

News snaps

Girl killed in road mishap

SATKHIRA, Aug 23: A minor school girl was killed in a road accident near Talola area on Satkhira-Khulna road under Sadar thana recently, reports BSS.

Police sources said, a Patkelghata-bound pick-up van of a bid company from Satkhira ran over one minor school girl Murshida Khatun, 10, daughter of Keamuddin of village Talola near her village area while she was trying to cross the road. She died on the spot. Murshida was a student of class three of Fe-Shilpi Primary School. A case was filed with Sadar thana in this connection. Police seized the pickup van, but the driver managed to escape.

Farmers' workshop

JESSORE, Aug 23: A three-month long farmers' workshop has begun in village Issalee under Sadar thana of the district, reports BSS.

The workshop, organised for integrated insect control programme, was arranged by the Agriculture Extension Department. According to the Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Department, 30 farmers have been trained-up on how to kill and control insects by using modern methods of agricultural technology instead of using insecticides. Such programme will be continued. This initiative has been taken up in order to increase food production and keep the environment balanced. The Deputy Director told the news agency that DANIDA will financially support the programme.

Man gets life term for killing wife

SATKHIRA, Aug 23: A court here recently convicted a man and sentenced him to life term in jail for killing his wife, reports UNB.

According to prosecution, Fariduddin Gazi of village Sikra in Sadar thana, with the help of his second wife beat to death his first wife on July 4, 1992. The District and Sessions Judge after hearing 15 witnesses and examining records, found him guilty of murder and handed down the verdict. Gazi was also fined Tk 5,000, in default, to suffer one year more RI. However, the court acquitted his second wife for lack of evidence.

Breast Feeding Week observed

MANIKGANJ, Aug 23: Breast Feeding Week '99 was observed in the district from August 1 to 7 to make people aware the benefit of breast feeding, reports BSS.

A week-long programme was chalked out by the World Breast Feeding Week '99 Observance Committee on the occasion in the district and thana headquarters. The programme included rally, painting competition and discussion meeting. On the concluding day a prize distribution ceremony was held in the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner. Sheikh Mozahar Uddin, Deputy Commissioner, Manikganj presided over the function. Pourashava Chairman Md. Ramzan Ali and Civil Surgeon Dr Md. Rashiduzzaman, among others, spoke on the occasion.

Quiz competition

CHANDPUR, Aug 23: A quiz competition for the school students organised by Chandpur Rotaract Club to mark the silver jubilee of Chandpur Rotaract Club was held at Rotary Bahavan here on August 6, reports BSS.

Chandpur Rotaract Club president Mohammad Mostafa presided over the function. Rotary District Governor M Ozaer Faruk and President of Chandpur Rotary Club Dr S M Shahidullah, among others, spoke on the occasion. Students of class nine and class ten of different schools under Chandpur district participated in the quiz competition.

Water crisis in Rohingya camp

COX'S BAZAR, Aug 23: Acute water crisis has been prevailing in five blocks of Rohingya refugee camp at Nayapara in Teknaf thana for the last few days, reports UNB.

Officials and inmates of the camp said the water pump in the camp went out of order resulting in the crisis. However, the authority has been supplying 50,000 litre water against the demand of 3 lakh litre for over 13,000 refugees in the camp.



Fruits for life: Pineapples have flooded the bazaars of Magura town in recent days. At present a pair of pineapple is being sold at the rate of Taka 20 at the local Pura Bazaar. — Star photo

Two with firearm, bullets held

SATKHIRA, Aug 23: Two people were arrested along with a revolver and two rounds of bullets from a shrimp farm at Fatkhalk in Assasuni thana Saturday, reports UNB.

Being informed by the locals, police rushed to the shrimp farm and arrested Kamrul and Akter while they were preparing to capture the farm. They were sent to jail *haja*.

Workshop

SATKHIRA, Aug 23: A day-long training workshop on "Disaster Management and Public Awareness" was held recently at the Deputy Commissioner's conference room, reports BSS.

Deputy Commissioner Saiful Alam, who is also the President of the District Disaster Management Committee, presided over the concluding function of the workshop. A total of 57 members of the District Disaster Management Committee participated in the workshop. M Hamiduzzaman Khan Chowdhury and Abul Kashem were the trainers in the workshop.

Old age allowance distributed

SHARIATPUR, Aug 23: Some 400 aged women of Bhederanj thana were given Tk 100 each as old age allowance on the occasion of National Mourning Day on August 15, reports UNB.

Senior officials of the Social Welfare Department distributed the allowance in presence of local leaders. Union parishad chairmen, thana officials and business leaders were present at the function organised by the Social Welfare Department.

Man killed by miscreants

GAIBANDHA, Aug 23: One person was killed and 20 others were injured in an attack by some miscreants at Durgapur in Palashbari thana recently, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the assailants intercepted a Monoharpur-bound reserve bus at Durgapur and swooped on the passengers following an altercation over getting into the bus. The miscreants also ransacked the bus and looted valuables, including gold ornaments, worth over Tk 100,000 from the passengers. During the attack, Saiful Islam, 35, was killed on the spot. The injured were rushed to Palashbari Thana Health Complex. Police arrested a traffic police for his alleged involvement in the incident. He was identified as Nuru Mia.

Orientation training

CHANDPUR, Aug 23: A two-day orientation training on Hilsha fish was held recently at Chandpur Riverine Fisheries Research Institute here, reports BSS.

About 100 fishermen and fish traders from different parts of the district participated in the training programme. Prof Shamen Dewan, an expert on Hilsha fish of Bangladesh Agricultural University, Md Rafiqul Islam, Principal, Fish Research Institute and Mirzanur Rahman, District Fisheries Officer imparted training to the participants.

Academic bldgs built

JESSORE, Aug 23: The construction and reconstruction of 27 academic buildings, costing taka 6 crore 27 lakh have been completed, reports BSS.

The Facilities department of Education Ministry has implemented the projects. According to the Facilities Department sources, construction of the largest auditorium in Jessore Zilla School, boundary wall of regional scouts office, hostel building of Government Women College along with 13 new primary school buildings have been completed. Implementation of the projects has provided facilities to about 15 thousand students to study in a developed condition. Besides, the accommodation problem of the students has also been greatly solved.

Desolate look of BSCIC industrial estates

From Aroop Talukdar

BARISAL, Aug 23: Entrepreneurs are reluctant to set up industrial units in BSCIC (Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation) estates in Bagerhat and Jhenidah because of high prices of plots and terrorist activities.

Entrepreneurs said high price of plots is one of the main obstacles to setting up industrial units in the estate, besides various other problems.

BSCIC estate in Jhenidah is facing problems mainly due to terrorist activities. Entrepreneurs are not interested to set up industrial units as incidents of extortion and terrorist activities in area are increasing.

Many plots in several BSCIC estates across the country have remained unsold for a long time due to various reasons,

sources said.

According to official sources, four regional offices were set up in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi in 1957 for the development of small and cottage industries.

So far 57 BSCIC industrial estates have been set up in the country. Of them, 10 industrial estates were set up in Barisal and Khulna divisions.

In the two divisions, estates were set up in Barisal, Swarupkathi, Patuakhali, Bhola, Bagerhat, Jhenidah, Satkhira, Kushtia, Jessore and Khulna on a total of 348.45 acres of land.

In Khulna, according to sources, there are 235 plots on 44.10 acres of land. All the plots except one have been sold to buyers. But on the plots only 89 industrial units so far have

been set up. Of them, 49 units working.

Of the 289 plots on 50.06 acres of land in Jessore all the plots were sold. In the estate, 123 units were set up, of them 88 are in operation.

All the 82 plots on 18.46 acres in Kushtia were allotted for 25 industrial units of which 19 units are in operation.

Out of 96 plots 31 were sold to entrepreneurs for 18 industrial units in Satkhira. Only three units in the estate are manufacturing.

In Jhenidah, 17 plots out of 98 plots were allocated for official purposes, 11 industrial units have so far been established. But only one is active.

Out of 95 plots, 10 were allotted to entrepreneurs in Bagerhat BSCIC estate. Only

one unit is active out of 5 units.

In Barisal BSCIC industrial estate was set up on 131.99 acres of land. 243 plots out of 330 were sold. 75 industrial units were set up. Of them, 32 units are active.

98 plots out of 138, on 24.74 acres of land, were brought in Swarupkathi. Of 53 units established in the estate 39 are operative.

In Patuakhali estate was set up on 15.27 acres of land. Out of 79 plots, 18 are meant for official purposes. Only 6 industrial units were set up and of them 3 are in operation.

In Bhola estate, set up on 14.45 acres of land, 7 plots were allotted out of 93. There are four industrial units in black and white. But not a single unit is active.

Fertiliser prices up in Jamalpur

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Aug 23: Chemical fertilisers are being sold in markets in the district at higher prices than the prices fixed by the government.

According to farmers, one bag of urea of 50 kg is being sold between taka 320 and 340 as against government rate of taka 240.

Fertiliser prices have registered a sharp rise during the last two weeks, peak season for *ropa-aman* cultivation, farmers said.

TSP and MP are being sold at taka 450 and 470 per bag respectively in rural markets.

The crop growers also alleged that they are being harassed by fertilisers dealers when they refuse to pay higher prices.

When contacted some fertiliser dealers said they have to pay tolls to extortionists and dishonest employees of Jamuna Fertiliser Factory at Sarisabari, compelling them to sell fertiliser at enhanced rate.

Meanwhile, at a recent high level meeting of the Ministry of Agriculture Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina directed the authorities concerned to take immediate action against extortionists and dishonest traders.

Two killed in Barisal road accident

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Aug 23: Two people were killed and at least 15 others injured, four of them critically, in a road accident near Kataksthal area under Gournadi thana of the district recently.

According to witnesses, a Barisal-bound passenger night coach of Royal Paribahan from Khulna fell into a roadside ditch when the driver lost the control at Kataksthal on Barisal-Faridpur highway that left two passengers dead on the spot and 15 other injured.

Of the injured 12 were admitted to Gournadi Thana Health Complex and 3 others were rushed to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

The victims were identified as Mozammel Hossain, 50, and his son Yusuf Nabi, 4, of Borhanuddin of Bhola district. The driver of the passenger coach, however, managed to escape the scene.

Employee of newspaper agency beaten

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Aug 23: An employee of a newspaper agency in the town was beaten up by newspaper hawkers recently.

Md Saiful Islam, manager of Paper Corner, was manhandled by hawkers Osman Ali Sarkar, Soleman Ali Sarkar and Moniruzzaman Sarkar in front of the central mosque in the town. The hawkers are siblings.

Witnesses said that when the manager asked the hawkers to pay Tk 6,000 they owed to agency, he was beaten up. A case was filed in this connection.

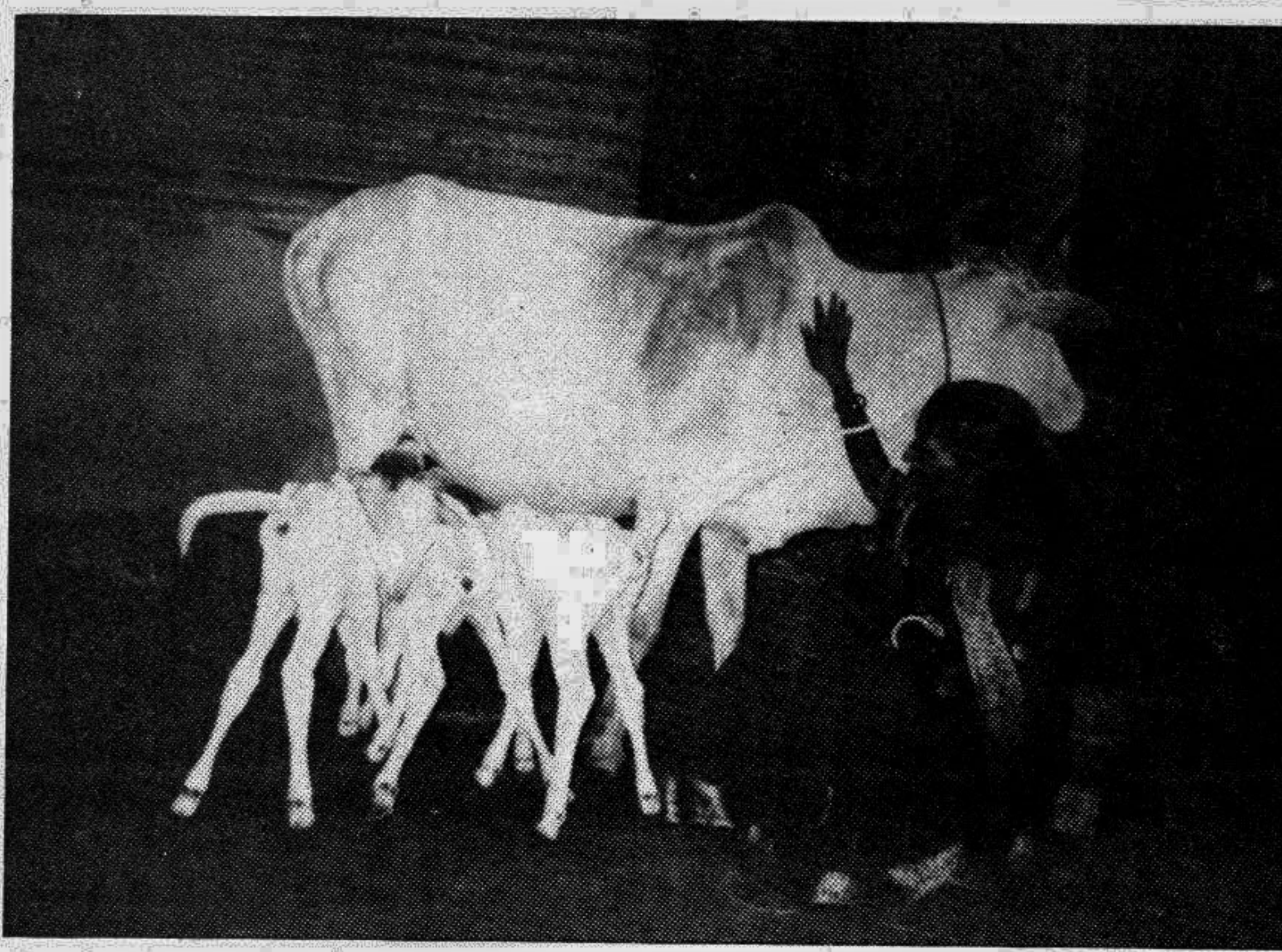
Three sentenced for possessing illegal arms

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Aug 23: Three persons were sentenced to 10 years each in prison on charge of possessing illegal arms recently.

The convicts were identified as Abu Bakkar of village Atulla under Shyam Nagar thana; Mujbar Shaikh of Shaikh Para under Sonadanga thana of Khulna district; and Momrej Mollah of Fatepur village under Keshabpur thana of Jessore district.

According to prosecution, the accused were caught by local people when they were looting a shop, owned by one Khatib Mollah, at Bajar Bathan-Noabekhi in Shyamnagar thana in Satkhira district on September 24, 1998. Firearms were also recovered from them. They were later handed over to police.



Freak of nature: Believe it or not a cow has given birth to three calves at Krishnapur village in Magura sadar thana recently. Photo shows the owner Maya Adhikari taking care of the calves. — Star photo

Erosion threatens PC pole plant at Aricha

From Abdul Matin Fakir

FARIDPUR, Aug 23: The existence of PC pole plant set up in 1988-89 financial year on 13.5 acres of land at Aricha on the eastern side of the Jamuna at a cost of Tk 60 crore is at stake apparently for lack of initiative by the authorities concerned.

This plant capable of producing 10,000 electric poles every year may be eroded into the River Jamuna at any time causing disruption of electricity supply which will hamper greatly development works.

This plant has so far manufactured 74182 electric

poles ever since its installation. It is learnt from official sources that the plant installed in Chittagong, Ghorashal and Aricha produce 9 metres, 11 metres, 12 metres, 15 metres and 22.5 metres long electric poles which mostly meet the demands of electric poles of the country.

To protect this plant from the erosion of the Jamuna, Power Development Board (PDB) requested the Water Development Board (WDB) authority to take necessary steps in 1994. On the request of PDB, WDB prepared a project

involving Tk 80 lakh and sent it to PDB for placing the fund. But PDB reportedly did not place the fund on the plea that the project prepared by WDB did not ensure any guarantee for protection of the plant from the erosion.

Now what is urgently necessary is that the higher authorities of both PDB and WDB should jointly work out plans and programmes for the protection of the plant at Aricha and its immediate execution for the greater interest of the country as a whole.



Shameful child labour: Kamrul, a 12-year-old boy, pulling rickshaw. —Star photo

Child labour on rise in Netrakona

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, Aug 23: The number of child labourers has been increasing here recently. Hundreds of ill-fated children here have been turning into child labourers everyday.

Kamrul a 12-year-old boy of Dudkura village in the sadar thana, goes to school in the morning and pulls rickshaw in the afternoon. He is the son of a day labourer and a student of class five. He wants to continue his education at any cost. He is determined to salvage his family from the mire of poverty. "I have to pull rickshaw because my poor father is unable to bear my educational expenses" the boy said.

Not only Kamrul, there are

so many boys like him who have become child labourers at this minor age. They pull rickshaws and work in garages, hotels and restaurants from dawn to dusk to support their poor families. According to a survey conducted by a non-governmental organisation (NGO), there are some 1,000 children in 10 thanas here, who are working in restaurants, garages, brickfields and workshops.

The survey showed that these tender-aged boys want to go to school, but unfortunately their helpless parents force them to work to add to their incomes, giving rise to unauthorised child labour.

Another 10-year-old boy

named Salam, son of Karim of Satpal in the town, works in a local tea stall from 7am to 9pm everyday.

"I want to read to change my lot, but my parents force me to work. This is because my father cannot run our seven-member family with his small amount of income" Salam said.

When asked a local school headmaster said "The government's efforts to ensure education for all by the year 2000 have virtually failed to increase enrolment in schools." However, the government alone cannot change the situation, it needs the united effort of all to make the total literacy programme a success" he said.

Aus cultivation declining

NETRAKONA, Aug 23: Cultivation of Aus paddy in 10 thanas here is gradually declining, affecting the country's overall foodgrain output, reports UNB.

Scarcity of quality seeds and inadequate irrigation facilities are mainly to blame for the downturn in Aus cultivation.

According to figures provided by the local agriculture office, some 64,000 hectares of land were brought under Aus farming here in 1997 while it came down to 54,000 hectares in 1998.

Officials said some 42,352 hectares of land were brought under Aus cultivation here this year, fixing the production target at 51,498 mts.

They said Aus output here continues to fall as farmers are no longer interested in Aus cultivation due to large-scale introduction of Irri-Boro variety. Pests severely affect the Aus fields after the harvest of Irri-Boro.

Another reports says: An ambitious programme was taken up to bring 1.08 lakh hectares of land under transplanted Aman cultivation in 10 thanas here this season.

Agriculture officials said the

target of production has been set at 17.29 metric tons of paddy.

They are hopeful of achieving the production target as the farmers found enthusiastic in T-Aman cultivation to grow more foodgrains this season.

The thanas brought under the programme are Sadar, Atpara, Mohongonj, Madan, Kendua, Bhabhatia, Kalmakanda, Durgapur, Purbadhala and Kaliazuri.

BSS from Chapainawabganj says: A total of 32,520 hectares in five thanas here have been brought under Aman cultivation in the current season.

The thana-wise break-up is: Chapainawabganj Sadar-5,925 hectares and production target 12,420 tonnes, Shibganj thana-1,495 hectares and production target 3,145 tonnes, Gomastapur thana-7,945 hectares and production target 16,754 tonnes, Bulahat thana-1870 hectares and production target 3,894 tonnes, Nachol thana-15,285 hectares and production target 31,702 tonnes.

Cultivation in 50 per cent land has already been completed, the Agriculture Department sources said.

18 unnatural deaths in Sylhet last month

SYLHET, Aug 23: At least 18 unnatural deaths were reported here in last month, reports UNB.

According to reports from different sources, Mosabbir Ali, 60, of Kathapur village in Fenchuganj thana was killed by his rivals on July 1.

On the same day, in another incident, Dulal, 20, of Lafna village in Goainghat thana, allegedly committed suicide.

Besides, Barai Ali, 55, of Kandiarchar in sadar thana, was killed by some miscreants on July 4 while Ranjit Kumar Shaha, 25, an employee of a shop in the town, was brutally killed by assailants on July 8.

Jahanara Begum, 10, of Alor village in Zakiganj thana, allegedly committed suicide on July 9. The motive behind the suicide of the girl could not be ascertained.

On July 10, Razna Begum, 15, of Nashipur village in Balaganj thana, died during an alleged illegal abortion. The girl was said to be pregnant.

On July 16, Askan Ali, 75 of Gaziarpur village in Balaganj

thana, was killed by his rivals. The same day, two children, of Balaganj and Sadar thanas, drowned in ponds.

Shahabuddin Master, 35, of Bidkhol village in Jaintapur thana, allegedly committed suicide on the same day.

A boatman, Lulu Mia, 28, was killed in a boat capsized in Companiganj thana on July 20 while Alur Rahman, 22, of Shikargaon in Jaintapur thana, was killed by unidentified assailants on July 23.

Assailants killed 70-year-old Abdul Khaleque of Balakona village in Golapganj thana on July 24. The body of Mainu Mia, 20, was recovered from a canal in Bikanibazar thana on the same day.

Sentu Mia, 30, and Bashir, 20, of Companiganj thana allegedly committed suicide on July 26 and 30 respectively while Abdul Jalil of Sadar thana committed suicide on July 29.

On July 30, auto-rickshaw driver Shahnaz, 25, was killed by miscreants in Fazikchishita area of the town.

Crimes up in Jamalpur

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Aug 23: Incidents of murder, robbery, kidnap, clash and rape have increased alarmingly in the last two weeks in the district, deteriorating the law and order situation.

Four robberies were committed in the last one week. Two persons were murdered and 28 others injured critically during the robberies. The robberies were committed at Hazipur Barzar, Tulshipur Bazar, Ramnagar Bazar and Polash-tala Bazar under Sadar thana. Besides, valuables and cash were looted.

One Sumi, a SSC examinee, was kidnapped recently from Mukanda Bari of Jamalpur town. The girl, however, was rescued later.

Hafizur Rahamn Sadha, a district correspondent of the

daily Bangla Bazar Patrika, was robbed by some muggers in the town on July 26. The muggers took away taka 862 and an identity card from the journalist at gun point. The journalist was returning his Nayapara resident after professional duty.

Besides, illegal trading of liquor and ganja has become rampant in Islampur, Malendah, Madarganj, Bakshiganj and Sarisabari thana.

Clashes between rival groups are also increasing alarmingly in the district.

Unofficial sources said over 1600 people heads were lifted from villages during last one year.

A total of 16 minor girls were allegedly raped and one of them was murdered in the last two months.

Natore BCL committee dissolved

From Anwar Ali

NATORE, Aug 23: The committee of the local district unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) was dissolved in a joint meeting of Awami League and BCL.

The decision of abolishment was made following intra-party rivalry in the BCL.

Advocate Sajedur Rahman, president of the district AL, presided over the meeting held at the local Muslim Institute on August 12.

Among others, the meeting was addressed by Advocate Hanif Ali Sheikh, general secretary of the district AL, BCL leaders Mostarur Islam Alam and Arifur Rahman Masoom.

Meanwhile, the intra-party feud triggered over the post of general secretary of BCL. Arifur Rahman Masoom is holding the post who is an elected commissioner of Natore

Pourasabha.

A group in the BCL termed this act to be unconstitutional and demanded his dismissal.

Party insiders said that the local AL leaders complicated the issue by paying little heed to the group's demand for Masoom's dismissal.

Masoom, who is an accused and wanted in three cases, has been allegedly terrorising the town dwellers. The rival group also claimed that an identified godfather had been giving shelter to Masoom.

On August 8, Masoom group activists hurled bombs and damaged a pathological centre on the sadar hospital road. Abdur Rahim Bachchu, 30, a passerby was injured in the incident, which police think, occurred as a sequel to a feud over quick pathological test.

17 posts of teachers lying vacant in college

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, Aug 23: Post of principal and 17 posts of teachers of several departments in Netrakona University College have been lying vacant for a long time, hampering academic and administrative activities severely.

Of the vacant posts, two in Bengali Department; two in English Department; one in Economics Department; one in Political Science Department; two in Department of History; two in the Department of Philosophy; two in Islamic History Department; one in Management Department; one in Physics Department; one in Botany; and one in Zoology have been lying vacant for a long time, college sources said.

Post of principal has been lying vacant for five months. Besides, the posts of library

and physical instructor have also been lying vacant the university college, which offers honours courses in 10 subject.

Lama-Aziz Nagar road link restored

BANDARBAN, Aug 23: Road communication between Aziz Nagar union and Lama thana headquarters was restored today, reports BSS.

The road communication was snapped on August 12 due to landslides caused by incessant rains. Seven people were killed in the landslides.

Bandarban district civil surgeon said that seven medical teams along with necessary medicines were sent to the affected villages today.