

News snaps

Three killed in Rangpur road accident

RANGPUR, Dec 27: Three people were killed in two road accidents in Kotwali thana here on Wednesday, reports UNB. Police said Ahmad Hossain, 42, and Nanda Kumar, 30, were killed on Rangpur-Bogra highway at Dharmadas area when a speeding truck knocked their rickshaw van. In another incident, one Anwarul Haque, 20, was seriously injured in an accident on Rangpur-Dinajpur road near BDR camp when a motorbus rammed into his bicycle on the same day. He was rushed to the Rangpur Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

'Check guest bird hunting'

NETRAKONA, Dec 27: Different species of migratory birds of cold Siberian region are being trapped by the professional bird hunters here despite government ban, reports UNB. They are trapping the birds with nets in different beels, canals, ditches and haors of Sadar, Atpara, Madan, Mohanganj, Khaliazuri, Kendua, Kalmakanda, Barhatta, Purbahal and Durgapur thanas of the district. The hunters sell the birds in rural haats and bazars even in the district town before the nose of the law-enforcing authorities. Local people demanded of the authority to take immediate steps to check the indiscriminate hunting of guest and indigenous birds.

Water supply project facing setback

BANDARBAN, Dec 27: The drinking water supply project in the town here is facing set-back due to non-payment of outstanding bills by the subscribers, reports UNB. At least 40,000 dwellers of municipal area have been receiving the facility of drinking water supply every day under the project of the Public Health and Engineering Department. But at present Tk 22 lakh is lying outstanding with the consumers. Official sources said the project under no loss and no profit basis was set up costing Tk 4.5 crore to ensure supply of safe water in the area. At present due to financial crisis the project cannot undertake any overhauling works as the subscribers despite getting regular supply of water show little interest to repay the bills. The Executive Engineer said the officials and employees of the project are not getting their salary since long. He also said the project is to pay about Tk 26 lakh electric bills which cannot be paid for absence of necessary financial allocation.

LGED scheme to construct drain

COMILLA, Dec 27: Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has taken up a scheme to construct a drain to remove water-logging in the town at a cost of Tk 16.63 lakh, reports UNB.

Poura chairman Kamaluddin Chowdhury on Wednesday inaugurated the work stretching from Kandipur to Monoharpur. Executive Engineer of LGED Mojibur Rahman, Sub-Assistant Engineer Golam Mostafa and local elite were present on the occasion.

Tk 2.6 cr electric bills still unpaid

NETRAKONA, Dec 27: A total of Tk 2.6 crore electric bills has been lying outstanding for long with the consumers including the government and semi-government offices here, reports UNB.

Of the total amount, Tk 1.39 crore is lying outstanding with the government and semi-government offices while the rest Tk 1.21 crore with the general consumers in the town. Meanwhile, a big amount of Tk 59 lakh is lying outstanding with Netrakona pourashava. Besides, Tk 13.05 lakh is lying with the religious institutions which is to be paid by the government. But the payment remained suspended for long showing no reason whatsoever.

Govt being deprived of revenue

SUNAMGANJ, Dec 27: A huge quantity of Indian coal is being imported every day through the Tahirpur frontier of the district depriving the government of huge revenue, reports UNB.

According to witnesses, a number of influential businessmen are engaged in the trade evading tax through the Barachara frontier area of Tahirpur with the collaboration of some dishonest officials. These people instead of government prescribed route bring coal and other valuables through the illegal routes from Meghalaya province of India since long. It is learnt that the number of such businessmen is increasing day by day as the goods can be brought with comparatively less expense with the patronisation of law-enforcing agencies. It was also alleged that the businessmen holding legal licences are importing coal and other goods through Tekerhat-Barachara transit in Tahirpur thana evading huge duties as they carry double or more than the fixed 100 tons coals against their legal LCs.

Eight including 5 killers arrested

SYLHET, Dec 27: Police in separate drives arrested eight people including five accused murderers from different parts of the town in the last week, reports UNB.

Police said they arrested Mamun, Fazlul Haque and Atiqur Rahman alias Ruhel on charges of snatching a necklace of a woman from Ambarkhana bus-stand in the town. They also arrested a couple — Dhan Mia and her spouse — Piyara Begum from Nayatila village in Sadar thana on charges of sensational Asia killing murder. Besides, police arrested Ahmad Imam, Mostakur Rahman and Uzzal for alleged killing of a night-guard of the airport market.

FFE programme hampered

SHERPUR, Dec 27: The Food for Education (FFE) programmes are being hampered seriously due to suspension of foodgrains for more than last five months here, reports UNB.

Official sources said children of the poor families under the programme are being engaged in physical labours instead of going to schools to seek out their living. As the allocation and distribution of foodgrains have been stopped from last July the number of dropout students at the primary schools is increasing day by day. At least 20,697 poor children of 185 government, semi-government and registered primary schools in 13 unions of the district have been brought under the FFE programme in the district. A total of 17,537 single families and 1,983 joint families have been receiving the education facility under the programme.

2 held for possessing phensidyl

KHAGRACHHARI, Dec 27: Police arrested two people along with 195 bottles of Indian phensidyl from Mohammadpur area in Panchhari thana on Wednesday, reports UNB.

Police challenged three tribesmen in the area and caught red-handed two of them along with the drugs. The arrested were identified as Pandap Chakma, 40, and Parchand Chakma, 27.

College girl commits suicide

HABIGANJ, Dec 27: A college girl allegedly committed suicide at Nayani village in Chunarughat thana on Monday, reports UNB.

Police said Sufia Khatun, 18, a student of Shayestaganj Degree College, killed herself by taking poison at her residence. The reason behind the suicide could not be known.

Deplorable condition of road

NARAIL, Dec 27: Movement of vehicles on the 20-km Narail-Fultala road has become risky due to its deplorable condition, reports UNB.

Bus drivers said it has become dangerous to cross the area in-between Gobra and Rupganj bazzars, and Birgram village as deep potholes developed at many places of the narrow road. They urged the Roads and Highways Department to take immediate steps to reconstruct the road.

Mushroom growth of labs

KISHOREGANJ, Dec 27: Mushroom growth of unauthorised pathological and X-ray laboratories in the town and other thana headquarters has been posing health hazards to the patients, reports UNB.

The patients are not getting proper diagnosis due to non-experienced pathologists all over the town that are going on only in name. There are about 20 pathological laboratories in different parts of the district town. As per government rules if anybody wants to establish a pathological laboratory, he will have to submit a form duly filled in with experience and educational qualifications that are not being abided by. Most of the tests are conducted by the technicians whose blood, urine and stool test reports are mostly found wrong causing suffering to the patients. Moreover, most of the doctors established small pathological laboratories in their chamber for extra earning without observing many formalities.

Training course for farmers

PATUAKHALI, Dec 27: A training course for farmers on "Integrated Pest Management" concluded at village Sharikhali under Sadar thana of the district recently, reports APB.

As many as 25 farmers took part in the training course, organised by the Agricultural Extension Department (AED). The trainees were given practical training on various methods of test control and also on the harmful affect of too much use of fertiliser. They were given certificates and prizes on conclusion of the training. The training course created tremendous enthusiasm among farmers in the area and a large number of farmers attended the concluding function.

Pest-attack on lentil field in Faridpur

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Dec 27: Lentil or musur plants on 1,050 hectares of land in sadar, Char Bhadrans and Sadarpur thanas of the district have been damaged by pest attack.

According to unofficial sources, the musur plants were badly affected by the recent rainfall and stagnation of rain waters in the fields in all the eight thanas of the district. Some farmers expressed utter despair that production cost would not be achieved in some cases.

It is learnt that some flood affected marginal farmers are selling their produce in advance to the money-lenders at nominal

prices owing to extreme hardship. Besides, many flood-hit farmers are reportedly selling their household articles and domestic animals to maintain their families. More than one and a half lakh people have been badly affected by the recent flood in the district.

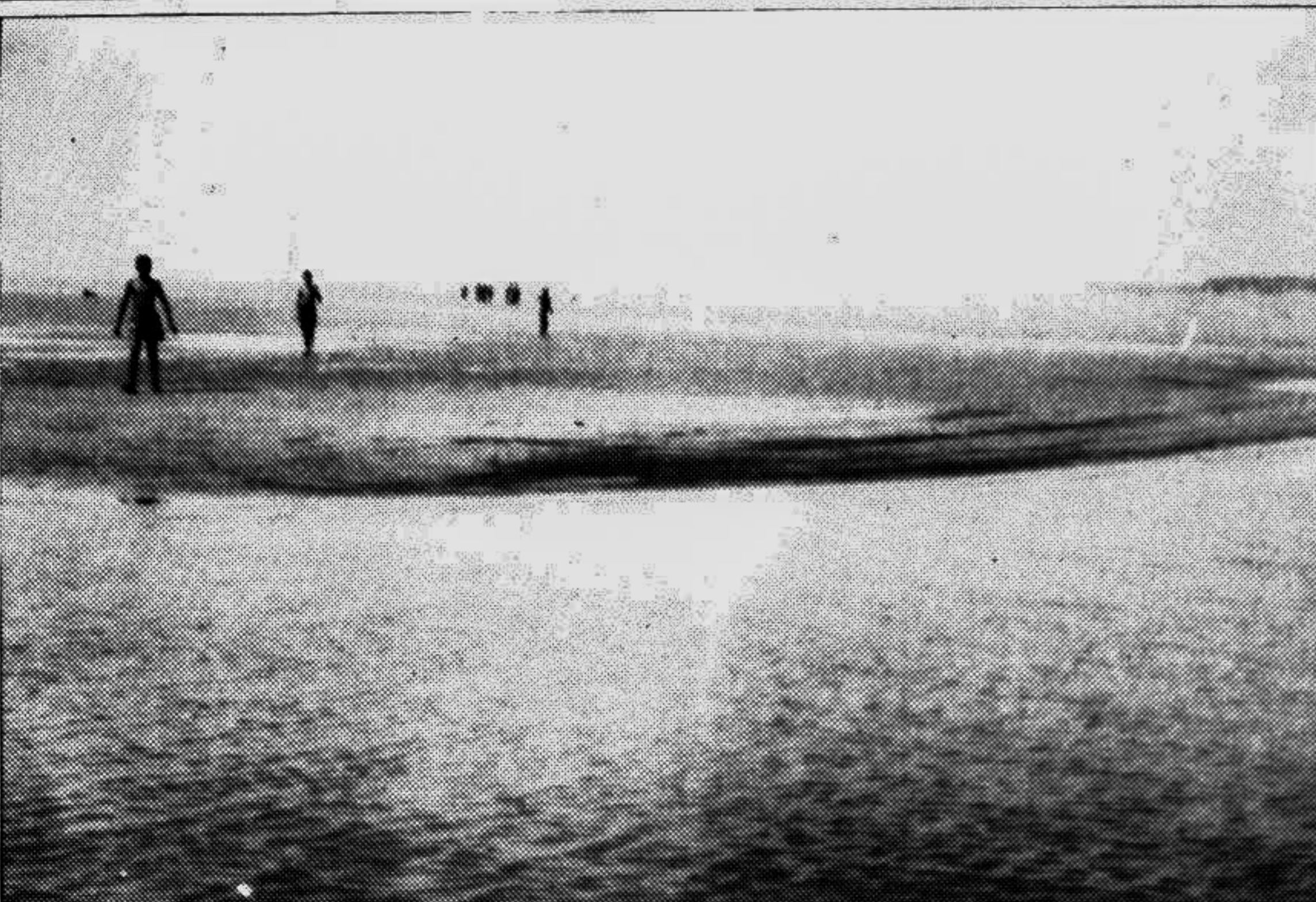
10 injured in Kushtia clash

KUSHTIA, Dec 27: Ten people were injured in a clash between two rival groups centering irrigation at a village in Daulatpur thana on Thursday, reports UNB.

Police said, the clash ensued at village Laubaria when a group tried to irrigate their land crossing the land of their rivals.

According to the sources, crops on 12,525 hectares of land have been completely and 10,728 hectares partially damaged by the flood. About 1,000 cattle head, 3,000 goats and several thousands of poultry birds died in the deluge.

Some farmers of the locality informed this correspondent that the district Agriculture Extension Department (AED) has not yet taken any measures to combat the pest menace.



CHANDPUR: Rural boys playing on a newly emerged shoal in the river Meghna.

— Star photo

Rapid fall in water level of rivers hampers navigation

From Shirin Akhter

CHANDPUR, Dec 27: Navigation to and from Chandpur has been affected seriously due to rapid fall in water level of all rivers in the district and emergence of shoals in river beds.

Many shoals have appeared in many places in the rivers of Padma, Meghna and Dakatia due to heavy siltation during the last flood.

Flying of riverine transports along different river routes have become very risky as well as time consuming.

According to Chandpur Water Development Board office sources, water level recorded in

the Padma, Meghna and Dakatia are lower than normal requirement during the dry season. Water level now went to 90 feet from 190 during the rainy season.

It has been alleged, about 10 to 15 feet layer of siltation have appeared in the river beds of the rivers Padma and Meghna.

It is expected, the ground and surface water will go down further affecting seriously the ecological balance and causing acute crisis of water.

Now water transports including steamers, launches, country boats plying between

Chandpur-Dhaka, Chandpur-Barisal, Chandpur-Narayanganj, Chandpur-Khulna have to cover an additional distance of four to five kilometres to reach destination by diverting the original routes. Passengers of steamers and launches plying on these routes have to suffer due to hidden shoals in different areas. Sometimes passengers on board are stranded for hours together in the middle of the river as the vessels sometimes hit hidden shoals and mud stream.

About 150 launches and other vessels are plying in these routes everyday. BIWTA is responsible to locate the 'sunk' shoals in these river beds. Sometime, BIWTA fails to locate the exact number of shoals in the rivers.

The river Padma and Dakatia are flowing for years together without dredging. Early dredging of these rivers is very essential. Dredging of rivers are convenient during the dry season. River transport system along Chandpur route will improve considerably following dredging.

Communications, trade, and business of the area will be improved if dredging of the three rivers are done in due time.



CHANDPUR: Siltation in the river Dakatia. — Star photo

Fund constraint hampers highway expansion work

MYMENSINGH, Dec 27: Work on expansion and strengthening of the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway may not be completed within the scheduled time due to non-availability of funds, reports APB.

One out of three years of the project's time has passed but no work has been done, sources said.

The Roads and Highways Department took up the project in 1997-98 financial year for expansion and strengthening of 88 kilometres of the 120 kilo-

meters Dhaka-Mymensingh highway.

So far Tk three crore has been made available for the project. Sources in the R&H Department said that only six kilometers of road development work will be possible with this paltry amount.

A high official of the department, however, expressed his doubt about the possibility of receiving the remaining funds in time.

It may be mentioned here

that although the Dhaka-Mymensingh road is considered as a national highway, it is only 18 feet wide. A national highway has to be at least 24 feet wide.

Most parts of the highway is now almost unusable because it took the entire load of maintaining road communications between the capital and 24 districts, including those in northern Bangladesh. It has developed innumerable potholes and cracks, causing frequent road accidents.



NARAYANGANJ: A total of 15 people including two women drowned when a passenger launch sank recently in the river Buriganga near Panchabati in Fatullah thana.

— Star photo by Ehsanul Huq

Cold wave starts earlier in N-Districts

NATORE, Dec 27: Cold wave started earlier in the northern districts this year, reports APB. Usually it starts in January but this year cold wave started sweeping the districts from early December.

The wind has become chilly and the nights have become heavily misted. The poor people who can not afford winter clothes are suffering very much. Every year a good number of people die from cold in the northern districts.

The number of deaths may be higher this year unless warm clothes are distributed by the government and welfare organisations among the poor and landless people who have been pauperized by the recent flood.

Memo submitted to RUVC

From RU correspondent RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, Dec 27: The final year students of Library and Information Science Department of the university have handed over a memorandum to the Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Dean of the Social Science faculty and the departmental chairman recently.

They were demanding fulfilment of their four-point demands. The demands included publishing of result of the general group, repayment of Taka 1,200 which was collected from them illegally by the former chairman in the name of computer training, cancellation of the thesis papers of the students for not getting at least 55 per cent marks in the honours examination.

They expressed their concern for not publishing the result of the MSS examinations. They expressed their grave concern for not publishing the report of the probe committee formed to look after the corruption charges against the former chairman of the department Prof Abdus Salam.

They threatened stern action in future if their demands are not fulfilled within a short period.

Four killed in Faridpur road accident

From Our Correspondent FARIDPUR, Dec 27: Four persons were killed and 10 others injured in a tragic road accident on December 22.

According to Madhukhali thana, a Khulna-bound passenger bus and a Dhaka-bound truck collided head-on at Chhankhali on the portion between Madhukhali and Kumarkhali on Faridpur-Jessore highway. As a result three persons died on the spot and the rest one succumbed to his injuries on way to Magura hospital. The injured were, however, released after first-aid from Magura hospital.

The dead were identified as Hashem Bhuiyan, 62, Masudur Bhuiyan, 28, Matiar Rahman, 60, and one unidentified septuagenarian. All the victims hailing from Narsigdi were on way to Khulna to attend at 'tablik jamat'.

10 hurt in clash over irrigation in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent KUSHTIA, Dec 27: Ten persons were injured when a bloody clash ensued in between two groups at village Laubaria in Daulatpur thana on December 17.

The clash occurred over irrigation through other's land.

The injured persons are Mizan, 40, Hasmat, 22, Liakat, 28, Shamima, 31, Kashem, 42, and Borhan, 19, of Nizam group while Sekendar, 50, Lavlu, 18, Shahajul, 24, and Tuhin, 15, belong to Bakhtiar group. Injured Tuhin has been admitted in Kushtia General Hospital while others were admitted in Daulatpur Thana Health Complex.

Fodder scarcity in Shariatpur

SHARIATPUR, Dec 27: Flood-affected farmers in six thanas of the district are selling their cattle at throw-away prices due to poverty, an unprecedented scarcity of fodder and outbreak of various cattle diseases, reports APB.

A farmer needs at least Tk 100 per month to buy fodder for a cow, which is beyond the means of most of the farmers due to the after-effect of the last flood.

Fodder has become scarce in the districts as elsewhere in the country due to loss of crops and water-logging in fields for long.

Cattle diseases like 'khura' and black quarter have broken out in the Sadar, Badarganj, Naria and Jagira thanas of the district.

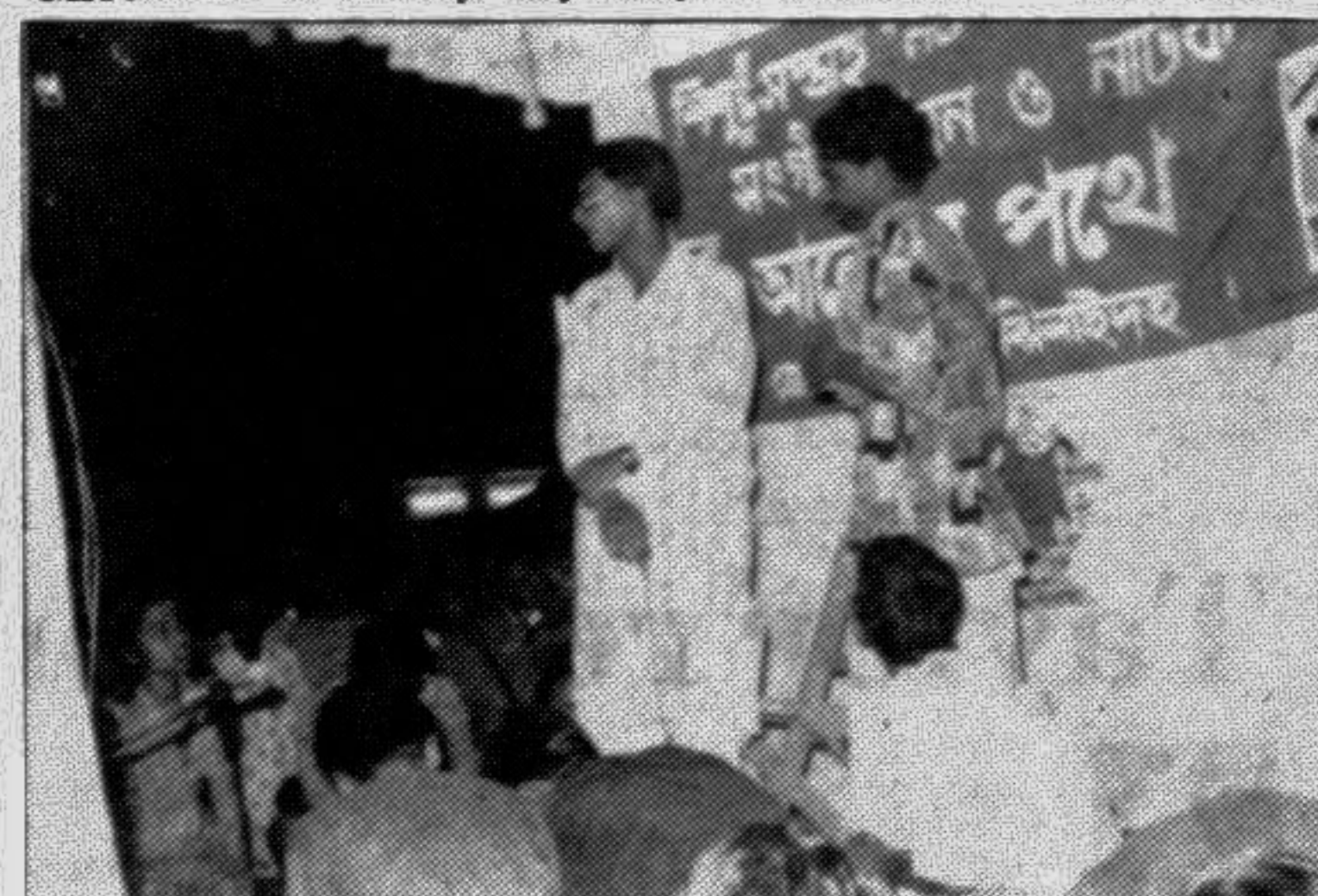
Foodgrains for 87 projects allocated

SHARIATPUR, Dec 27: The government has allocated 1152 tonnes of foodgrains for implementation of 87 projects in the district under the Food for Work Programme (FWP), reports APB.

Of the total quantity, 261 tonnes have been allocated for 19 projects in Badarganj thana, 107 tonnes for nine projects in Damuddah, 149 tonnes for 11 projects in Goshirhat, 267 tonnes for 20 projects in Naria, 166 tonnes for four projects in Sadar and 202 tonnes for 16 projects in Jagira thana.



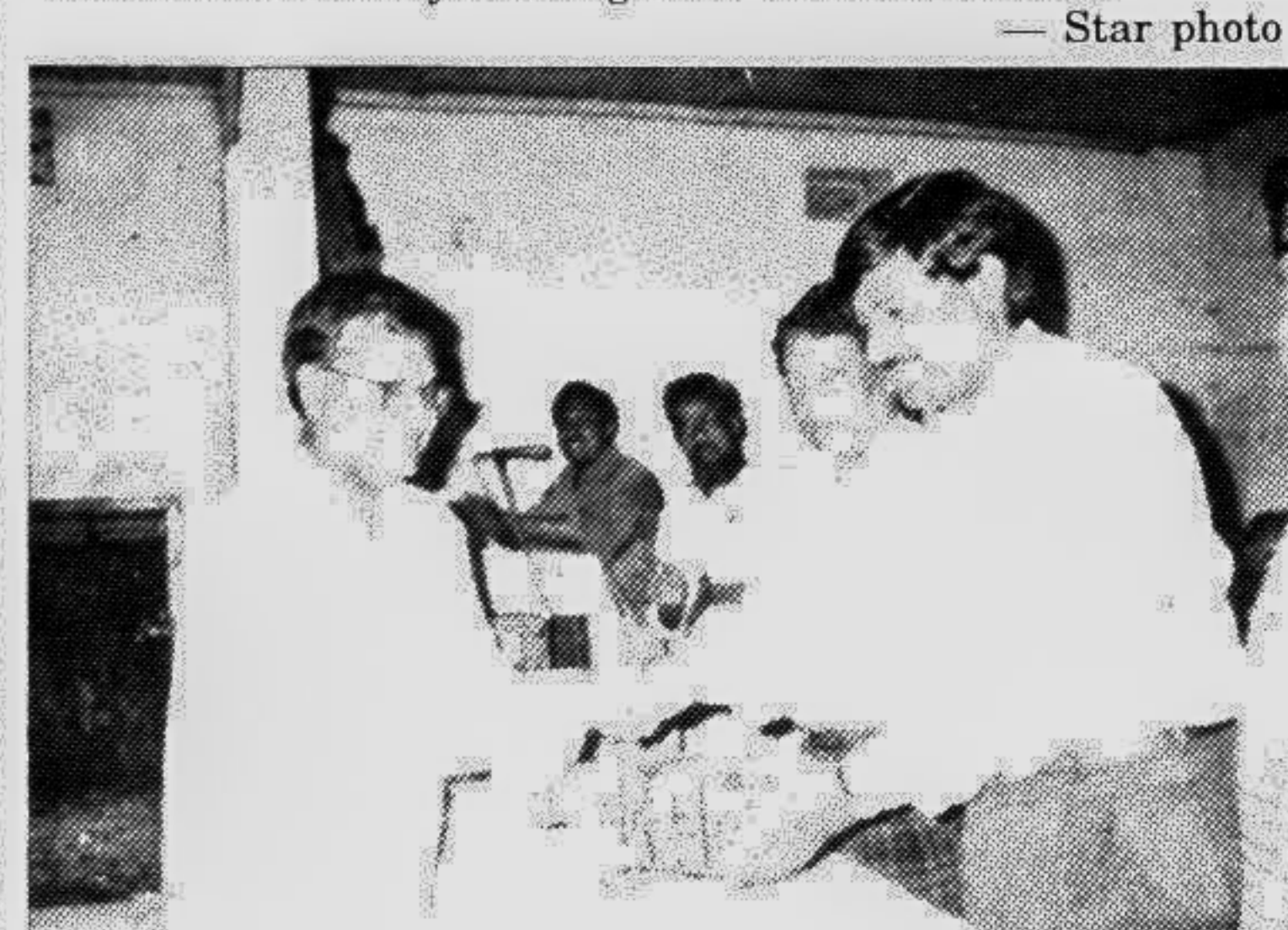
MAGURA: A Victory Day rally in the town. — Star photo



JHENIDAH: A scene from a street drama which was arranged at Jhenidah Agrani Square recently. The drama was as part of the programme arranged in observance of Child Rights Week. — Star photo



FARIDPUR: A day long workshop on 'Reforms of Election Laws' was jointly organised here recently, by Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) and Study and Research of Human Assistance Association. Awami League leader S M Nurunnabi is speaking at the workshop which was held at Sikkhya-o-Sanskriti Charcha Kendra. — Star photo



BRAHMANBARIA: Prizes being distributed among the best cooperative members of the sadar thana by the ADC(General) of Dhaka. — Star photo



MAGURA: Onion farming by following the direct method is in progress on the field of a local farmer at village Nabagram. — Star photo



MYMENSINGH: Muhammed Hussain, Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) placing wreaths at the Muktijoddha Smriti Stambha on the Victory Day. — Star photo



MYMENSINGH: Certificates were awarded among the trainees of 'Tailoring Training Course' at a function held in the town recently. Shafiqul Islam, ADC (Revenue) of Mymensingh distributed the certificates. — Star photo