

News snaps

Attack on Chandpur newsman

CHANDPUR, Aug 3: A journalist of local daily "Chandpur Kancha" suffered serious injuries as he came under attack by some miscreants in the town on Friday, reports UNB. A gang of miscreants attacked Fakhru Alam Apu, a staff reporter of the daily, with lethal weapons when he went to collect news from Palpara Met Office in the evening. Apu was admitted to Chandpur Sadar Hospital with multiple fractures on his hands and legs, hospital sources said.

Triennial council of scouts

SYEDPUR, Aug 3: The triennial council meeting of Bangladesh Boy Scouts, Syedpur railway district was held last week at the local Scouts Bhavan, reports BSS. Syedpur district scouts president M Osman Amin presided over the meeting. M A Rahim, Additional General Manger (RS), Bangladesh Railway attended the meeting as the chief guest. Plantation of saplings of different trees and release of fish fries were held on the occasion.

Criminal arrested

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Aug 3: One young person was caught red-handed when he tried to flee with money from the bank counter of Agrani Bank, bus stand branch recently. He was handed over to police later on. He confessed that he hails from Khulna and is engaged with this type of crime in various places. Recently two persons were caught from Khoksa bank counter and he is one of their party men. His name is Babu 20.

ROK scientist meets BAU VC

From Our Correspondent

AGRI-VARSITY (Mymensingh), Aug 3: Scientist of international repute Prof Chan Uing Joo of Chonbuk National University, South Korea called on Vice-Chancellor Prof Muhammed Hussain in the Bangladesh Agricultural University campus. Prof Joo who is currently visiting Bangladesh as head of the youth corps to Bangladesh of the Pacific Asia Society alongwith 21 delegates held detailed discussions with the BAU Vice-Chancellor in respect of higher education, research, extension and training. They discussed about the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between BAU and Chonbuk National University in the near future to strengthen academic relationship.

Training programme on Child rights

NARSINGDI, Aug 3: A three-day training programme on Child rights for local district level officers and journalists began at the local curcuit house on Saturday.

UNICEF, Bangladesh in collaboration with Narsingdi district administration organised the programme. Science and Technology Minister Lt Gen (ret'd) Mohammad Nuruddin Khan inaugurated the programme. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rafiqul Islam, police super Mokhlesur Rahman, ADC (Rev) Bejoy Kanti Sarkar, ADC (Gen) Azimur Rahman, among other district level officers, journalists and TNOs took part there.

Mystery shrouds over death of man

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Aug 3: Mystery shrouds over the death of Musa Mia, 30, of village Admapur in Austagram thana. His body was found hanging with the ceiling in his house on July 20. Family sources said, Musa quarrelled with his mother and sister on trivial matter the previous day. He sent his wife to his father-in-law's house in the afternoon. He went to sleep after having his meal at night. Police said, the body bore some marks of torture. Later on his body was sent to the morgue of Kishoreganj sadar hospital where the post-mortem was performed by a medical board.

Installation ceremony

NARSINGDI, Aug 3: The installation ceremony of newly elected executives of Hatirdia Rajiuddin Degree College Students Union and reception to first year students was held in the college premises recently, reports BSS. Science and Technology minister Lt Gen (ret'd) Mohammad Noor Uddin Khan was present as the chief guest, while principal of the college Prof Zahirul Hoque presided over the function. The chief guest administered the oath taking ceremony and congratulated the first year students.

BKB loan disbursed

SHEPUR, Aug 3: Bangladesh Krishi Bank disbursed loan totaling Tk 9.12 crore in the district during the fiscal 1998-99 against the target of Tk 22.07 crore, reports UNB. Officials said BKB distributed the loan among 29,067 farmers through its 10 branches in the district. Of the loan, Tk 16.32 crore were sanctioned for crop farming while Tk 2 crore for livestock, Tk 1.16 lakh for fisheries, Tk 29.29 lakh for irrigation, Tk 2.54 crore as current capital and Tk 36.51 lakh for socio-economic development and Tk 12.50 lakh for agro-based industrial sectors and the rest for other purposes.

Worker succumbs to injuries

JOYPUHAT, Aug 3: A construction worker was killed and another critically injured when they came in touch of a live wire in an under-construction mosque at village Chakbarkat in the sadar thana, reports UNB. They were rushed to General Hospital where Shakhawat succumbed to his injuries. The condition of Jamiluddin was stated to be critical.

Farm credit distributed

RAJBARI, Aug 3: Bangladesh Krishi Bank distributed Tk 21.51 crore as farm credit in the district during the preceding fiscal, reports UNB. Officials said 19,422 farmers in Sadar, Goalunda, Pangsha and Baliakandi thanas received the bank loan. Of the amount, Tk 16,36,71,000 were given for crop farming while Tk 5,14,47,000 for purchasing agri-inputs. Meanwhile, the bank realised loan to the tune of Tk 13.37 crore from 10,890 farmers during the period.

Land dev tax realised

SHERPUR, Aug 3: Land development tax amounting to Tk 41.09 lakh was realised from government and general sectors of the district in the fiscal 1998-99, reports UNB. Of the amount, Tk 35.39 lakh were realised from general sector while Tk 5.70 from government organisations against the target of Tk 54.67, showing 75.05 per cent recovery rate, officials said.

Valuables looted

KHULNA, Aug 3: Highway robbers in the guise of passengers boarded a bus and looted the valuables of passengers near New Market area here on Sunday morning, reports UNB. Police sources said a band of 7-8 road pirates boarded the Kushtia-bound bus and swooped on the passengers as soon as the bus left the Ferryghat crossing. The robbers snatched cash and valuables worth about Tk 50,000 from the passengers.

Fisheries Week observed

SATKHIRA, Aug 3: Fisheries Week '99 sponsored by the Fisheries Department was observed in the district headquarters and different thanas of the district on July 25-31, reports BSS. A discussion on fish culture was held on the occasion in Assasuni Thana Parishad auditorium Dr Mokhlesur Rahman MP, president of Assasuni Thana Awami League attended the function as the chief guest. Assasuni Thana Nirbahi Officer Akhtaruzzaman Mohammad Mostafa Kamal presided over the function.

BRDB loan disbursed

RAJBARI, Aug 3: As part of the government's poverty alleviation programme, Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) disbursed Tk 49.64 crore as loan in five districts of greater Faridpur during the last fiscal, reports UNB. The district-wise breakup of the loan: Tk 13,79,89,000 in Faridpur, Tk 9,24,89,000 in Gopalganj, Tk 10,93,18,000 in Madaripur, Tk 9,75,86,000 in Shariatpur and Tk 5,90,19,000 in Rajbari. Officials said 77,114 poor people, including women, of the districts received the loan. BRDB provided the loan for self-employment generating programmes like crop farming, food processing, rural transport, nursery, small cottage and pottery industries and fish farming.

Telephone exchange work

HABIGANJ, Aug 3: Work on the installation of a 1,200 line digital telephone exchange here is progressing fast under the "Digital Exchanges in 10 District Headquarters Project," reports UNB. The local Telegraph and Telephone (T&T) sources said 70 per cent work of the switch room, including installation of the main distribution fan, air-conditioner, two computers and battery, has already been completed.

Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj border areas Safe routes of arms smuggling

From Abdul Wadood

RAJSHAHI, Aug 3: Several organised groups are smuggling arms from India through various bordering routes of Rajshahi and Chapai Nawabganj districts.

Police sources said they are well-informed of the incidents of arms smuggling, but they are yet to take any special measure to control it.

"Smuggling of arms from India is not a new phenomenon," a Rajshahi metropolitan police official said. "Though the smuggling has increased in the recent days, it has been within the limit till now." He further informed that the smuggled arms were of common types like revolver, pistol, cut rifle, shot gun, shutter gun, bullets and ingredients of bombs.

Arms are, however, very uncommon thing in the seizure lists of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR). "We read about arms smuggling in the newspapers, but we cannot trace it actually," said a BDR official, on condition of anonymity.

But, police also said, many of the accuseds arrested so far

in connection with arms case informed that they had collected arms from India.

In September last year one young man with two Indian-made pistols and several rounds of bullets was arrested from Rajshahi bus terminal. In the same month, another young man with two Indian-made air-rifles was nabbed by the BDR personnel from Premtoli bordering area of Godagari thana.

On last January 11, two gun runners with 11 pistols and several rounds of bullets were arrested from a city hotel near Rajshahi bus terminal. The arrested persons confessed that they had brought the arms from India through Shibganj bordering area in Chapainawabganj.

Dhaka police arrested one woman from Rajshahi at Gabtoli bus terminal with five revolvers and 10 rounds of live bullets on May 19 last. She also confessed that the arms had been smuggled in from India.

Besides these notable incidents, police recovered arms and ammunition every month

in the recent past in Rajshahi. Shibganj of Chapainawabganj and Godagari of Rajshahi are usually being used as the safe routes of arms smugglers.

A source of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police said, Shibganj and Godagari bordering areas are located in such a position that smugglers can easily evade the vigilance of the law-enforcing agency members.

From Chapainawabganj to Godagari, the bordering areas are surrounded by the Padma and the Mohananda which have crisscrossed each other at Sultanganj of Godagari. Due to lack of adequate number of speed boats and manpower the law enforcing agencies cannot effectively guard the border areas. This is why the smugglers use the riverine routes for smuggling in general, sources said.

On the other hand, the Shibganj bordering areas are surrounded by about 20 square kilometres of Babla forest and sand dunes. The smugglers can easily conceal themselves in-

side the thick forest. Even at day time, the smugglers cross the borders safely without any hindrance.

Besides, most of the people residing in the bordering areas have relatives across the borders whom they visit every now and then. Even for daily shopping, people of the bordering areas go to the neighbouring huts and bazaars on both sides of the border.

The 'ghatials' (bidders of the bordering routes and ghats) manage the administration and the law enforcing agency members by allegedly paying kickbacks to keep them mum. The 'ghatials' arrange easy trespassing of hundreds of people day and night across the border in exchange of 'ghat fees'.

Such an opportunity of easy and safe passage across the border helps the arms smugglers much in conducting their illegal trading.

Smuggled arms are mostly used by the cadres of political parties, organised gangs of dacoits and terrorists.

Three big cracks developed on CIP dam at Haimchar

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Aug 3: Erosion has been threatening Taka 100 crore Chandpur Irrigation Project (CIP) at Tashkhand Kandi point in Haimchar thana on Monday.

Three big cracks have developed on the embankment.

As a result 100 metres area of the dam have been devoured on Monday. If the embankment is eroded this was then about 12 lakh people living inside the project area consisting of six thanas of Chandpur and Laxmipur will be rendered homeless. Besides, 50 thousand hectares area with standing crops will be inundated.

Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) officials have been working round the clock to save the embankment by placing blocks in the affected area.

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) and the Superintendent of Police (SP) along with journal-

ists visited the affected area on Monday.

Meanwhile, erosion of the river Meghna is continuing in the area alarmingly till filling of this report on Monday.

UNB reports: Worried at the situation local leaders of the opposition withdrew the 30-hour hartal Monday-Tuesday.

Local leaders of Awami League visited the spot. The district administration sent message to the ministries concerned to take immediate steps to protect the dam.

A report from Rajshahi says: With sharp rise of water level, the mighty Padma became furious devouring some 200 houses alongside its bank in the district.

The river marked a rise by 37 cm in last 24 hours till 9 am on Monday while 87 cm in last 48 hours, said local WDB officials.

The erosion by the river Padma intensified along its 50

km bank from Godagari to Chargaat.

City dwellers have become frightened with the continuous rise of water level. The river is just 83 cm below the danger mark.

BSS from Bheramara says, the overall flood situation in Kushtia district has improved following fall of water level in the Padma and the Gorai.

The Padma is now flowing below the danger mark at Hardinge Bridge point and the Gorai at Gorai Railway Bridge Point.

Four unions under Daulatpur thana have been affected due to erosion by the Padma. The unions are Philpinagar, Marisha, Chilmari and Bazumara.

Vast agricultural, residential and commercial lands have been eroded and a large number of people became shelterless by the erosion in these unions.

Natore DC sued

From Anwar Ali

NATORE, Aug 3: A retired government official and advocate Moniruzzaman lodged a case against the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Natore, M Ishaq Bhuiyan in the Senior Special Judge's court on Thursday for demanding bribe.

District and Sessions Judge Md Anwar Hossain asked the Superintendent of Police (SP) of Natore, Abdul Bari Mia to investigate into the matter and report within August 24, 99.

Complainant advocate Moniruzzaman alleged that the DC had called him and demanded a bribe of Taka 50,000, promising, in exchange, prompt cooperation from the district administration for collecting his arrear bills of Taka 4,67,270.

It is to be mentioned here, Moniruzzaman, was a government official in Bagatipara thana. He was suspended from service on June 6, 1994. He joined the service on November 14, 1995 after two verdicts of the administrative tribunal in his favour. He, however, went on retirement willingly on the very next day of his joining.

Moniruzzaman is legally entitled to get the sum of Taka 4,67,270 as his arrear payments and other allowances.

Eight BRDB loan defaulters arrested

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Aug 3: Eight women farmers who were allegedly loan defaulters of Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) were arrested by police from a village under Kathalia thana of Jhalakati district in the early hours of Friday.

Arrested women are: Aparna Rani, 27, Urmi Rani, 24, Anita Rani, 29, Sefali Rani, 31, Tulsi Rani, 30, Susala Rani, 30, Sumati Rani, 33, and Sunita Rani, 28.

According to police, a case was lodged for realising the outstanding loan. Police arrested them from Binapani village of Kathalia after issuance of a warrant of arrest from the concerned court. They were produced to the court the next day.

Three more outlaws surrender

From Staff Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Aug 3: Three outlawed party members surrendered with two fire arms and eight rounds of life cartridges to Satkhira Sadar thana police on Friday, reports BSS.

Police sources said those who surrendered were Tapan Sarkar 35, and Bhim Chandra, 24 of village Goalpota and Daud Ali, 32, of village Mashkhola under Sadar thana. They surrendered to the Officer-in-charge of the thana Mohammad Ishaq and deposited two shutter guns and eight rounds of cartridges.

So far 14 members of the outlawed party surrendered to the law enforcing agencies in the seven thanas of the district. They deposited four shutter guns, two pipe guns, 21 rounds of ammunitions, one Chinese axe and one knife, police said.

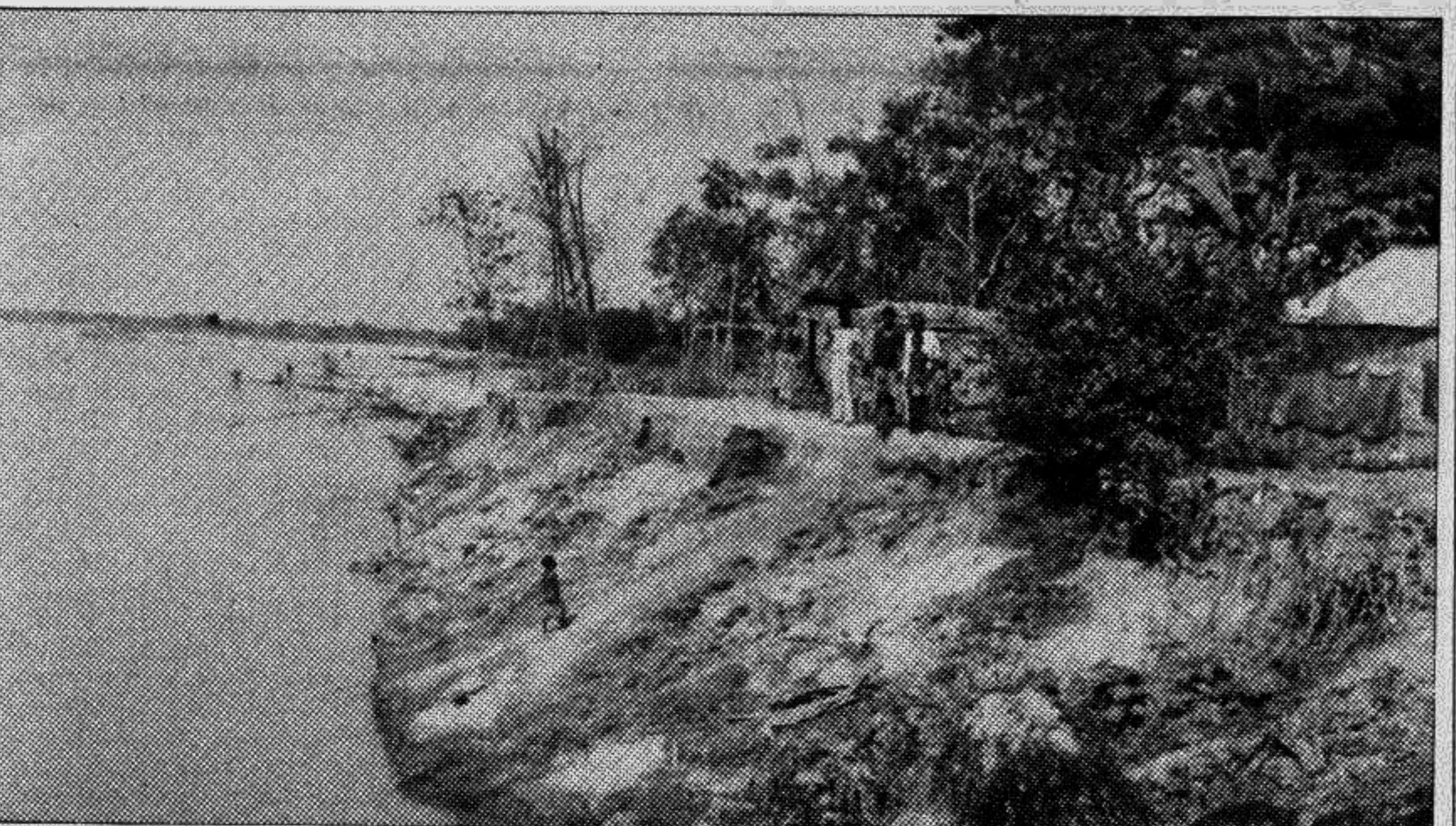
Two killed in Natore road accident

From Anwar Ali

NATORE, Aug 3: At least two persons were killed and 30 others injured, eight of them seriously, in a road accident near Dattapara area in Sadar thana on Saturday morning.

Rafiqul Islam 45, of Shingra thana and Mohammad Ali, 40 of Sadar thana were killed on the spot when a Natore bound inter-district bus coming from Gurudaspur thana fell into a roadside ditch near Dattapara.

The eight seriously injured persons are, Hazrat Ali, 48, Abdul Malek, 45, Mozaffar, 26, Abdus Salam-1, 26, Rafiqul, 25, Ashraf, 30, Abdus Salam-2, 28, and Alal, 25. They were admitted to Rajshahi Medical college Hospital (RMCH) and Natore Sadar Hospital. Others were given first aid at different clinics.



Living in a floodplain: Hundreds of families have become homeless due to Brahmaputra river's erosion in Mymensingh. —Star photo

Pest-attack on 6,000 hectares of Aus crops in S-dists

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Aug 3: A vast tract of land of Aus paddy has been attacked with 'majra' and 'pamri' pests in recent time.

Farmers said, crops of not less than ten crore taka are feared to be damaged and lost if the pest attack cannot be controlled soon in the southern districts.

Besides, Agriculture Extension Department sources said, nearly six thousand hectares of cropland have been attacked by 'pamri' and 'majra' pests in these districts.

Meanwhile, pests were eradicated from nearly three thousand hectares of cropland. But the farmers refused this statistics and statements of

AED, saying that pests like 'pamri' and 'majra' had attacked on over four hundred hectares and 130 hectares of cropland respectively in Barisal district only during this period.

The worst affected thana area is Bakerganj where the agriculture sector may incur a huge loss in this year.

In Bhola, 'pamri' pests attacked the crop fields of nearly 2,500 thousand hectares. Crops on about one thousand hectares of land have already been damaged, farmers alleged.

In Patuakhali, 'pamri' and 'majra' have damaged crops on 12 hundred and two hundred hectares of croplands respectively, its is learnt. In Jha-

lakati over one hundred hectares and in Pirojpur nearly 50 hectares of cropland have been attacked by pests.

Farmers of different places alleged that this time the field workers of agriculture department are seldom found in the pest affected areas.

Different sources pointed out that some areas of the vast Sundarbans have already been submerged by onrush of flood waters. Pests of various kinds are taking refuge in the southern districts in flocks.

According to a source of AED, to control 'pamri' attack on the croplands nearly 20 metric tons of wheat have been allocated.

Housewife killed by husband

From Staff Correspondent

JHALAKATI, Aug 3: A young housewife of Sorol village in Nalchhiti thana was allegedly killed by her husband for dowry on Sunday, reports UNB.

Police said Nazma, 25, daughter of late Fazle Ali of Rajpasha village, was beaten to death by her husband Belal Hossain who used to press her for Tk 10,000 as dowry. Later on Belal poured poison into Nazma's mouth to prove the killing as suicide.

Quoting villagers, police said Belal frequently used to quarrel with Nazma and beat her for bringing dowry from her mother since their wedlock a few years back.

Police arrested Belal's mother on Monday following a case filed by Nazma's mother against five people.

Separate incidents claim three lives

By Staff Correspondent

Three persons were killed in separate incidents in Noakhali and Mymensingh on Sunday.

UNB from Noakhali reports: Two people were killed and 12 others critically injured in a traffic mishap at Contractorpol on Noakhali-Choumuhuni road on Sunday.

Witnesses said the mishap took place when a truck rammmed into a tempo leaving the tempo passenger Nurul Islam, 34, and another unidentified man dead.

Five of the injured were admitted to General Hospital.

Another report from Mymensingh says: A college student allegedly committed suicide under the wheels of a train in the town on Sunday night. Railway Police said Sanker

Kumar Bhadra, 20, a first year student of Accounting Department of Ananda Mohan College, was run over by the inter-city 'Ekata Express' near Sankipara level crossing at about 8:30 pm. They recovered the body at midnight.

The victim hailed from Nilkhiya village of Boxiganj thana in Jamalpur district was living at a student mess at Sankipara.

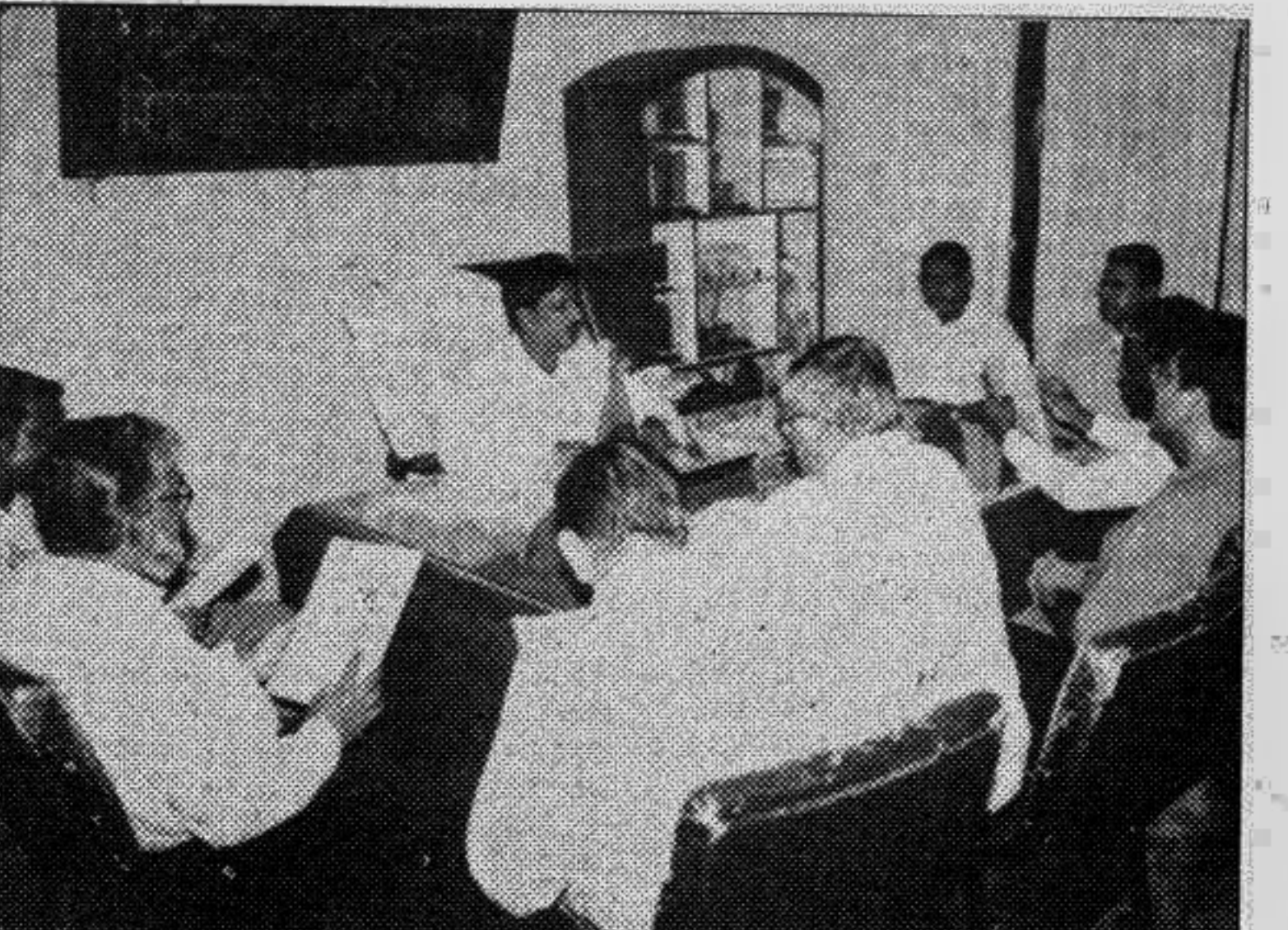
His roommates told police that Sanker left the room at about 8pm saying that was his last night.

The cause behind the suicide could not be ascertained. After autopsy, police handed over Sanker's body to his relatives.

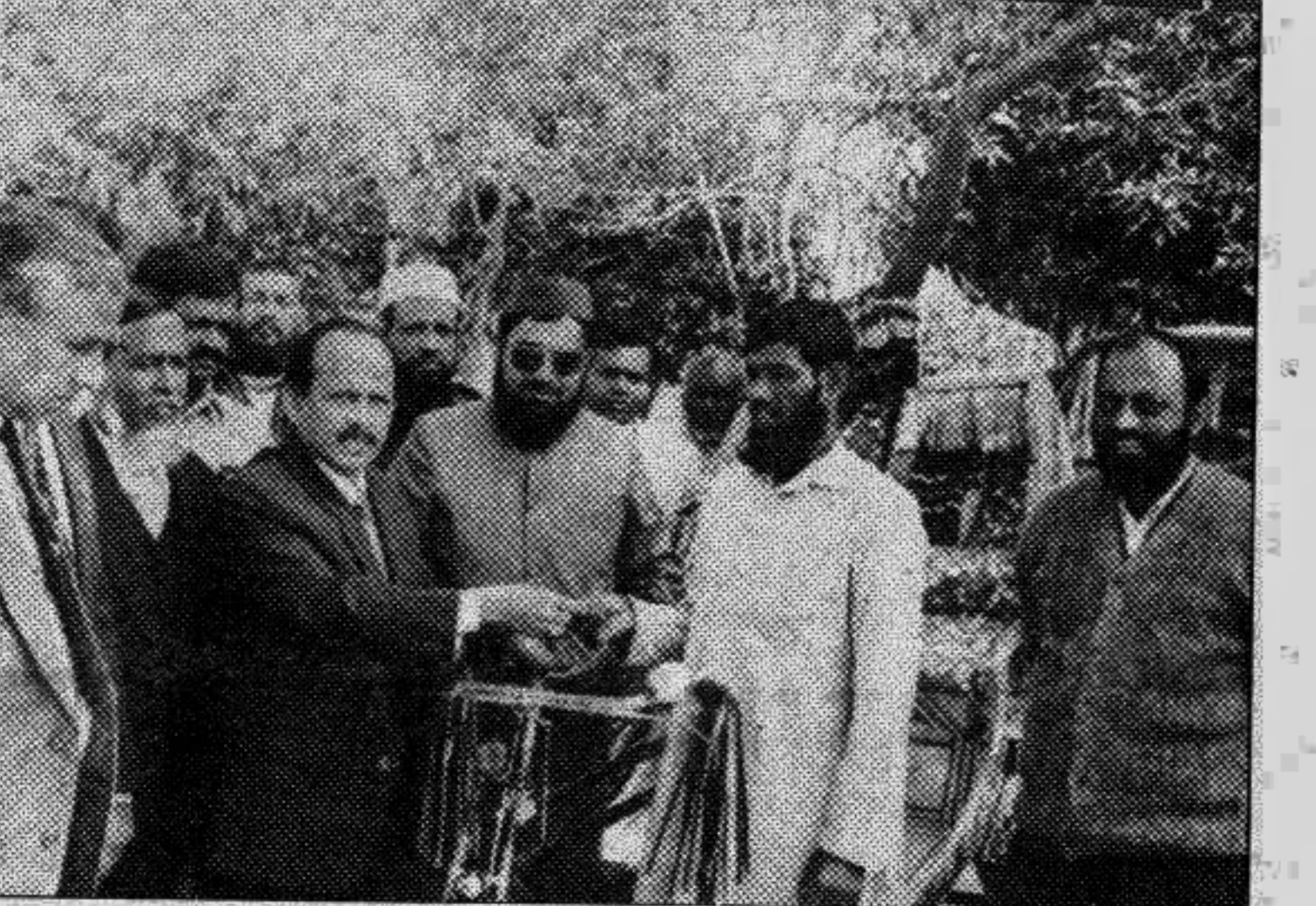
Events of districts in picture



Folk menace: Ministry of health and family welfare and Folklore research institute arranged a seminar in Kushtia recently on "Arsenic Contamination and Mass Awareness". —Star photo



Local power: Mayor of Rajshahi city corporation Mizanur Rahman Minu meeting with a team from the Kuwait Fund for Economic Development who will work in the city's power sector. —Star photo



Lending a helping hand: Islamic Foundation, Natore distributing new rickshaws among poor people, as part of its welfare programme recently. —Star photo



Prof Abul Fazal Huq, treasurer of Rajshahi University placing the university budget recently. —Star photo



Mir Shahabuddin, DG of social services distributing interest free loan to a rural woman of Bishnupur village in Saikupa thana of Jhenidah. —Star photo