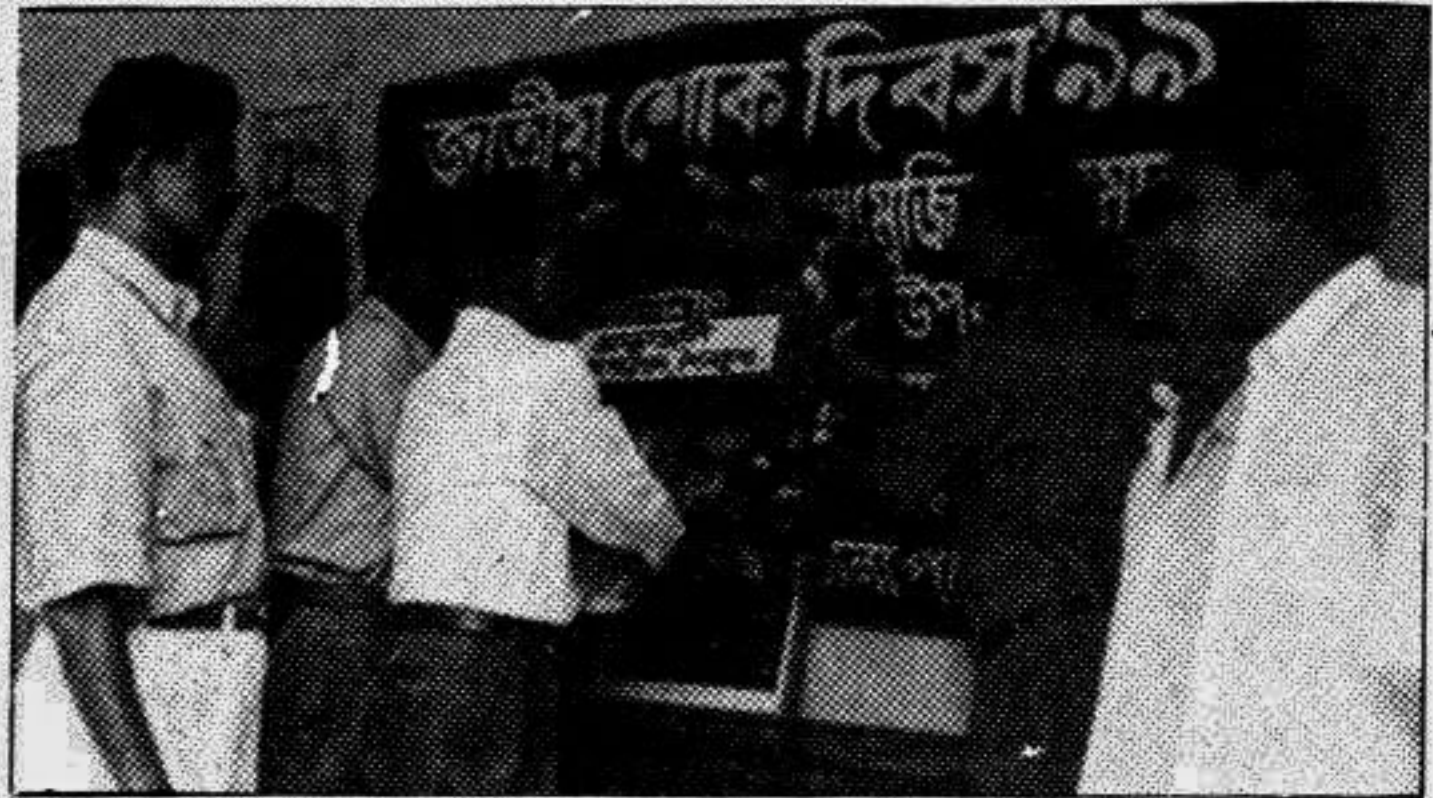


News snaps



Tributes to Bangabandhu: Golam Mortuza, Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) of Sailkupa placing floral wreath at the portrait of Bangabandhu on the National Mourning Day. — Star photo

Training on bio-gas

RANGPUR, Aug 22: A two-day training programme on bio-gas and natural fertiliser concluded at the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) office here on Thursday, reports UNB.

A total of 30 thana-level LGED engineers from Rangpur and Dinajpur districts took part in the training programme. ADC H M Mahfuzur Rahman inaugurated the training course on Wednesday. DAE Deputy Director M Mokhesur Rahman, TNO Namita Halder, Deputy Project Director of Rural Development Project-21 Motiar Rahman and local LGED Executive Director Makbul Hossain addressed the inaugural function.

Indian onions seized

MANIKGANJ, Aug 22: Police seized Indian onions worth about Tk 20 lakh from a night coach and a truck at Manikganj bus stand on Dhaka-Aricha highway on Wednesday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, police halted a truck at the bus terminal and seized 21,370 kgs of onion smuggled from India. Later, they seized 13 sacks of Indian onion from the roof of a Dhaka-bound night coach from Prakpur. Four people were arrested in this connection.

Hospitals lack equipment

BARISAL, Aug 22: Medical treatment, particularly X-ray examinations, are seriously being hampered in various hospitals for lack of X-ray films and other equipment, reports UNB.

Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital ran out of stock of X-ray films nearly one month back and steps are yet to be taken to supply films to the hospital. Poor patients, who used to get free X-ray examination facility in government hospitals and thana health complexes, are now forced to go to high-charging private laboratories. When asked Dr Ramesh Chandra of the Barisal Medical College Hospital acknowledged that there was a short supply of X-ray films. He hoped that the situation would become normal within a week.

9 LGED projects implemented

CHUADANGA, Aug 22: The local Government Engineering Department (LGED) implemented nine projects in four thanas under its construction and reconstruction of rural infrastructures on priority basis including those damaged by flood scheme, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the government sanctioned Taka 49,69,658 for implementation of the projects in the last fiscal year. Six projects were executed in Chuadanga sadar thana and one each in Alamdanga, Damurhuda and Jibannagar thanas. The projects included development and reconstruction of roads by carpeting sealcoat.

Dacoity committed

SATKHIRA, Aug 22: A dacoity was committed in the house of Monimohan Master of village Banitola in Assasuni thana recently, reports BSS.

Police sources said, about 14/15 armed dacoits stormed into the house of Monimohan Master at the dead of night. The dacoits looted cash and other valuables on gunpoint from the house. A case was filed with Assasuni thana in this respect. Police also visited the spot.

Gunmen kidnap businessman

MYMENSINGH, Aug 22: Gunmen kidnaped a businessman from his house at Dhara Bazar in Halua Ghat thana early Tuesday, reports UNB.

Police said the kidnapers broke into the house of Rabi Mohon Pal, 60, at about 2 am and picked up him at gunpoint. They, however, left behind a pipegun when the house inmates cried out for help. A case was filed.

Two young men arrested

BOGRA, Aug 22: Bogra police arrested two young men with a country made point 22 bore revolver at midnight recently, reports BSS.

The arrested youngmen were identified as Khalil and Rubel of Bogra town. Police sources said, Rubel and Khalil were arrested from Yakubia Girls High School area. Police recovered a loaded revolver from Khalil when he was searched.

Law & order reviewed

MYMENSINGH, Aug 22: The monthly law and order meeting was held in the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner on Thursday, reports BSS.

Deputy commissioner Md. Rafiqul Islam presided over the meeting. The meeting was attended among others by Advocate Moslemuddin MP, Police Super Shah Alam Sikder, Additional District Magistrate Manir Hossain Miah, Pouroshava chairman Advocate Mahmud Al-Noor Tareq, Public Prosecutor Advocate Zahidul Haq, Bar Association president Advocate Wazedul Islam and other district and thana level officer. The overall law and order situation was reviewed in the meeting and concerned officials have been asked to take strong measures to curb anti-social activities.

2 box culverts under construction

TANGAIL, Aug 22: Roads and Highways Department, Tangail is constructing two box culverts on Tangail-Madhapur road at a total cost of Taka 23,79,578/- in this year, reports BSS.

Official sources said, the two culverts are being constructed in 12 and 13 kilometre of the road. The work will be done within two months.

Jewellery shops looted

BAGERHAT, Aug 22: Thieves plundered two jewellery shops in the town and escaped with ornaments worth about Tk 10 lakh recently, reports UNB.

Police said the thieves entered into Mukta Jewellers and New BK Jewellers by breaking the hind wall at midnight and looted 98 tolas of gold and Tk 3 lakh in cash. A case was filed with Sadar police. None was arrested.

10 receive acid burn injuries

BANDARBAN, Aug 22: Ten persons, including five woman and two children, of village Hatirkhedra under Fashia Khali union, got burn injuries when rivals threw acid on them recently, reports BSS.

Thana administration sources said that some members of the Marma tribe, locked in an agrarian dispute, threw acid on their rivals in the cover of darkness, injuring 10 persons. Five women, two children and three men received acid burn. Nine of the victims were treated at the thana health complex while a 10-year old boy was rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital for treatment.

Body recovered

SATKHIRA, Aug 22: Sadar thana police recovered body of an unidentified teen aged girl from a field of village Baru Barsa under Sadar thana recently, reports BSS.

Police suspected that she was strangled to death about three days ago. The cause of the killing could not be known. The body was sent to sadar hospital for postmortem.

11 pirates held

BAGERHAT, Aug 22: Police arrested 11 pirates from Sindur-talla area in Mongla thana on Thursday night while they were planning to commit robbery in a ship, reports UNB.

The arrested were identified as Abul, Yusuf, Hasan, Mohidul, Jahangir, Eskander, Kabir, Shahidul, Yusuf Sarder, Masud and Shahidul Mollah. All of them were wanted in several dacoity cases, police said.

Two children drown

MADARIPUR, Aug 22: Two children drowned in different areas of Rajor thana recently, reports BSS.

Babita, 3, daughter of Binol Malo of village Malokandi in Rajor thana drowned in a pond near her house on August 15. Sagor, 4, son of Harun Munshi of village Beparipara in Rajor thana drowned in a pond on August 14.

Bumper production of Aman if weather favours in 16 dists

From Abdul Wadood

RAJSHAHI, Aug 22: Both the Agriculture Extension Department (AED) of Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) and the farmers are expecting a bumper production of Aman paddy this year if weather remains favourable.

"Weather is very much suitable for cultivation of Aman till filling of this report. The farmers are also very much enthusiastic to cultivate Aman paddy on most of their lands", an AED official said. Both the factors will help achieve the expected target of Aman cultivation during the ongoing season, he said. He also added that the expected target of harvest would also be achieved if any natural disaster like flood do not damage their crops. "We are expecting that the harvest would exceed the fixed target."

Muhammad Mohiuddin Mollah, a cane development assistant of Rajshahi Sugar Mills said that at first his aim was to cultivate Aman paddy on one and a half acres of land. "But I found from my experience that the season would be very much favourable for Aman cultivation and I transplanted Aman saplings on two more bigas of lands," said the marginal farmer of Shyampur village in Motier thana while he along with three labourers were nursing the green and rapidly grown saplings of paddy on his land on August 11 afternoon.

According to the local AED sources, almost 90 per cent of the targetted lands have already been cultivated so far. The farmers are now busy in transplanting paddy saplings on more and more lands. Sufficient rainfalls throughout the whole rainy season has made it possible, AED sources elaborated.

AED has fixed a target to cultivate Aman paddy on 16,53,375 hectares of lands in 16 districts of Rajshahi division, the main rice producing region of the country during the current season. It is widely expected that 31,60,685 metric tons of paddy would be produced.

District-wise break-up of the targets are as follows: 2,00,872 metric tons of paddy from 1,20,910 hectares of land in Thakurgaon district, 4,91,692 metric tons of paddy from

2,49,160 hectares of land in Dinajpur district, 1,87,804 metric tons of paddy from 1,09,170 hectares of land in Panchagarh district, 2,94,748 metric tons of paddy from 1,43,090 hectares of land in Rangpur, 1,91,961 metric tons of paddy from 1,04,555 hectares of land in Gaibandha district, 1,99,368 metric tons of paddy from 1,13,240 hectares of lands in Kurigram district, 1,88,254 metric tons of paddy from 93,570 hectares of land in Lalmonirhat district, 2,21,308 metric tons of paddy from 1,10,440 hectares of land in Nilphamari district, 66,328

metric tons of paddy from 31,990 hectares of land in Pabna district, 34,418 metric tons of paddy from 20,790 hectares of land in Sirajganj district, 3,04,286 metric tons of paddy from 1,69,930 hectares of land in Bogra district, 1,63,932 metric tons of paddy from 78,710 hectares of land in Joypurhat district, 67,914 metric tons of paddy from 32,520 hectares of land in Chapainawabganj district, 39,660 metric tons of paddy from 23,250 hectares of land in Natore district, 3,24,825 metric tons of paddy from 1,79,180

hectares of land in Naogaon district and 2,02,175 metric tons of paddy from 80,870 hectares of land in Rajshahi district.

BADC sources said that it had taken extensive programmes in advance to make the Aman cultivation successful. The corporation had distributed quality seeds of high-yielding varieties and extended technical supports to the farmers for making seed-beds. In addition, it has kept close observation on the ongoing Aman farming from very early this season through its extension workers.

Meanwhile, Rajshahi Krishi Unnyan Bank (RAKUB) has also taken up an elaborate credit programme for Aman cultivation. Considering the havoc wrecked by last year's devastating floods, RAKUB extended the time limit for loan repayment by one year and gave new loan to the farmers.

Other nationalised commercial banks and some private banks have also extended their credit programmes for assisting Aman cultivation directly and indirectly.

In some places, however, short supply and high price of fertilisers are creating problems.

Farmers have alleged that some unscrupulous dealers taking advantage of the increasing demands of fertilisers, especially urea, are creating artificial crisis. One bag of urea is being sold in some places, as in Tanore, Puthia, Godagari and Bagmara thanas, from Taka 330 to Taka 380.

Sirajul Islam, a marginal farmer of Matchpara village in Puthia thana expressed his apprehension that the crisis of fertilisers, whether it is artificial or natural, will aggravate further as the demand of fertilisers especially urea would increase several times from the next month.

"Most farmers do not use urea during transplantation for many reasons, but they will obviously use it from the next month when the splings will grow enough," he said.

He suggested tough and effective measures to ensure smooth supply of fertilisers at fixed price everywhere for making Aman cultivation successful.



A Santal woman transplanting Aman saplings in a field at Matchpara in Puthia thana. — Star photo

Those days are now sweet memories

NATORE, Aug 22: Unplanned use of pesticides in croplands and massive farming of hybrid foreign fish by NGOs in the northern region have brought the local varieties of sweet-water fish close to extinction, reports UNB.

Delicious sweet water fish like Koi, Magur, Tengra, Shole, Bowal, Singhee, Puthi, Kalfoush, Chanda and Bheda are now rarely seen in hats and bazars in remote areas of the district.

These sweet water fishes once were produced in abundance in the region. Now their production has decreased abnormally.

Fish growers attributed the rapid fall in local varieties of fishes to massive production of hybrid foreign fishes in water bodies.

According to them, some donors and international NGOs in a bid to capture our market have suggested the local NGOs to largely cultivate hybrid varieties of fishes like Silver Carp, Gass Carp, African Magur, Minar Carp, Thai and Japanese Swarupithi.

Their large scale fish farming in the region has ultimately outperformed the production of the country's traditional local varieties, they felt.

They also blamed drying up of water bodies, including rivers, beels and canals due to adverse effects of Farakka barrage, lack of government steps, indiscriminate use of pesticides in croplands for sharp decline in fish production.

Once the Natore district was known as sweet water fish producing region for its location on the vast Chalun Beel territory.

Rural people used to catch plenty of fishes from water bodies and distribute among their relatives. But those days have become only sweet memories for the elderly people.

14 development projects progressing in 2 dists

The work of 14 development projects has been progressing in two districts, report agencies.

A report from Sherpur says: The work of 10 projects under the "Post-Flood Rehabilitation Programme" is going on in full swing here.

Roads and Highways (R&H) Department sources said a total of Tk 6.82 crore was sanctioned in 1998-99 fiscal year to implement the projects.

About 40 per cent work of the projects has already been completed.

An R&H engineer said two bridges on Kapasia-Nakugaan and Longarpara-Mamdabari roads are being constructed at a cost of Tk 82 lakh while eight schemes are being implemented costing Tk 6 crore.

The eight schemes included carpeting, brick soling and repair of the roads Nonni-Baromari, Sherpur-Nalitabari, Halaughat-Nalitabari, Sherpur-Karia, Jalalpur-Baneshwardi-Bhuradi, Phulpur-Kadamatali-Pathakata, Bangaon-Nalitabari, Dhana-Jamalpur and Jhulgaon-Jhinaigati.

Another message from Chuadanga adds: The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has been implementing four schemes in Damurhuda and Jibannagar thanas here at an allocation of Taka 1,32,50,501 in the current

Smuggled goods worth over Tk 4cr seized in 6 months

CHUADANGA, Aug 22: Smuggled goods worth taka 4,73,12,506 were seized by the BDR personnel from the different areas of the district during the six months from January to June this year, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the smuggled goods worth Tk 3,71,74,525 were seized while being smuggled into the country and goods worth Tk 1,01,37,981 were seized while being smuggled out of the country. A total of 34 persons were arrested in connection with the smuggling during the period while seven smugglers absconded.

A total of 709 cases were lodged with the respective police stations during the period.

14 unnatural deaths in three districts

A total of 14 unnatural deaths were reported recently in Jhenidah, Mymensingh and Faridpur districts, report agencies.

Post-mortem was done and a case has been registered with Kaliganj police station in this connection. None was arrested.

A gang of robbers chopped Quaiyoom Ali, 55, a grocery shop owner at Bhabanipur bazar of Harinakundu thana to death and looted valuables worth about Tk 50,000.

Imamul, 16, son of Abul Hossain of Bhattara village in Kaliganj thana was asleep when some unidentified intruders abducted him.

They chopped him and left away at nearby Mostafapur village. He succumbed to his injuries at the district general hospital.

Two persons were killed and 25 others injured in a road accident at Rupchandpur under Tarakandi thana in Mymensingh district on Thursday night, police and hospital sources said.

The accident took place when a Mymensingh-bound speeding passenger bus collided head-on with a truck at Rupchandpur on Mymensingh-Halaughat highway. At least 25 persons were wounded and two of the injured, Abdul Hai, 35, and Billal, 30, succumbed to their injuries at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

Fourteen injured persons are now under treatment at Mymensingh Medical College and rest were released after first aid.

ganj Health Complex with severe injury where he later died. Family feud may be the cause behind the killing.

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In separate incident, a young man, Hazrat Ali, allegedly committed suicide by taking poison in Kshitiapara village of Sadar thana on Tuesday.

Relatives said family feud was the reason for his taking the extreme measure.

The body of the 30-year-old Hazrat Ali was recovered from a boat in the morning.

An unnatural death case was filed with Kotwali police.

A school student drowned in a pond while having his bath at Alipur area in Faridpur on Tuesday.

He was identified as Tanjim Islam Hirok, 9, a student of class three of local police line high school, and son of Shariful Islam Piru, a former chairman of Dumain UP.

In another incident, two construction workers died of carbonmonoxide gas in an under-construction septic tank at Purbo Khabashpur area in Faridpur town on Friday.

Bodies of Mohammad Shaikh, 40, and his assistant Murad, 20, were brought out of the tank by Fire Brigade men.

Residents said they were engaged to clean up the tank by the house owner Aynal Shaikh. Mohammad Shaikh first got into the tank, when there was no response from him, Murad went into it. Others were concerned when they failed to come out and immediately called the Fire Brigade.

The firemen filled the tank emptying the gas and recovered the bodies.

RU VC exchanges views with local journalists

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, Aug 22: Vice Chancellor of Rajshahi University Professor Sayeedur Rahman Khan said the authority must take action against the sacked chairman of the Department of Library and Information Science if he is found guilty by the university probe committee report.

The VC was exchanging views with local journalists at his residence on the campus recently.

Mohammad Abdus Salam was removed from chairmanship of the Department of Library and Information Science in October in 1998 on charges of corruption and nepotism.

Immediately after his removal from the position a three-member probe committee, headed by Professor Sohrab Ali, was formed to investigate into the allegations.

Probe committee report was submitted to the authority in the last week of June this year.

The next session of the university Syndicate will discuss the report, the VC said.

However, the VC did not mention the date of the next session of Syndicate.

Ration cards for cattlehead soon

FARIDPUR, Aug 22: The government is contemplating to introduce ration card for cattle heads to supply fodder during crisis caused by natural calamities like flood, reports UNB.

Advocate Mosharraf Hossain MP, who is chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Fisheries and Livestock, said the government was considering it in view of decline in the number of cattle heads in the country.

He was speaking at the prize distribution ceremony at Kabi Jesimuddin Hall on Tuesday. He distributed prizes and certificates among 8 best block supervisors of Department of Agriculture Extension for their outstanding performance.

Those who received the prize are Mujahidur Rahman (sadar), Habibul Islam (Madhukali), Naim Molla (Boalmari), Parimal Chandra Roy (Alifadanga), Jahangir Alam (Charbhadrashan), Shayama Prashad Bairagi (Bhanga), Ayub Ali (Nagarkanda) and Pares Chandra Mondol (Sadarpur).

Acid thrown on housewife

GOPALGANJ, Aug 22: A housewife at Gopinathpur village in sadar thana here suffered acid burn injuries recently, reports UNB.

Witnesses said Rafeza Begum, 35, wife of Farid Sheikh was seriously injured when her neighbour Sher Ali Sheikh, 32, reportedly threw acid on her over previous rivalry in distributing VGD cards among the flood affected people.

Events of districts in picture



A silent procession was brought out in Mymensingh town by Awami League to mark the National Mourning Day. — Star photo



Rangpur District Awami League brought out an anti-terrorist procession in the district town recently to condemn the opposition parties' terrorist acts. — Star photo

75th birth anniversary of S M Sultan celebrated

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Aug 22: The 75th birth anniversary of S M Sultan, the noted artist of the country was celebrated here on August 10 beneficially.

The local district office of Shilpakala Academy drew up a programme to mark the occasion. State Minister for Sports, Youth and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Kader attended there as the chief guest. He also inaugurated the programme.

He addressed a discussion meeting arranged on this occasion. A children's art exhibition was also arranged at the shilpakala academy auditorium.

Presided over by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Jessore, Aminur Rosul, it was attended, among others, by the local woman MP Aleya Afroz, police super Abdur Rouf and local peorasabha chairman Kamuruzzaman Chunnun as special guests.

The state minister called upon the new generation to engage themselves in the culture of paintings and thereby keep them off the current wave of violence and terrorism.

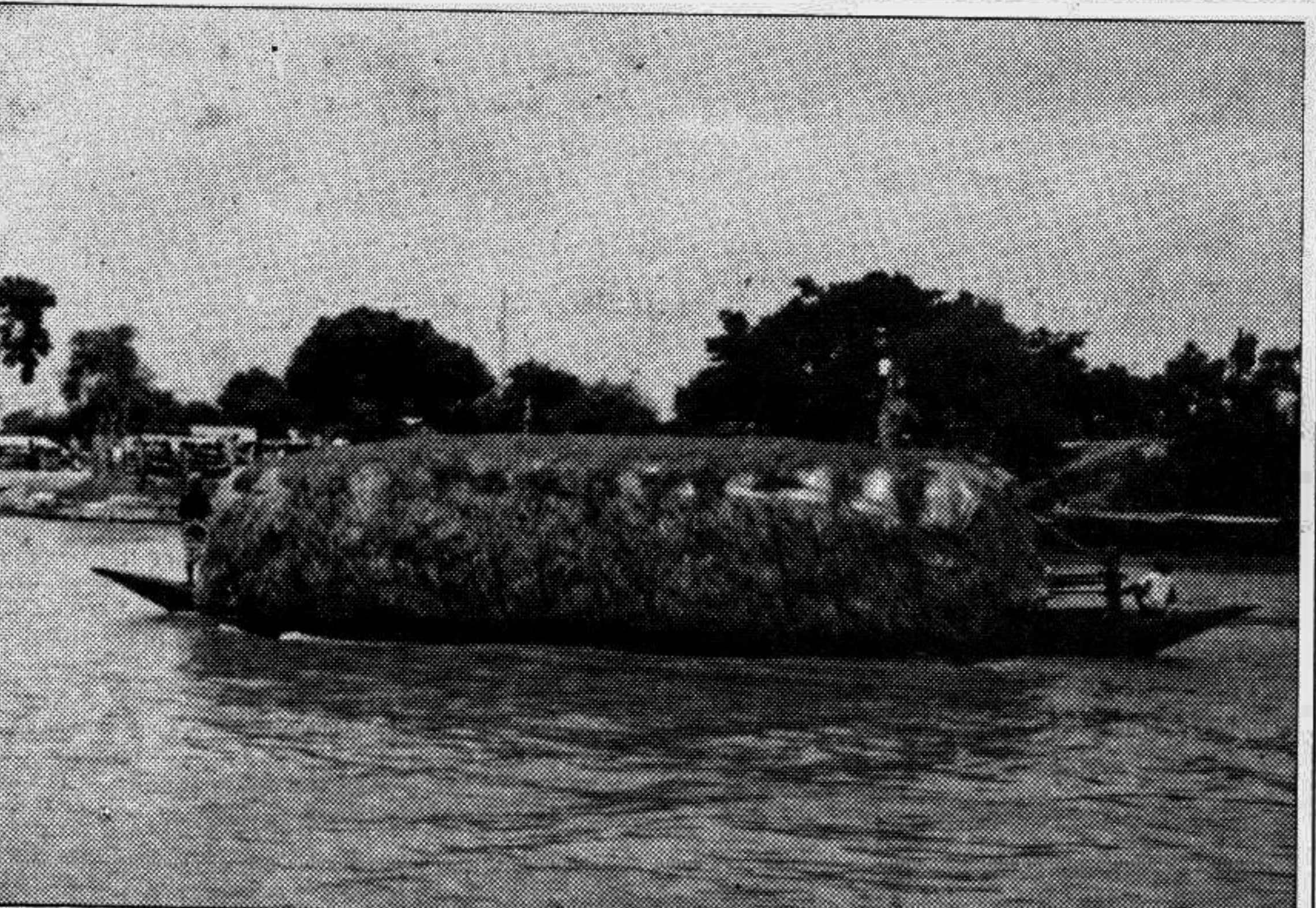
Tk 2cr Shishu Sadan bldg completed

COMILLA, Aug 22: Construction of Debidwar Shishu Sadan building has been completed at a cost of Taka two crore, reports BSS.

Public Works Department completed the construction.

Samaj Seba Department sources said, one hundred orphan children will be accommodated in the Shishu Sadan.

Joint Secretary Katebur Rahman visited the Shishu Sadan on August 14. Deputy Director of district Samaj Seba Department, Rokeya Begum accompanied him.



No more fodder crisis: The hats and bazars of Natore district have been flooded with abundant straws, fodder of domestic animals. This is because of last year's bumper Boro production. Such straws are also used as house building material for poor villagers. Though the price is still high yet the prevailing acute crisis of fodder has been solved to a great extent. Photo shows straws are being carried to the bazars in a typical Bangladeshi boat on the River Gur in Shingra thana. — Star photo by Anwar Ali