

News snaps

Rally of landless

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, May 16: A big rally of landless was held under the auspices of Satkhira District Bhumihen Samity at Shahid Abdur Razzak Park on May 10.

President of the association Kawsar Ali presided over the rally while it was addressed, among others, by Advocate Abdur Rahim, Prof. Abu Ahmed, Abul Kalam Azad, Saifullah Laskar, Abul Hossain, Abul Kashem, Khodeja Khatun, Ahmad Palash. They urged the government to fulfill the eight-point demand of the landless people within the shortest possible time.

Red Crescent Day observed

From A Correspondent

NETRAKONA, May 16: World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day was observed in Netrakona on May 8 in a befitting manner. A colourful procession and a discussion was held on the occasion. Osman Gani Talukdar, chairman of Netrakona district unit of BRCS and local MP Fazlur Rahman Khan led the procession.

Road mishaps in 4 months

From A Correspondent

JAMALPUR, May 16: Some 105 people were killed in 372 road accidents on Jamalpur-Dhaka and Jamalpur-Mymensingh highways in the last four months.

At least 1,015 people were injured in the accidents and 215 vehicles were damaged during the same period. Police said, of the dead 68 people were killed in 172 truck accidents and the rest were killed in coaster, bus and motor car accidents.

2 prisoners die at MMCH

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, May 16: A convict and an undertrial prisoner died at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) on May 5.

According to jail sources, Jalal Uddin, 40, a convict who was serving a 10-year jail term in Mymensingh Central Jail was sent to MMCH after being ill since May 4. Sadek Mia, 45, of village Raoti in Tariai thana of Kishoreganj district, an undertrial prisoner was admitted to MMCH from Kishoreganj jail on May 4 in a critical condition where he died on May 5.

Jute seeds crisis in Jamalpur

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, May 16: The target of jute cultivation in seven police stations of the district will not be achieved during the current season for want of seeds.

Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation preserves seeds in its godowns to supply among the growers. About 25 thousand hectares of land in the district have been brought under jute cultivation during the current season. The change in the distribution system of seeds by BADC this year has caused the crisis.

Separate incidents claim 4 lives

FENI, May 16: Four persons were killed in separate incidents in the district recently, police said, reports APB.

Saiful Islam, 34, and Rafiq, 35, were killed by lightning when they were walking on a street at Fotehpur village under Porshuram thana. Another boy, Mohiuddin, 13, also suffered serious burn injury in the incident. In another incident, Sahara Aktar, 20, mother of a seven-month-old baby, was allegedly beaten to death by her husband for dowry at Panchgachia village under the Sadar thana. Abdus Sukur, 32, was run over by a bus on the Feni by-pass road at Jatra Shiddhi, police said.

Zinger loaded trucks seized

COX'S BAZAR, May 16: BDR personnel seized two trucks loaded with 14 tonnes of zinger near Damdamia check post on the Cox's Bazar-Teknaf Highway recently for evasion of about 60,000 taka import duty, reports APB.

BDR sources alleged that the tax was evaded in connivance with a section of Customs officials. The government is being deprived of huge amounts of revenue due to evasion of import duty by a section of traders engaged in cross-border trade with Myanmar, they said.

TLM programme ends

NETRAKONA, May 16: The six-month Total Literacy Movement (TLM) programme under the auspices of Ujjibitta Netrakona concluded recently in three thanas here.

The three thanas included Sadar, Barhatta and Kendua. Under the programme, 2,13,750 illiterate people were targeted for imparting education through 7,125 centres with equal number of teachers under 450 supervisors. The government sanctioned Taka 6.28 crore to make the programme a success.

Pry dropouts up

SHERPUR, May 16: A large number children are being deprived of primary education in the frontier thana of Nalitabari here due to abject poverty and ignorance of their guardians, reports UNB.

The situation aggravated at the suspension of programmes for making the primary education attractive to the children. The programmes were introduced in different schools of the thana in the second and third years of the introduction of compulsory primary education to increase the enrollment. Under the programme the poor students were provided with dresses and educational appliances other than textbooks, which created interest among the children to go to the school. According to the thana Primary Education Office, some 32,026 children out of 41,883 have been enrolled in different primary schools of the thana this year.

Work progressing

BARISAL, May 16: The construction of an inter-district bus terminal is underway in Rupatali area of this divisional town at a cost of about Tk 70 lakh in this fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to an official source, government has acquired a total of 2.03 acres of land for the construction of this bus terminal, a long felt demand of the people of the region. Preliminary engineering work and soil test have already been completed here and the earth work on this project is progressing fast in this dry season. Besides, land demarcation of the plot of land has also been completed some days ago. When completed, the inter-district bus services of six southern districts of Barisal division will be easier and comfortable.

Foodgrains distributed

PIROJPUR, May 16: Foodgrains worth about Tk 2.19 crore have been distributed here in the last three months under the Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) programme, reports APB.

The district Relief and Rehabilitation office told that a total of 1,882 tonnes of wheat and rice have been distributed among 36,200 flood affected people in six thanas and two municipalities during the period.

Doctor killed

COX'S BAZAR, May 16: After the death of two persons in the hands of a mad man at Naptikhal village in the Sadar thana on Monday, a homeopath doctor was killed by another mad man in another village of the same thana on April 20, reports APB.

The doctor Sudhangshu Bimal Sharma alias Ratan Doctor, 57, of Bomangkhal village was allegedly hit with a stick by the mad man when he was returning home from a local market, police said quoting local people. He died at a local hospital. A case has been lodged with local police. The mad man, Mostaque Ahmed, aged about 30, fled away. He is the son of one Naderuzzaman of Bomangkhal village.

Fodder crisis

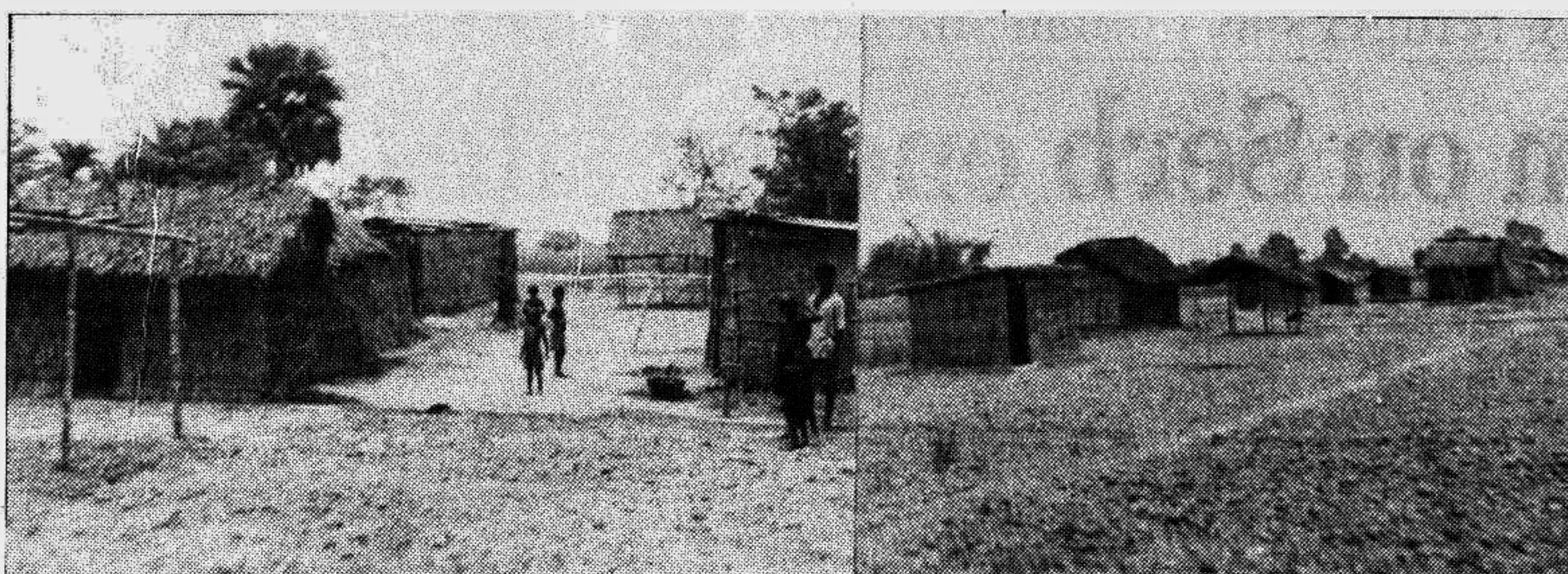
JHENIDAH, May 16: Cultivation of local varieties of paddy has decreased in Jhenidah district over the last few years, reports APB.

Farmers said they have been facing fodder crisis. This is due to non-cultivation of local varieties of paddy. On the other hand, production cost of IRRI-Boro paddy has also been increasing day by day with rise in prices of inputs as these are more dependent on fertilisers and irrigation than local varieties. Apart from that, IRRI-Boro fields can not be used for cultivation of other crops after harvest of paddy. Previously, the farmers could produce at least three crops a year, they said.

Agri-fair concludes

RAJBARI, May 16: A five-day agricultural fair concluded at the local agricultural office here recently, reports UNB.

A total of 16 stalls of agricultural products were set up in the fair. Besides, two stalls of handmade jute goods and silk products took part. On the occasion, a rally of farmers was held at the premises of the fair with AED deputy director Abdur Rahman Khan in the chair. Another four-day agri-fair also concluded in Pangsha thana on March 2, organised by the local Agriculture Extension Department.



(Left to Right) Some so-called landless people have erected temporary houses recently after occupying the lands of aborigines at Shankarbhag village and Basupara village in Natore sadar thana. — Star photo

Tension in 3 Natore villages over illegal occupation of land

From Anwar Ali

NATORE, May 16: Tension has been prevailing at three villages of Natore sadar thana following illegal occupation of land of some aborigines by some so-called landless people.

Security of life of people has become unsafe at Sankarbhag and Peerjipara villages under Boro Harishpur union and Basupara village under Laxmipurkholabaria union in Natore sadar thana. This is because the illegal occupants and the aborigines are threatening each other everyday showing arms, local villagers said. Incidents of bloodshed may occur at any moment in the area, but the local administration remains silent although several complaints were filed for and against the occupants.

The situation started with the grabbing of land of former Union Parishad (UP) chairman Abdul Jalil of Harishpur union. About seven acres of his cultivable land at Joynagar and Peerjipara villages were grabbed by a group of so-called landless people during early April. A complaint was lodged with the assistant judge's court on April 6 and an injunction was issued, on the same day, preventing the occupants from using the land.

Another case, filed with the same court, on May 5, said that the 'illegal occupants' of Abdul Jalil's land at Joynagar violated the court's previous injunction and built 29 temporary houses on the land.

The occupants of the land claimed that they were landless and they had learnt that this land was a 'khas' property. However, in his complaint to the assistant judge's court, Abdul Jalil said that his father, late Bogai Uddin Sarkar, surrendered the land to the government following a government ordinance in 1972. But the land remained in their possession. This is because the government had never tried to take control of the land. So they did not handed it to the government in exchange of due compensation.

However, the illegal occupants are now safe on Jalil's land.

After this incident, the so-called 'landless' people have grabbed the land of aborigines of Basupara, Shakarbhag and Peerjipara.

On April 20 night, about 2.55 acres of land of Madhu Sudhan Teli, an aborigine of Peerjipara village was illegally grabbed by some people. Although this land was in possession of Madhu which he inherited from his forefathers, yet the government records termed those to be 'khas' land in 1990. This was a verdict of the assistant judge's court. Then Madhu appealed to the higher court against the verdict of assistant judge's court.

On April 25, 86 decimal land of two aborigines — Khatish Chandra Roy and Anil Kumar Teli, at Shankarbhag village was grabbed overnight by another group of so-called landless people. They allegedly built temporary houses on the land with bamboos from the clusters of Anil and Khatish. This land is now being investigated whether it is 'khas' property or not.

On the following night (April 26), another group of so-called landless people occupied 16 decimal land of Subadhi Chandra Teli at Basupara, nine bighas of land of Subeet Teli at Shankarbhag village. These lands of the aborigines are also controversial.

While this correspondent visited Shankarbhag village recently, he found that some poor people, claiming themselves to be landless had built about 20 straw-made temporary houses on their occupied land. They had been living there with their family for about three weeks.

Khatish Chandra Teli, a teacher, and Anil Kumar Teli, a farmer claimed the ownership over 86 decimal land.

They told this correspondent that they had been living on the land from the period of their forefathers.

This correspondent met Bellal, one of the occupants and his wife Mamataz on their occupied land at Shakarbhag. They said that they had built houses on this land three weeks ago when they came to know that the land was 'khas' property.

Bellal who is a day labourer and currently working at the house of one Haibat Master in the area, told that though his father had some lands, yet he had nothing. 'Being a landless person, I have every night to live on a 'khas' land,' he said.

Another occupant Dukhu Beao, a widow of 40, said 'We started occupying the 'khas' lands here when we found other landless people had been living undisturbed on Jalil's land at Joynagar and Peerjipara'.

Montu, a day labourer and Bulu, a widow and day labourer Alal and his wife Moriom Khalun also replied in this way. All the occupants are of the opinion that they had occupied government's land, so they would face none but the government in this matter.

Mantu Sheikh, an occupant said 'We are sure that the land was 'khas' property. The government did not evict us till now'. Montu also said, 'If the government evict us, we will leave this place willingly'.

While talking to this correspondent, Sattya Narayan Teli, a leader of the aborigines in the area and member of Harishpur Union Parishad (UP), told that the aborigines of Shankarbhag, Peerjipara and Basupara villages were now feeling insecure at their own villages where they had been living from time immemorial. He also alleged that the landless people, who occupied their land illegally, were not landless at all. Sattya said that the occupants were misled by an influential quarter. But, he quoting several complaints lodged with the local police, said that a group of 24 persons led by Mahtab, Majdar and Sabdul had threatened the aborigines.

'Our girls are not safe here.... if this situation continues, our people will be bound to flee from these villages', Sattya said.

He also alleged that local police and administration were silent over the matter. When this correspondent visited Shankarbhag village, he

talked to Sabdul, one of the leading accused persons of the cases filed by aborigines. He refuted the allegations and said 'The cases against us are designed to harass us.' Sabdul said, 'I have too bighas of land... I till my own land and thus run my family.... then why shall I go to occupy other's land?'

Sabdul also alleged that the aborigine leaders here were rearing 'hired terrorists' in the villages, Sabdul added.

Sattya, however, denied Sabdul's allegation of rearing hired goons in the village.

Mahtab and Majdar, leaders of occupants were not available on the spot for their comments.

On May, the aborigines here brought out a large protest procession in the town with their traditional weapons such as bows and arrows, spears and sticks. They paraded the streets of the town and laid siege to the Deputy Commissioner's (DC's) office here. They damaged two government vehicles and submitted a memorandum to the DC, ADC (revenue) Md Abdul Quaiyum, received the memorandum on behalf of DC. The memorandum demanded immediate eviction of illegal occupants from the aborigines' land and punishment to the responsible persons. Similar memorandum was also given to the DC on April 29 by the aborigine leaders.

Talking to this correspondent, Abdul Bari Mia, Superintendent of Police (SP), Natore refuted the allegations of deteriorating of law and order situation in the villages. He said that the law and order situation of the disputed areas had become normal and police had been on alert there.

When contacted, M Ishaq Bhuiyan, DC, Natore told The Daily Star that none of the aborigines and occupants are legal as they could not show any legal document regarding their claim.

However, investigations are still going on in this matter. Ishaq said adding that proper steps would be taken after the investigations.

Diarrhoea claims 39 lives in Noakhali, Laxmipur

LAXMIPUR, May 16: Diarrhoea has claimed lives of 39 people and affected over 4,500 people in Noakhali and Laxmipur districts during the last week, Civil Surgeon office sources said, reports UNB.

According to an unofficial estimate, 51 people died and some 6,967 were affected during the period.

The sources said 14 people died of the water-borne disease and 2,000 were affected on May 4.

Diarrhoea broke out in 50 unions of four thanas of Laxmipur district where 52 medical teams and 12 doctors have been working to combat the menace.

The sources also said almost half of the population of Boyar Char of Rangait thana, western part of sadar including the vast tract of embankment areas of Char Bongshi and Char Ababil of Raipur thana of Laxmipur district were affected by the disease.

The shoal areas of Hatiya, Sudharam, Companiganj of Noakhali district were also hit by the disease where 84 medical teams have been working.

In Noakhali, 22 people died in four days with the death of five people in May 4. The number of affected was estimated at 2,117.

A physician said scarcity of safe drinking water created due to sealing up of the tubewells for

arsenic contamination and intake of adulterated food were the causes behind the spread of the disease.

Diarrhoea takes serious turn in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

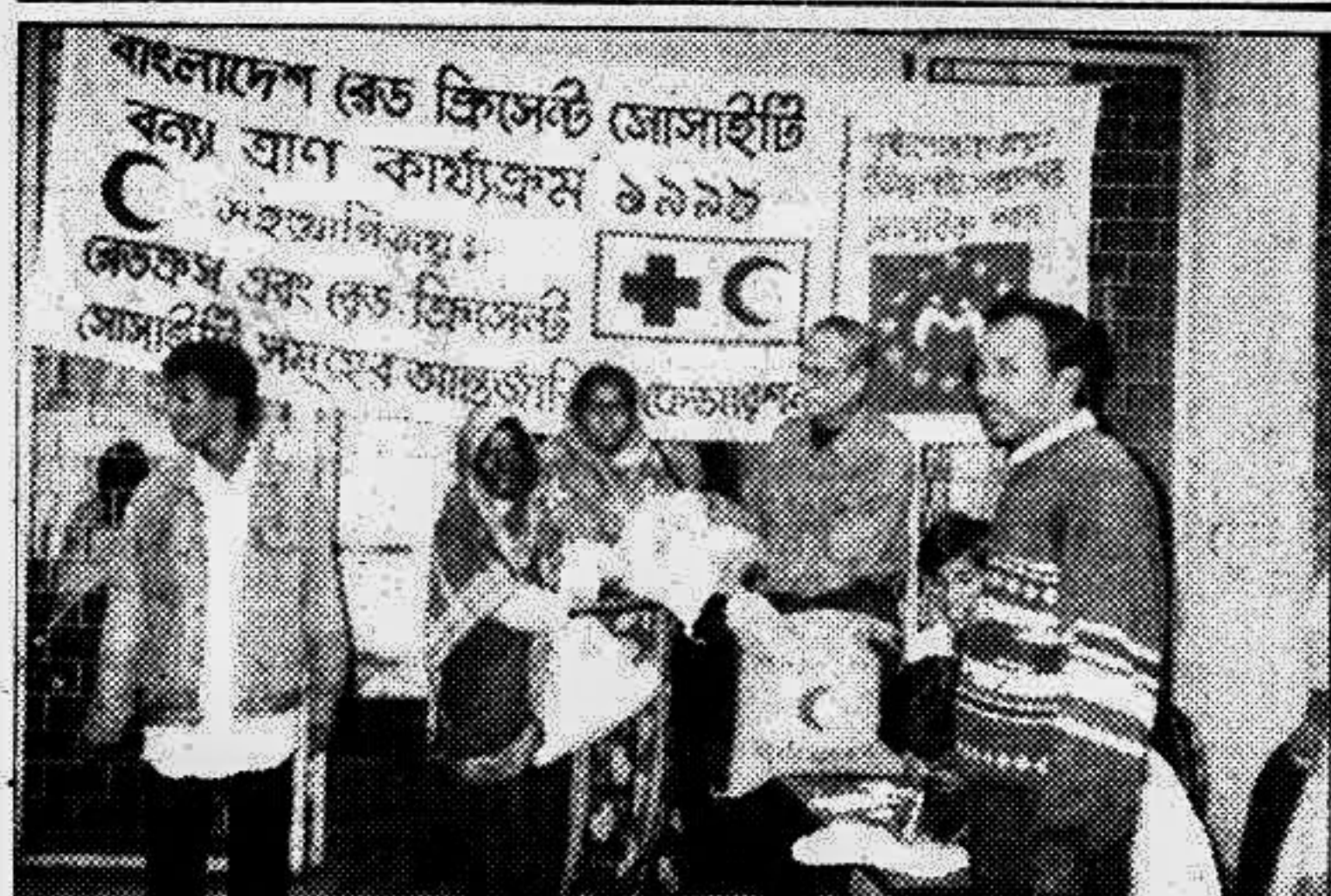
KHULNA, May 16: Diarrhoea has broken out in the metropolitan city in an epidemic form.

The number of patients is increasing day by day alarmingly.

According to a reliable source, the total number of diarrhoeal patients increased from 4,044 in January to 8,216 in February this year. The number rose to 10,016 in March hinting further jump during the current month as it appears from the trend.

Last year, death toll by diarrhoea rose to 25 out of 60,935 patients. On the other hand, 321 persons were attacked in January, 266 in February and 291 in March, while till April 19 the number of patients rose to 380 with only one person dead.

Acute crisis of pure drinking water and unhygienic environment and taking exposed and stale food are the reasons for outbreak of this disease.



CHANDPUR: The local unit of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society distributing relief materials among the distressed people of shoal areas under Chandpur thana recently. — Star photo

Herbal pesticide with no sideeffects on environment

PANCHAGARH, May 16: A herbal pesticide with no side-effects on the environment has been invented by a youth who has no academic degree or training, reports APB.

Saiful Islam claims that his pesticide, made from leaves and seeds, is an attractive alternative to Heptachlor, an imported chemical pesticide.

Heptachlor kills beneficial insects like earthworms, fish in paddy fields and affects the environment but Saiful says his herbal pesticide has no such side-effects.

Moreover, its cost of production is so low that it can be sold at Tk 60 per kg. Heptachlor is being sold at Tk 400 per kg. Some farmers who have used Saiful's pesticide also said about its effectiveness having no side-effect.

Sources at the Nasipur Wheat Research Centre in Dinajpur said they applied Saiful's pesticide to wheat and potato farms and found it very effective.

A professor of the Cornell University recently visited the Centre to see the results of Saiful's pesticide, they said.

The Bangladesh Science and Technology Extension Centre has given Saiful Islam a fellow-

ship. The government has also given official recognition to Saiful's pesticide.

Saiful told this correspondent that if the government finances him, he can start production of his herbal pesticide on a commercial scale.

Snatcher arrested

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, May 16: A snatcher identified as Bablu was arrested by police while he was about to run away after snatching a bag containing Taka 3.75 lakh from the counter of the main branch of Sonali Bank at 11:00 am on May 3.

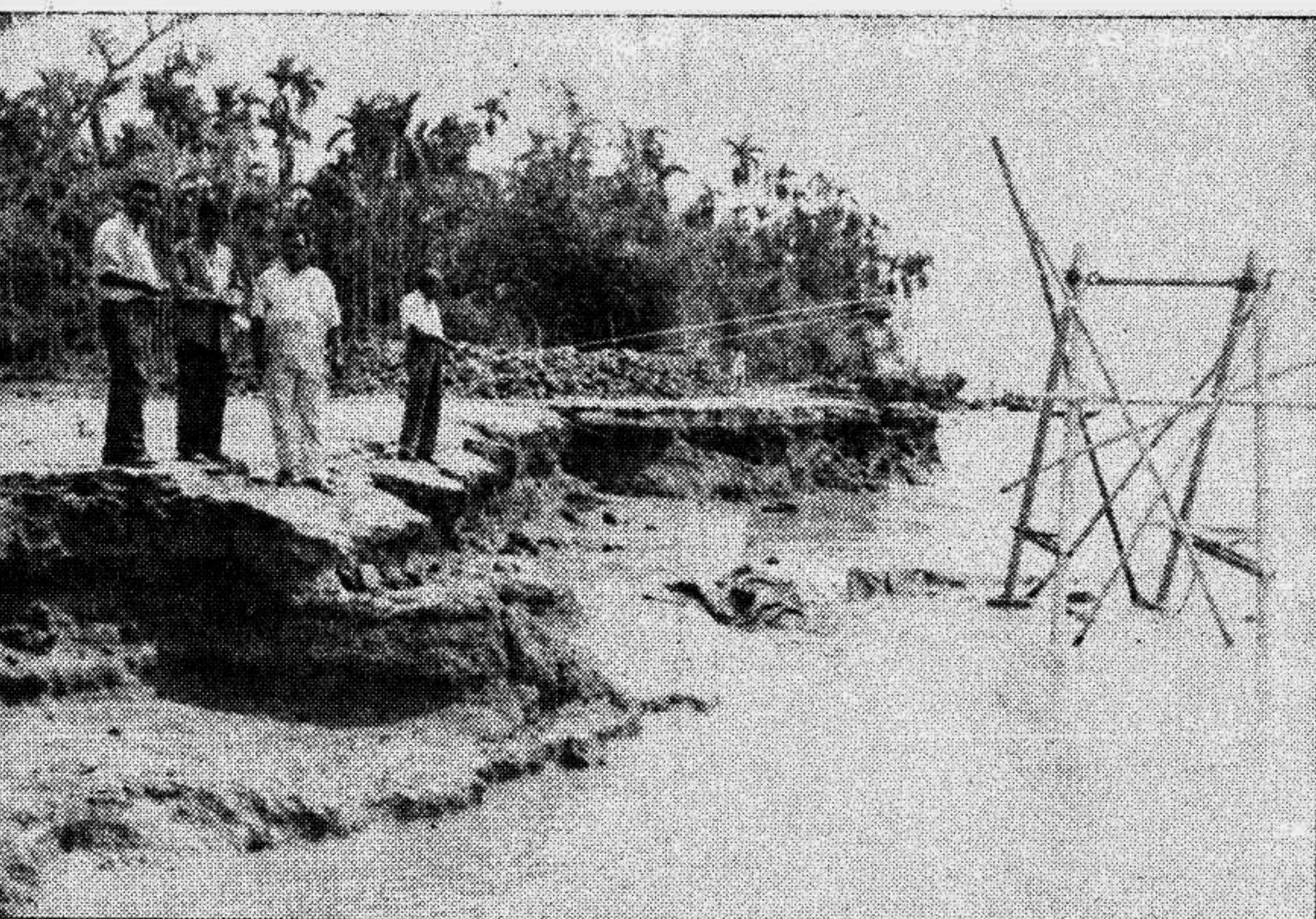
According to police source, the cashier of the main branch of Krishi Bank, withdrew the aforesaid amount of money from Sonali Bank. He handed over the same to the guard of Krishi Bank who was waiting at the counter. At one stage the snatcher was about to run away after snatching the bag. He was caught red-handed by the members of the public. Later on police recovered the money and arrested the snatcher.

KU Computer Sc & Engg students on strike

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, May 16: Students of Computer Science and Engineering Department of Khulna University (KU) are on strike for an indefinite period since April 21.

They were demanding removal of Dr Azad Khan, Head of the Department.



The river Meghna eroding fast Haimchar protection embankment in Chandpur. — Star photo

Erosion threatens Chandpur Irrigation Project dam

From Shirin Akhter

CHANDPUR, May 16: Erosion of the river Meghna at Haimchar thana, about eight kilometres south of Chandpur town has taken serious turn for the last few days.

Erosion in the area has started alarmingly with the beginning of rains. The erosion of Haimchar thana is continuing from Katakhal to Ibrahimpur union along the bank of the river Meghna.

About 10,000 people in the area is seriously affected by erosion. TNO office, dormitory, police station hospital, banks, two high schools, government quarters have already been eroded. The Taka 100 crore Chandpur Irrigation Project embankment near Haimchar is also threatened by erosion.

Chandpur Irrigation Project embankment was eroded three times. Three alternative embankments were also constructed at a cost of Taka 10 crore.

The embankments are at the point of erosion. Haimchar thana is constituted of six unions. About 50 per cent area of

Haimchar, Nilkamal, Gazipur, Algi Unions were eroded by the river Meghna. At present erosion is going on unabated in

5 more police outposts in Magura

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, May 16: The government decided to set up five more outposts of police in all the four thanas here for improving the law and order situation, according to police sources.

The outposts will be constructed at Shanta Laxmipur bazaar in Raghabadri union of Sadar thana, Singrabazari in Dhaniswargati union of Shaikhikha thana, Rajapur in Muhammadpur thana, Nakol bazaar in Siripur thana. The police outpost has been already functioning at Hajrahati under Siripur of the district.

There will be one Sub-Inspector (SI), one Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) and 30 constables in each police outpost.

Algi, Katakhal, Taskerkandi, Char Bhairabi, Isanbala areas of Haimchar thana.

About 200 acres of land have already been eroded.

Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) constructed an embankment from Taskerkandi to Akhener Hat at a cost of Taka 40 lakh last year.

The embankment has already been damaged due to continuous erosion in the area. Aminul Islam, Executive Engineer of BWDB, Chandpur, told this correspondent that he had submitted a scheme of Taka 50 crore for the protection of Haimchar thana. But the government sanctioned only Taka one crore seventy lakh for the protection of Haimchar thana.

According to CC blocks are being dumped in the eroded area. Chandpur Irrigation Project embankment is situated within 200 metres of the river Meghna.

If the erosion is not checked it may again affect the Chandpur Irrigation Project embankment. As a result entire irrigation project within 220 kilometres area will be inundated.



Bangladesh Railway Tender Notice

No 6/99

Dated: 2-5-99

The Chief Controller of Stores, Bangladesh Railway, Pahartali, Chittagong invites quotation against the following tender particulars:

Sl No	Tender No & description of stores	Price of tender document Taka	Cost of specn. Taka	Postage of charges Taka	Date of selling of tender	Date of opening
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	P6/17/017/1998 V Belt-50 Nos	400/=	-	20/=	5-5-99 to 31-5-99	1-6-99
2	P2/GB4/4/99/SR Steel spring carbon silico manganese flat size 4"x5/8"-1387 metres	400/=	30/=	20/=	10-5-99 to 30-5-99	31-5-99
3	P2/GB4/2/29/SR Steel mild round size 1.3/8"-207 metres	400/=	30/=	20/=	10-5-99 to 30-5-99	31-5-99
4	P5/EB6/01/99 Cloth leather artificial upholstery green 50/52" wide-8,700 metres	750/=	-	20/=	12-5-99 to 1-6-99	2-6-99
5	P5/EB6/02/99 Magnesium Oxy Chloride flooring composition & Magnesium Chloride (crystal) etc.=2 items=1,82,135 kgs.	750/-	-	20/=	12-5-99 to 15-6-99	16-6-99
6	P2/GB4/66/98-99/ACST Steel spring flat tested size 3"x1/4"-317 metres & 2.3/4"x3/8"-371 metres	400/=	30/=	20/=	10-5-99 to 30-5-99	31-5-99

Tender documents may be obtained from the office of the undersigned as well as from ACOS/DA & COS/W/RJH from 9.00 hrs to 12.00 hrs on all working days either on cash payment or remittance of the charges by money orders (non-refundable). The document having been sold is not transferable.

Quotation addressed to the Chief Controller of Stores, Bangladesh Railway, Pahartali, Chittagong must reach by 12.00 hrs on or before the opening date or be dropped into the tender box kept in the office of the undersigned or the office of ACOS/DA by 12.00 hrs on the opening date. The tender will be opened at 12.00 hrs on the opening date.

If the office remain closed on the last selling date of the tender documents, the next working day shall be deemed as the last selling date of tender and the tender will be opened on the following working day at 12.00 hrs.

Rail/B/45
DPP-10463-11/5
G-905

Chief Controller of Stores
Bangladesh Railway
Pahartali, Chittagong