

News snaps

7 criminals arrested

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, June 28: Gaibandha police arrested seven notorious criminals from different places here in two days. The criminals include inter-district dacoits also. The arrested persons are Abdul Wahab of village Ramchandrapur in the sadar thana, who is a member of inter-district gang of dacoits, Jahid, Alam, Mizanur Rahman, all inhabitants of village Dhobadanga, Muihit of village Bhatpara, Akber, Nur Islam of college para in the sadar thana. The accused persons remained at large for a long time. There are several criminal cases against them.

Man arrested from court hajjat

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, June 28: One person was arrested while supplying a bottle of phensidyl to a detainee recently at the court hajjat of Brahmanbaria District Court. According to police, Masud Ahmed, 22, son of Nurul Islam of village Sunamura of Haraspur union in the sadar thana was supplying a bottle of phensidyl to an under-trial detainee at the court hajjat. At once police on duty nabbed him and handed from the spot. Later on he was sent to the court from where the magistrate ordered for sending him to Brahmanbaria district jail hajjat.

Housewife commits suicide

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, June 28: One housewife committed suicide recently by taking poison. Police sources said, the victim, Shirin Akhtar, 18, wife of Siddique Mia of village Konapara in Kuliarchar thana swallowed poison recently. She was admitted into Zahurul Islam Medical College Hospital. She died there on the following day. Cause of the suicide could not be known.

Fries worth Tk 30,000 destroyed

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, June 28: Fries worth Taka 30 thousand have been destroyed in the pond of 'Bittohin Samobai Samity' of Nawda Khondoria in Mokarimpur union of Bheramara thana recently.

A written allegation said that the members of Bittohin Samobai Samity took lease of the pond belonging to Mostafa on May 7 and released fish fries worth Taka 30 thousand. They filed a case with Bheramara police station accusing two persons who poured poison in the pond and destroyed all the fries.

Uplift schemes progressing

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, June 28: The Road and Highways Department here has been implementing three schemes in three thanas at a total cost of Taka 73 lakh 21 thousand.

All the schemes have been taken up for implementation during the current financial year. According to an official source, so far 80 per cent work of all the schemes have been completed. Rest of the work is expected to be completed by the current month.

Urmi wants to study CA



Urmi with her parents. —Star photo

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, June 28: Nilufar Yasmin (Urmi) stood third in the Humanities group securing 844 marks in the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination from Jessore Board this year.

She appeared in the SSC examination from Salimunnissa Girls' High School in Kaliganj thana. She scored letter marks in Mathematics, History, Economics, Islamic religion and Agriculture Science.

She usually read for about five hours every day. Her hobby is reading books. Cricket is her favourite game. She does not like to play.

Her father Ayub Hossain is an employee of Mobarakganj Sugar Mills Ltd and mother Shamsunmahar is a teacher of a government primary school.

Urmi also obtained primary scholarship in second grade and junior scholarship in talent pool.

Three arrested

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, June 28: Three persons including two absconding accused were arrested with fire arms and ammunition from Alipur area of the town in two separate raids conducted by Kotwali police within two days.

According to police sources, on a tip-off police raided the area and arrested two accuseds Shahidul Islam and Zahid Sheikh. Police recovered a pipe-gun and two rounds of bullets from their possession recently. Police also arrested Lablu Sheikh with a country made pipe-gun and two cartridges recently.

464 uplift schemes implemented

HABIGANJ, June 28: Relief and Rehabilitation Department implemented 464 development schemes in the district under Rural Infrastructure Maintenance and Renovation Programme during the 1998-99 fiscal, reports UNB.

Officials said some 2,087 metric tons of wheat had been allocated to implement the projects, including construction and reconstruction of rural roads, mosques, religious and educational institutions. Of the schemes, 41 were implemented in Bahubal thana, 76 in Chunarughat, 47 in Lakshai, 74 in Madhabpur, 75 in Nabiganj, 71 in Baniachang, 20 in Ajmiriganj, 56 in sadar and one each in Habiganj, Shaestaganj, Madhabpur and Nabiganj paurasabhas.

Foundation stone laid

NARSINGDI, June 28: Foundation stone of the academic building of Narsingdi Government College was laid by Education Minister ASHK Sadeque on Thursday, reports BSS.

The government sanctioned Taka 54.20 lakh for construction of the building, an official source said. The function was addressed, among others, by Rajuddin Ahmed Raju MP, Principal of the college, Prof Surja Kanta Das, Deputy Commissioner Rafiqul Islam, Narsingdi District Awami League President Advocate Asaduzzaman, Narsingdi Paurasabha Chairman Abdul Matin Sarkar and Bangladesh Chhatra League President Bahadur Bepari.



BARISAL: Subrata Biswas, a promising young magician who has been performing magic shows since 1980 under the banner of Magic Miracle, enthralled the audience of all ages here in a jam-packed show arranged recently by Biswas Show-Biz Limited at the local Shilpakala Academy auditorium. —Star photo

Fund constraint hampers Tk 16 cr Gorai bridge project work

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, June 28: Fund constraint has been hampering the construction work of the well foundation bridge over the river Gorai.

Work on the Taka 16-crore project began in the month of January, 1998. Now its work is progressing at snail's pace due to fund crisis. Completion of the bridge is urgently needed in view of its location. The bridge connects Kushtia with Dhaka via Rajbari reducing its distance by 70 kilometres.

The construction firm started constructing 10 out of 14 wells. Depth of each well was 17-metre before flood. Total depth of the well was scheduled to be 30-metre which would be sunk gradually.

While the construction work was going on flood waters rushed and crossed the danger level. Flood waters threatened all the wells under construction. Two wells were washed away by the unprecedented deluge that ravaged the country for more than two months.

With the recession of flood waters the levelling work on the bridge had again been started.

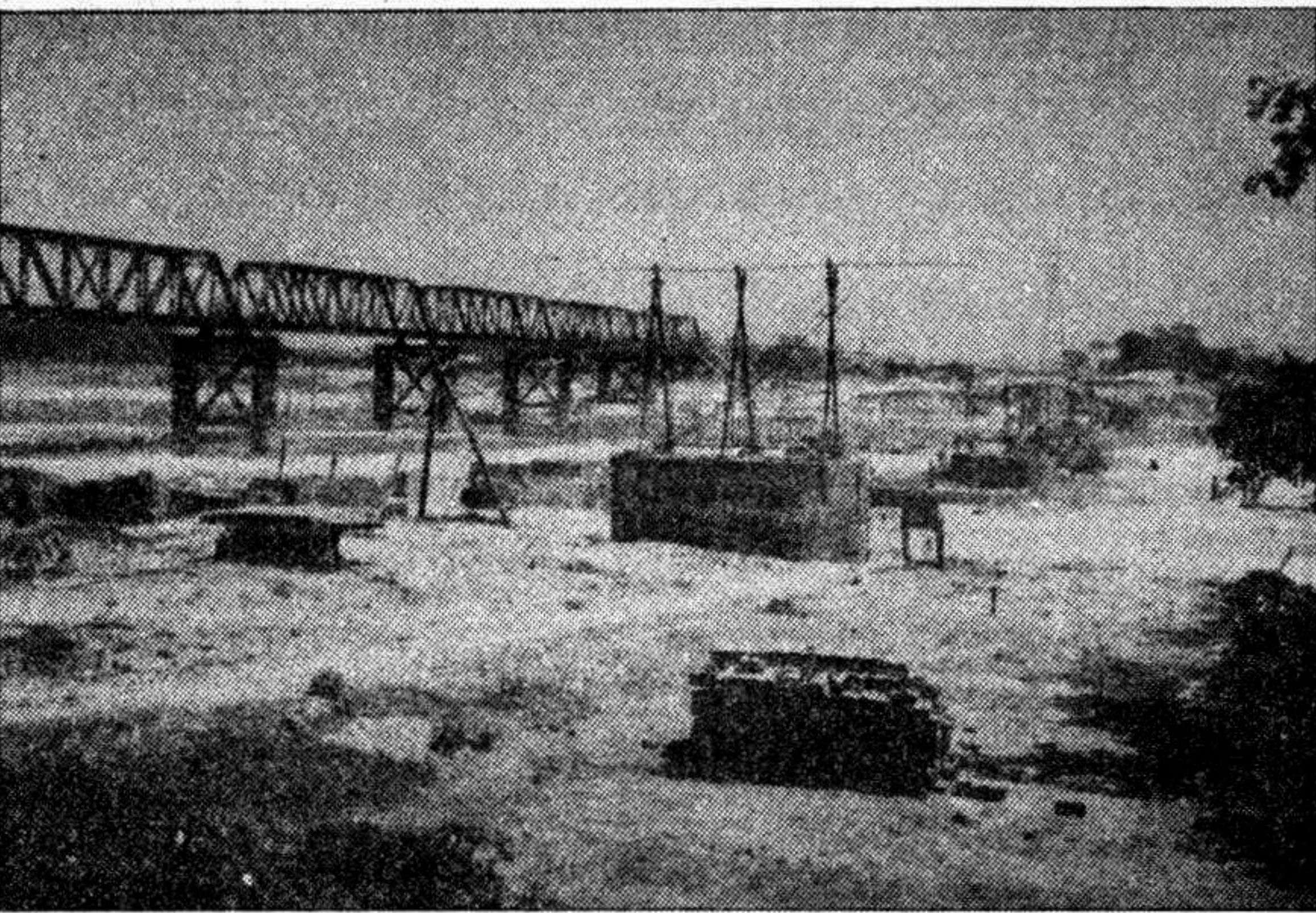
When contacted the concerned contractor told this correspondent that no fund for the bridge had yet been reached during the current fiscal year. Meanwhile, the ferry service over the river Gorai was suspended following fast recession of water of the river Gorai in the dry season. The authorities of the Roads and Highways Department invited tender for making new ghat shifting the pontoon at a suitable place and making necessary approach road for the purpose. But due to mysterious reason the ferry

service remained inoperative.

At present the travelling passengers are suffering much due to absence of ferry service. As a consequence buses and trucks have to ply via Jhenidah and Magura covering an additional distance of 70 kilometre to reach Dhaka from Kushtia now.

Local people said that due to negligence of the Executive Engineer of the Roads and Highways Department of Kushtia Division the ferry service over the river Gorai had been suspended. The department concerned did not take adequate arrangement for running the ferry service when water level of the Gorai started receding fast.

Now the water level of both the rivers Padma and Gorai has been rising fast. It is now high time to start the ferry service over the river Gorai with a view to facilitating smooth plying of transport vehicles on both sides of the river.



The bridge construction work over the river Gorai progressing at snail's pace. —Star photo

School girl shot dead by ousted BNP leader at Banaripara

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, June 28: A school girl of class three was shot dead on the spot in Banaripara thana area of the district on Friday.

According to police and eye-witnesses, Yasmin, 7, and Chand, 10, daughter and son of Nur Mohammad of Banaripara were returning home from Uttampur Government Primary School at noon.

Jalil Howlader, a local influential who is the ousted General Secretary of BNP thana unit stopped them on way. After an altercation with Yasmin over a trifle matter he suddenly opened fire which left Yasmin dead on the spot.

Later on when the local police proceeded to the spot Jalil Howlader fled the scene with his gun and an associate. Earlier Jalil tried to conceal the dead body of Yasmin, but failed. He took Chand to his house.

After a few hours police rescued Chand from Jalil's house. They recovered the gun from under a bathroom slab.

Police also seized three rounds of bullets and the gun licence from Jalil's business establishment.

But it is strange that the district police control room here got the information of the incident after six hours. Shaheen, Yasmin's brother filed a case. Police arrested Shahid.

Medicine shops doing business without licence

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, June 28: Medicine shopowners in the districts have been running their businesses without licence for many years.

The Drug Control Department, which is supposed to oversee the activities medicine shops, has failed to perform its duty properly.

The unlicensed shopowners run their businesses by paying monthly tolls ranging from Tk 200 to Tk 500 to the members of law enforcing agencies, local people alleged.

Many of the unlicensed medicine shops have been selling substandard, banned and expired medicines, posing threat to public health.

Meanwhile, banned phensidyl syrup, ganja, country made liquor and other banned drugs flood the markets of the districts, encouraging anti social activities in the district.

A section of people are doing illegal drug businesses allegedly in collaboration with some corrupt members of the law enforcing agencies.

Among the illegal drugs Indian made phensidyl cough syrup is a hot item because of its comparatively low price. Machuabazar and Barabazar areas of Netrakona town are safe haven for phensidyl syrup traders.

Loan disbursed among slum women

COMILLA, June 28: Comilla Pourashava under its slum development programme has disbursed Tk 1.20 lakh among 40 women of Shubbapur slum in the town, reports UNB.

Chairman of the Pourashava distributed the loan at a simple ceremony here on June 22.

The programme was attended, among others, by Slum Development officer Nasrudin Ahmed, organiser Omar Farooqui Tapas, Amulya Kar-maker and Kazi Nasima Akhter.

829 cases pending with courts in Gaibandha

GAIBANDHA, June 28: A total of 829 cases have piled up in the courts of seven thanas of the district in the last two months, reports UNB.

In April, 129 cases were pending in Sadar thana courts, 65 in Sadullahpur, 40 in Sundarganj, 48 in Polashbari, 99 in Gobindaganj, 35 in Saghata and 35 in Fulchhari thana.

In May, 118 cases were pending in Sadar thana, 62 in Sadullahpur, 34 in Sundarganj, 45 in Polashbari, 77 in Gobindaganj, 25 in Saghata and 17 in Fulchhari.

Many of these cases have been continuing for several years.

Another message from Jessore said: A total of 800 cases are pending with local courts and another 300 cases

awaits trial for several months just because of the viscera reports are not yet available.

According to sources, samples have to be sent to the only viscera laboratory at Mohakhali in Dhaka from where reports are sent back to the districts for disposal of cases.

Authorities here alleged that the Mohakhali laboratory takes a long time in sending the reports to the thana or district level offices.

Police and court officials said the situation would improve only when the project on setting up viscera laboratories in the divisional headquarters is implemented.

Another report from Gaibandha adds: At least 15 people were injured in separate clashes in Gobindaganj thana of the district recently.

Witnesses said the first incident ensued when some youths of Akhira Fatepur village beat up a tempo-helper for charging high fare on the highway near Kalitola police box.

Later, following the incident, the supporters of the two rival groups of Fatepur and Singzani villages locked in a fierce clash that left five people injured.

On information, police led by SP Rezaul Karim and OC Altair Rahman rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

In another incident at least 10 people were injured when two rival groups of people, equipped with lethal weapons, attacked each other. One group accused the other of assaulting a school teacher at Gopalpur village.

He pedals rickshaw when others of his age group attend schools

From Abdul Wadood

RAJSHAHI, June 28: "My mother gave birth to me in this beautiful world of light and air with immense pain. Would it be justified, say, sir, to neglect her?" asked an adolescent boy in a light but happy and wise mood bending forward his head and body to apply force on the pedals of his rickshaw to keep it running.

His name is Abul Hossain. His father, a small farmer had remarried a woman and ultimately divorced his mother about a year ago. He and his two younger sisters had also been driven away along with their undone mother. "We have taken shelter in my maternal uncle's house, but we have to earn our own living costs," the boy said.

It was a hot noon. The sun was shining with its scorching rays. We were profusely sweating and gasping for fresh and cool air, being exhausted after a walk of about half a mile.

Suddenly we saw a rickshaw standing beside the road under the shadow of a mango tree. Rushing to the spot we saw an adolescent boy sleeping on the rickshaw in a peculiar position. His head was resting on the driving seat and the buttock was kept on the passenger seat hanging the legs onto the back of the rickshaw.

We took two photographs and then awoke him.

"What's the matter?" he said at first, but soon got shy seeing us and got down from the rickshaw we hired him to reach our destination.

"I was tired and the road was almost deserted," he said to explain the reason of his sleeping.

His mother used to work in the houses of wealthy persons of the village. But so little income could not afford them even meal of two times a day. So Abul Hossain left his mother and sister in the village of Adhipur in Govindaganj thana of Gaibandha district.

"I have come here with a man of the same village who pulls rickshaw in Rajshahi city for many years," said Abul Hossain.

The man whom he called maternal uncle managed a rickshaw for him.

"This (pulling rickshaw) is a good job, though troublesome," he said, "because it gives a good earning."

Abul Hossain earns an average amount of Taka 70 each day. He has to pay Taka 16 to the owner of the rickshaw. He

eats bread made of Maslikalai in the roadside hotels under the open sky in the morning and noon that costs about Taka 15. "I eat rice only at night time in such Italian hotels at a cost of about Taka 10," he said.

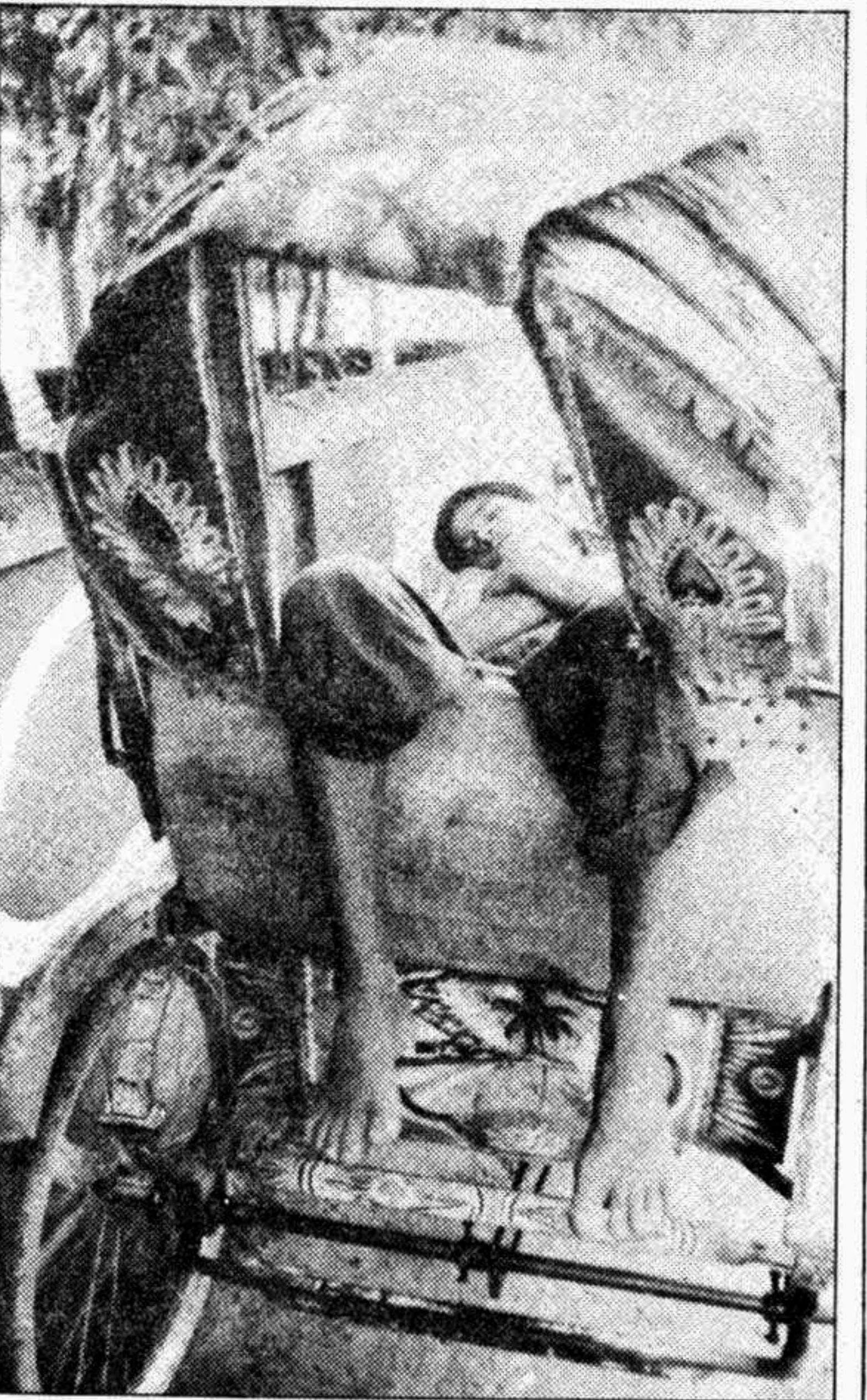
The boy sleeps on the platform of Rajshahi Railway Station along with many other people paying Tk 10 per month to the Railway people or musclemen whose identity is not known to him.

He sends money to his mother through acquainted

people. "I have sent a total of Taka 1,350 in the last four months to my mother", Abul

said and added that he kept some money in his hand for emergency purposes.

Hundreds of boys of school age are now seen pulling rickshaws in Rajshahi city whose life-stories are almost the same. They have become victims of poverty and social injustice, but none is there to look after them.



Abul Hossain taking rest following a hard day's labour on his rickshaw. —Star photo

Four unnatural deaths in Gazipur dist

GAZIPUR, June 28: Four unnatural death incidents have been reported from different areas, reports UNB.

The decomposed body of an unidentified young man of about 25 years of age was recovered last week from Chandra forest area.

Police said the youth was apparently murdered and left hanging on tree.

Another unidentified young man was left in an unconscious state at the Sadar Hospital last week. The youth died shortly afterwards, hospital and Joydevpur thana police sources said.

Ansar Havelier Jahirul Islam, 35, hanged himself in his house at the Ansar Academy premises. The reason of his suicide could not be ascertained.

Housewife Roushan, 20, allegedly committed suicide by taking poison in her house. She was the wife of Azizul Huq of Kewa village in Sreepur thana.

She was taken to the Sreepur thana Sadar Hospital, but the doctors declared her dead. The reason was not stated.

Another report from Joydevpur adds: A young man allegedly committed suicide by taking poison at Pali village in Sadar thana being frustrated by his father's refusal of his marriage proposal.

Police said Ferdous (20) killed himself on Saturday when his father Azizur Rahman said he could not agree to the marriage proposal because Ferdous was not yet established in life.

He was rushed to a quack but it was too late. A case was registered with the Sadar thana.

Report from Lalmonirhat adds: Police recovered a dead body of a newly married girl from a house at Boonchoki village in Aditmari thana of Lalmonirhat.

Police said the body of Sumitra Rani, 17, bore several marks of injury. The in-laws including the deceased's husband Santosh went into hiding after the incident.

The body was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy.

The investigating officer said Sumitra, daughter of Bangtu Barmon of Ghongagach village in Kaliganj thana, was married to Santosh against her will one year back. Since then she was leading an unhappy conjugal life.

Police suspected that she was tortured to death when her premarital affair with a young man came to light.

Another report from Sirajganj says: A 10-year-old boy allegedly committed suicide by taking poison at Sharaichati village of sadar thana of Sirajganj district on Sunday.

Police and family sources said mentally retarded boy Yunus Ali, a student of class four and son of Akbar Ali took poison in the evening. He died on way to hospital.

The reason behind the suicide could not be known. A UD case was filed with the police.

'Education board to be set up soon in Sylhet'

CHITTAGONG, June 28: Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad Humayun Rashid Chowdhury said here on Saturday that an education board would soon be established in Sylhet, reports BSS.

Addressing the inaugural function of Jalalabad Association at Pahartali in Chittagong, the Speaker said the literacy rate in Sylhet division is the lowest in comparison to other divisions and as such major steps have been taken to make the division free from the curse of illiteracy by the year 2005.

Presided over by the association president A I Chowdhury, the inaugural function was addressed, among others, by Chittagong City Mayor A B M Mahiuddin Chowdhury, Mohammad Farid Gazi, MP, Sultan M Mansur Ahmed, Presi-

dent of Jalalabad Association, Dhaka, Dr Ayubur Rahman, General Secretary, Ganyum Chowdhury and General Secretary of Chittagong chapter Abdul Ghani.

Jalalabad Association is a welfare organisation of Sylhetis staying in Chittagong.

The speaker said steps have been taken to develop communications system of Sylhet by constructing roads, culverts and bridges. The major development work accomplished in greater Sylhet during the three year tenure of the present government could not be done during the last 21 years of different governments, he added.

Commending the activities of Jalalabad Association he said the association has opened branches abroad to look after the interest of the Sylhetis.



BRAHMANBARIA: Local poura chairman Md Helaluddin recently inaugurated a cleanliness campaign organised by ATN, a non-governmental organisation at Ward Number 4 of the pourasabha. —Star photo

16 commit suicide in Gaibandha, B'baria

by Staff Correspondent

A total of 16 people committed suicide in Gaibandha and Brahmanbaria districts recently.

Our Gaibandha correspondent reports: A total 13 people committed suicide in the last two weeks.

One Jahanara Bewa, 38, of village Palanpara and Azet Ali, 25, of village Mohishbani under Sadullahpur thana committed suicide by taking pesticide.

Sanower, 20, of village Taraf Kanupur under Gobindaganj thana killed himself by taking pesticide.

Ranjit, 24, of village Refayepur under Gaibandha sadar thana committed suicide after sustaining loss of Tk 40 in gambling board. The victim came out of his home with the amount for shopping purpose.

One Amirul Islam, 26, of village Khamar Deshla and another house wife Marjina Begum, 22, of village Chalk Salaipur under Sadullahpur thana committed suicide by taking pesticide after being frustrated over family disputes.

Emdadul Huq, 24, of village Ranchandrapur under Gaibandha sadar thana committed suicide by taking pesticide. However, the body was buried without conducting autopsy.

Shah Alam, 30, of village Hatbari under Saghata thana committed suicide after drinking pesticide. The reason behind the suicide could not be known.

A SSC examinee Shewlee Begum of village Kholahati under Gaibandha sadar thana committed suicide by hanging herself after being failed in the examination.

One Marjina Begum, 30, of village Depur under Gobindaganj thana committed suicide after drinking pesticide. She was a mad woman.

Another Akber Ali, 22, of village Ballamjhar under Gaibandha sadar thana killed himself after taking pesticide.

Abdul Latif, a deed writer, of Gaibandha Registrar Office of village Gopalpur under Gaibandha sadar thana committed suicide by taking pesticide following long standing family dispute.

One Lucky Khatun, 18, of village Parbatipur under Gobindaganj thana committed suicide by taking pesticide over a love affair.

Our Brahmanbaria correspondent adds: Three people committed suicide in three separate places in the district on the same day recently.

According to hospital sources, one Nasima Begum, 20, wife of Jakir Hussain of village Mirjarchar, committed suicide by hanging herself at her father's house at village Sheetaur under Nabiganj thana of the district.

It is reported that she was married to Jakir Hussain three years ago but he had not given birth to any child. This frustration can be the reason behind her suicide, family members said.

After receiving information, police recovered the body and it was sent to Brahmanbaria Modern Hospital for autopsy. An UD case was filed with Nabiganj police this connection.

On the same day one Ratna Begum, 18, wife of Md Khalil Mia of village Raj Ballab of Bayek union under Kasba thana of the district committed suicide by taking poison. It is learnt that her family fued was the main cause behind the suicide. The autopsy of the body was done at Brahmanbaria Modern Hospital on June.

An unnatural death case was filed at Kasba police in this connection.

On the other hand, an unidentified old man aged between 60 to 62 years committed suicide by throwing himself before a running mail train near Akhaura railway junction.