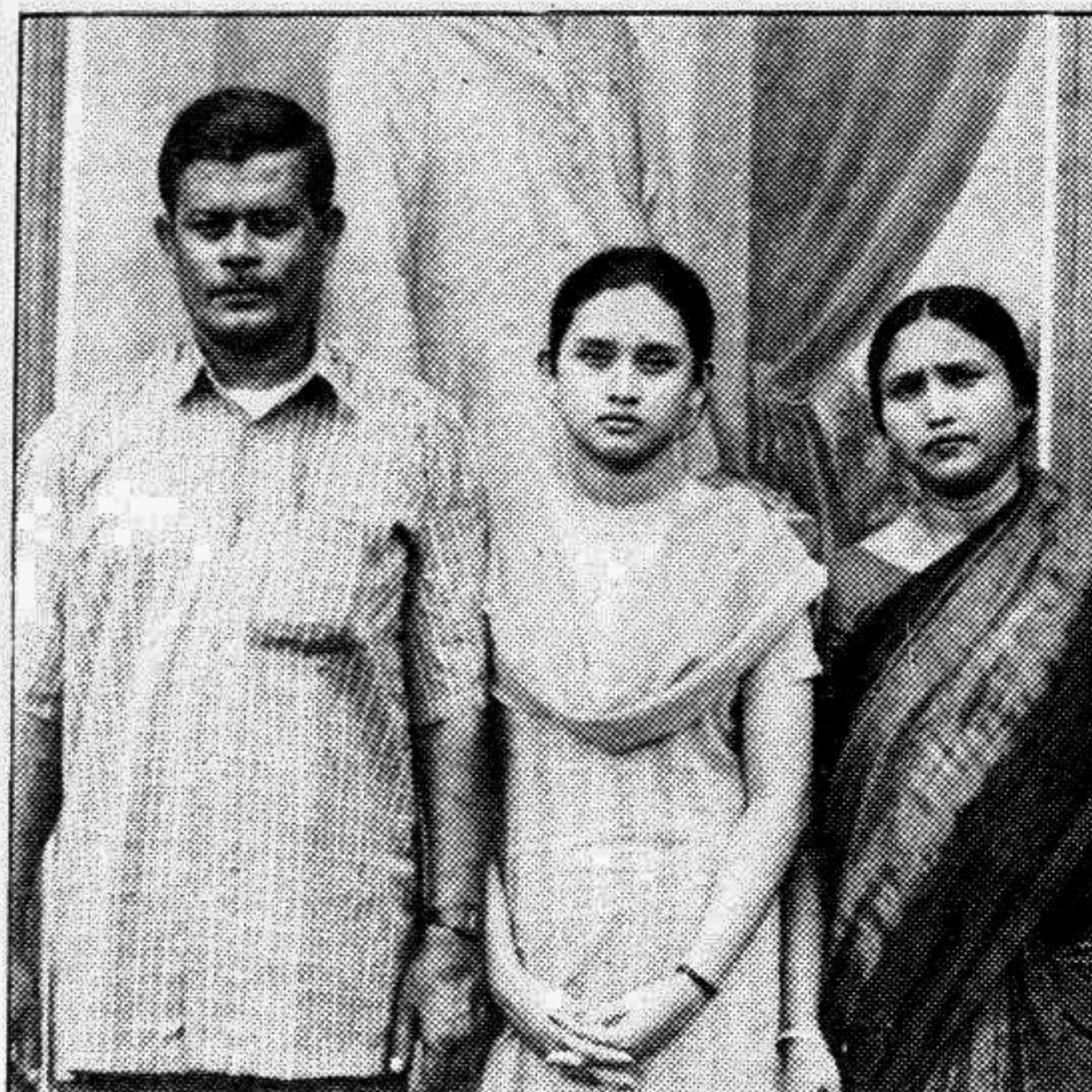


News snaps



Iman with her parents.

— Star photo

Iman wants to be a lawyer

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Sept 1: Entesar Alam Iman secured the first position in the combined merit list of the Humanities group in the HSC examination from Anirital Dey College under Jessore Education Board this year.

She obtained 905 marks in total with four letters in Logic, Statistics, Islamic Studies and Computer Science.

Her father SM Lutful Alam is a businessman, now residing at Baldyapara in Barisal town. Her mother is a housewife. Iman, is a singer of Tagore song and won prizes at the national level at different times.

She dislikes student politics. She wants to be a lawyer in future.

Discussion on Nazrul

GAZIPUR, Sept 1: A discussion meeting on the life and works of the national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam on the occasion of his 23rd death anniversary was held on 29th August at the weekly Bhalwal office here, reports BSS.

Organised by Bhalwal Shishu Kishore Mela, the discussion was presided over by its president, J. H. Mollah, Nurul Islam, Pradip Adhikari, M. A. Rahman, Mahbubur Rahman, Monirul Zaman and Maria Akhtar, among others, took part in the discussion. The speakers discussed various aspects of the life and works of the poet and said he played a great role in the independence movement of the sub-continent.

Aman cultivation on 45,271 hectares

MANIKGANJ, Sept 1: A total of 45,271 hectares of land have been brought under aman paddy cultivation in the seven thanas of Manikganj district in the current season, according to Agriculture Extension Department, reports BSS.

The thana-wise break-up of aman cultivation is as follows: Manikganj sadar 7,477.8 hectares, Singair 5,342 hectares, Sataria 6,234 hectares, Ghior 5,450 hectares, Dalatpur 3,850 hectares, Shivalaya 7,540 hectares and Harirampur 9,377 hectares. Improved variety seeds were supplied to the farmers and different banks including Krishi Bank disbursed loan for the cultivation in the district.

Five killed in separate incidents

KHULNA, Sept 1: Five people were killed and eight others critically injured in separate incidents in the district recently, reports UNB.

Police and hospital sources said an old man, Patiram Sarder, died on the spot and eight people were injured when an army jeep crashed into a tempo in Chalna. In another incident, a rickshaw-puller, aged about 35, and an unidentified passerby in his 40s were killed when a bus knocked them down at Elahipur on Rupsha-Mongla road. Besides, Nawab Ali, 60, hailing from Sheikhpur village in Terogadathana who was injured in a road accident on Khulna-Mongla road, succumbed to his injuries at a city hospital. At the city's Jatpur crossing, an unidentified old man was killed when a train knocked him down.

Five children drown

BOGRA, Sept 1: At least five children drowned in separate incidents in Shariatkandi thana recently, reports BSS.

Twin brothers Hassan and Hossain drowned in flood waters at Ramgarh village. Sheikh Hamid, 7, son of Qurban and Tohin, 6, son of Dulal Mia drowned near their house. Shihani Mia, 3, son of Mokter of Horina vilage drowned also in flood waters.

Deerskins seized

KHULNA, Sept 1: Police seized seven deerskins from a trawler in the river Bhairab near Fultala Bazar of the district recently, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, police recovered the abandoned deerskins from the trawler at the bazaar ferry ghat. The deerskins were being trafficked by an organised group of smugglers, but police could not yet arrest anyone in this connection.

Reception to SSC talents

TANGAIL, Sept 1: Students who secured first division in this year's SSC examinations from Tangail Sadar thana was accorded a reception by the Thana Parishad here recently, reports BSS.

Awami League presidium member Abdul Mannan M P attended the meeting as the chief guest. Presided over by Sadar Thana Nirbahi Officer Nasima Begum the function was addressed among others by Deputy Commissioner M Habibullah and former member of the Planning Commission Dr Sekandar Hayat Khan Eusufzai. Mannan called upon the students to devote themselves in the pursuit of knowledge so that they could shoulder greater responsibility of the nation in future.

Mothers' rally held

NARSINGDI, Sept 1: A rally of mothers of school students was held at Bajan Government Primary School premises in Belabo Thana of the district recently, reports BSS.

Mostafa Ahmed, former District Information Officer presided over the rally. Belabo Thana Education Officer Md Akhtar Hossain attended the rally as the chief guest. About 300 mothers took part in the rally, which discussed the role of mothers in the education of their children. Prizes were distributed among the mothers who had taken special care in sending their children to schools.

Discussion on drug control

KUSHTIA, Sept 1: A discussion on the role of parents and guardians to free the society from the curse of drug was held recently in the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner here, reports BSS.

Additional District Magistrate Abul Hossain presided over the meeting organised by the Bangladesh Inter-religious Brotherhood Association. Khabir Uddin Ahmed, Deputy Director of the Drug and Narcotics Control Department, among others, took part in the discussion. The speakers said that the people of all sections of the society irrespective of caste, creed and religion should come forward to save the nation from the curse of drug. Parents and guardians can play a vital part in this respect, they said.

Reception to brilliant students

MANIKGANJ, Sept 1: A reception was accorded to the brilliant students who secured star marks in the SSC examination this year by district JSD at its office recently, reports BSS.

The reception meeting was presided over by Arif Hossain Loton, President, district unit of JSD. Iqbal Hossain Khan, Organising Secretary, Central Committee of JSD was present as the chief guest. The parents and guardians of the brilliant students were also present in the reception. The brilliant students were given prizes in the meeting.

School teacher beaten up

BAGERHAT, Sept 1: A high school teacher was critically injured as miscreants beat him up with iron rods at Chandrapara village in Kachua thana recently, reports UNB.

Villagers said the criminals picked up Azhar Ali, an assistant teacher of Gopalmut Girls' High School, from in front of Khalishakholi Primary School while he was returning home at night. They took him to a desolate spot and beat him up severely. They also pushed him into his legs and later left him in an unconscious state.

Unabated smuggling of Hilsa to India

From Abdur Wadood

RAJSHAHI, Sept 1: Hilsa is being smuggled out to India now in large scale.

Smuggling of hilsa has adversely affected the local markets in the ongoing season due to meagre supply of Hilsa, said a fish trader of Saheb Bazaar in the city.

Rajshahi region is not actually a Hilsa producing zone. Small fishermen catch Hilsa from the Padma and supply the same to the local markets.

The district fisheries office sources said the catches of hilsa here had fallen to about 10,000 metric tons from more than one lakh tons in the last 15 years.

This is mainly due to the adverse effect of the Farakka Barrage. Innumerable shoals have emerged in the Padma river bed resulting in obstacle in free movement of Hilsa here, an official said requesting anonymity. A very negligible number of the Hilsa cross the

Hardinge Bridge now a days, he said. In the previous years, local catches had met about 85 per cent of the local demands. The number of Hilsas, especially the big ones, crossing the Hardinge Bridge, is decreasing every year, the fisheries official said and elaborated that unabated fishing of 'jatkas' was another reason of decrease in production of Hilsa all over the country.

Local fish traders observed that at least 50 per cent of the total catches were being smuggled out to West Bengal of India. Only the 'jatkas' are released in the local markets, they said. "Now, about 80 per cent of the local demands are met by importing the fish from the Hilsa producing zones," they said.

Markets in Rajshahi region have almost been devoid of Hilsa fish from the very beginning of the season this year due to sharp fall in catches of the

fish almost everywhere in the country.

"I am catching only two to three Hilsa, a day" said Riazul Islam, 35, of village of Tangon in Charchat thana, who has been fishing in the Padma with his small boat for the last 13 years. "Catches of Hilsas are being reduced every year, but I have never experienced such a lean period in my whole life."

55-year-old Asgar Mia of Yusufpur village in the same thana said.

They informed that though considerably little in amount this year, most of the Hilsas, especially the big ones, were going across the border.

Both the whole sellers and the retailers in the markets of the city and the suburbs disclosed almost the same informations. "West Bengal has always been a very good market of Hilsa", they said.

The Commanding Officer of

BDR Rajshahi Sector rejected the allegation of smuggling of

Hilsa across the borders of Rajshahi region. "Not a single hilsa is going across the border", he said and explained that fishing of 'jatka' was the main cause of scarcity of Hilsa. Another BDR official on condition of anonymity, however, acknowledged that Hilsa was being smuggled in small amount. They were ignoring this trend as chasing Hilsa smugglers would seriously hamper fishing in the river.

A wholesale marchant said that Hilsa was being smuggled out and exported in large scale from the Hilsa producing zones. "Though catches are comparatively less this year, scarcity of Hilsa would not be so severe. If smuggling and export from the Hilsa zone can be prevented people will get Hilsa at a reasonable price," he said.

Brahmaputra may devour Kamarjani port in Gaibandha any moment

From K M Rezaul Hoque

GAIBANDHA, Sept 1: Kamarjani river port, market and surrounding areas in the sadar thana are threatened by the Brahmaputra's erosion.

The erosion has now intensified in the area. Many shops, dwelling houses and other structures have already gone under water.

Kamarjani is a river port where country boats and cargo vessels from different places are anchored round the year for carrying goods and passengers. The port is famous for jute and paddy business. Boats carry goods towards Narayanganj and other port towns.

Erosion took an 'alarming turn' with sharp rise in water level in the Brahmaputra basin. Major portion of Kamarjani bazaar and about 100 dwelling houses went into the river. Besides, one food godown and union health centre and several other business units are now on the verge of destruction due to erosion.

Three villages namely Chowdhurybari, Gohat and Karabari have already corded away rendering 3,000 people homeless. Seven more villages in the area are seriously affected by the erosion.

On August 29 the local people of Kamarjani area brought out a procession demanding steps to check erosion. They laid siege to the Deputy Commissioner's (DC) office and Water Development Board (WDB) office and for taking emergency precautionary measure to halt the erosion. They handed over a memo to DC.



Damaged Sakpala embankment along the River Katakhal in Gobindaganj thana of Gaibandha district.

—Star photo

Although unabated erosion is going on for the last few years yet WDB is yet to take any precautionary measure. During the ongoing season WDB did not take any emergency protective measure till filing of this report.

While talking to the Executive Engineer of WDB, Gaibandha he told The Daily Star that the department had undertaken a protective scheme

for constructing 500 feet closure dam at the upstream. Accordingly a project of Taka nine crore nine lakh has been forwarded to higher authority but till date no fund was allocated for implementation of the project.

About 500 feet areas of Sakpala embankment along the River Katakhal and 300 feet embankment at Tarafkanu in

Gobindaganj thana are now threatened by erosion. If the embankment is damaged water will directly submerge the national highway. A 100-year-old mosque at Kaiyaganj on the bank of the River Katakhal may erode at any time. However, WDB personnel are working round the clock to stop seepage at the embankment site with sand bags and bamboo pilings.



Season of harvesting: Ripe golden Aus paddy brought new hope for Magura farmers who are engaged in harvesting the paddy at village Boro Khori in the sadar thana recently.

— star photo

Four commit suicide in Mymensingh

From Aminul Islam

MYMENSINGH, Sept 1: Four people committed suicide in different places in the district recently.

According to police and family sources, Bahar Mia, 24, son of Atab Ali of village Batajour under Bhaluka thana, committed suicide by taking poison following an altercation with his wife on July 4.

In another incident, one Selina Akhtar, 20, wife of Helal Uddin of village Bhatgona under Bhaluka thana killed herself by taking poison following a quarrel with her husband over a trifle matter on the same day.

A teenage girl committed suicide at village Harua under Iswarganj thana on June 21. The victim was identified as Shamima Akhtar, 12, daughter of one Ali Newaj.

According to police, Shamima killed herself as her father rebuked her as a goat of the family had eaten saplings of one of her neighbours.

An Alim examinee identified as Ujjal Mia, 25, committed suicide on June 13 by taking poison following an altercation with his mother.

He was rushed to Trishal Thana Health Complex in a critical condition where he succumbed to his injuries.

Bridge to be constructed over Chhoto Jamuna

NAOGAON, Sept 1: A bridge over river Chhoto Jamuna will be constructed at a cost of Tk 5.14 crore, reports UNB.

The ruling party presidium member Abdul Jalil laid the foundation stone of the 110-metre bridge on Friday.

Shahin Monwara Haq MP, Pourasava chairman Akhter Ahmed Siddique and senior officials here were present on the occasion.

There will be pavement on both sides of the three-span bridge, which will be constructed under the supervision of the Roads and Highway Department.

BSS from Feni reports: The construction of six bridges on different roads of Feni district is in full swing.

Roads and Highways Department has undertaken the programme to construct these bridges at a cost of about Taka 11 crore in the last financial year.

The bridges are: Silonia Bridge on Feni-Majdee Road, Bivolee Bridge on Feni-Rajapur Road, Mahariganj Bridge on Chhaganaiya- Mahariganj Road, Box Mahmood Bridge on Captain Leak Road, Lemua Bridge on Lemua-Laskar Hat Road and Gatia Bridge on Feni-Parshuram Road.

Forty per cent work of these bridges have already been completed and the rest will be completed by December this year.

After completion of these bridges communication facilities of the district will be improved much.

Night coach robbery in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Sept 1: At least six passengers were injured and valuables worth at least taka three lakh were looted from a night coach in the district recently.

Police said a gang of armed robbers in the guise of passengers suddenly overwhelmed the driver of Dhaka-bound night coach, Suman paribahan, and looted valuables from passengers at gun point.

When some passengers tried to protect themselves, the robbers beat them up. At least six passengers of the coach (Dhaka metro Cha-99191) were beaten up.

The robbers left the coach near Bardah bridge area under Saikupa thana of the district. A case was filed with police in this connection.

Anti-mosquito pilot project at Bandarban

BANDARBAN, Sept 1: A week-long pilot project to free the local municipality from the mosquito menace began recently, reports BSS.

Health department in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO) launched the project in the municipality area, which is identified by the WHO as high malaria risk zone of the country.

As part of the project, 10 medical teams soaked around three thousand mosquito nets with Deltha Mathaprin in nine wards of the municipality and later on the project will be implemented in all thanas of the district in phases.

The mosquitoes which spread malaria will die off as soon as they come in touch with the mosquito nets soaked with Deltha-Mathaprin, health experts said.

They said the use of the mosquito nets would completely free the bedrooms from malaria for at least nine months and will also help check mosquito biting immensely, the sources said.

Sherpur, Pabna farmers face certificate cases

SHERPUR, Sept 1: Some 1,338 certificate cases were filed against loan defaulters here in the last 1998-99 fiscal year, reports UNB.

The cases were filed in a bid to realise land development taxes totalling Tk 10.31 lakh that remained outstanding with the farmers during the year, officials said.

They added that 85 of the cases were settled and over Tk 2.23 lakh realised during the period.

Some 318 cases were filed for realising Tk 2.40 lac in sadar thana, 590 cases for Tk 24,781 in Nakla, 44 cases for Tk 2.16 lac in Nalitabari, 178 cases for Tk 2.60 lac in Jhenaidag and 123 cases for Tk 66,600 in Sribardha thana.

Another report from Pabna adds: Certificate cases were filed against 3,939 farmers in nine thanas of the district to realise Tk 6.99 crore in outstanding dues, including crop loans.

Officials said 715 cases were filed for realising Tk 1.02 crore in sadar thana, 359 cases for Tk 1.06 crore in Ishwardi, 198 cases for Tk 32.77 lakh in Bhanga, 481 cases for Tk 1.40 crore in Chatmohar and 499

cases for Tk 90.21 lakh in Santhia thana.

Besides, 876 cases were filed for realising Tk 68.45 lac in Atghoria thana, 235 cases for Tk 41.69 lac in Bera, 123 cases for Tk 27.88 lac in Sujannagar and 453 cases for Tk 89.27 lac in Faridpur thana of the district.

Local farmers alleged that the authorities concerned were harassing them.

AL-BNP clash in Magura: 20 hurt

MAGURA, Sept 1: At least 20 people were injured, two seriously, in a clash between the activists of Awami League and BNP at Shalikhata head-quarters today, reports UNB.

Critically injured, Awami League worker Nowsher Ali and Chhatra League activist Baharul Islam were admitted to local thana health complex.

Police said the clash began when BNP activists raised provocative slogans from a rally while a procession of Arpara College Chhatra League was crossing the area in the noon.

Sayeed urges NGOs

Help solve housing problems in villages

From Ranesh Maitra

PABNA, Sept 1: State Minister for Information Abu Sayeed urged non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to work for addressing the housing problems in rural areas.

The government will provide all-out support to the organisations in this regard, the state minister said.

Professor Abu Sayeed was addressing a peasants rally recently at Bishnupur village under Santhia thana. The rally was organised on the occasion of hand over of documents of some houses to land-less people, Samata, an NGO, has constructed the houses.

Presided over by Sekendar Ali, President of the Executive Committee of Samata, the rally was also addressed, among others, by Omar Faruque, Santhia Thana Nirbahi Officer, Abdul Kader, Managing Director of Samata, Sarwar Alam, Programme Director of Samata, Golam Rasul, Head Master of Dulal High School, Aleya Khatun and Mohammad Niaz, two land-less peasants.

The state minister, in his speech, lauded the activities of Samata, the NGO which has been working for land-less peasants in the area for one and a half decade, for mitigating housing problems rural area.

Abdul Kader, Managing Director of Samata, said the organisation had taken up the scheme to construct 600 houses in four thanas of Pabna district for land-less people. The thanas are Santhia, Bera, Sujannagar and Faridpur.

The managing director said Bangladesh Bank is financing the project. The central bank has already provided an amount of Tk 1,20,000, he said, adding some houses have already been completed.

Abdul Kader said house owners would pay for the houses in 20 quarterly installments.

Arsenic related diseases spreading

KHULNA, Sept 1: The laboratory test showed that waters of 50 per cent of the tubewells in 21 districts are contaminated with high percentage of arsenic causing various diseases, reports UNB.

Officials said sample of waters were collected from 3,308 tube wells in the region and tested in the laboratory. The test revealed waters of 1,556 tubewells carried arsenic ranging up to 10 milligram per litre. The waters of 512 tubewells contained more than 10 milligrams of arsenic.

The tolerable level of arsenic was found in waters of 7,048 tube wells.

The test has been conducted since May this year following report of widespread diseases caused by using contaminated water.

High percentage of arsenic was found in waters of 1,871 tube wells out of 2634 tested in the districts of Khulna division.

Loan for farmers, poor men

Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) and Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) have distributed loans among farmers and poor people in three districts, report agencies.

BKB disbursed farm loans of Tk 21.51 crore among the farmers of Rajbari district in last fiscal year (1998-99).

BKB, through its 13 branches in four thanas here, has distributed the loans among 19,422 farmers, including sharecroppers.

Of the total, about Tk 16.37 crore was disbursed for crop cultivation while the rest for other sectors, including agribusiness.

Meanwhile, the bank realised outstanding loans of Tk 13.37 crore during the period from 10,890 farmers here, officials added.

BRDB has distributed Tk 6.82 crore loans among 7,000 poor peasants of Pirojpur during the last financial year ending in June, reports UNB.

Official sources said the amount exceeded the target of Tk 6.65 crore set earlier to disburse among members of 397 cooperative societies.

They said the loans were in-

tended to raise farm production, cow fattening and small trading, nursery and dairy firm and making fishing net.

Of the total, Tk 1.16 crore were disbursed in sadar, Tk 82.86 lakh in Nazirpur, Tk 2.23 crore in Sworupkati and Tk 65 lakh in Kaokhali thana.

Besides, loans of Tk 56 lakh were disbursed in Bhandaria, Tk 84 lakh in Mathbaria and Tk 54.63 lakh in Indarkani thana.

BRDB under its productive employment generation project has distributed Tk 95 lakh as loan among the poor people in Palong thana of Shariatpur district.

The recipients were also given toilet slabs and hand driven tubewells free of interest in a bid to help improve their environment.

Meanwhile, BKB, Chuadanga region recovered Taka 9,45,95,000 as outstanding loan from the borrowers in 1998-1999 fiscal year, exceeding the target by 10 per cent, a bank source said here.

BKB had fixed the target of recovery of outstanding loan at Taka 8,60,00,000 in the region in the last fiscal year.



Save the city: Rajshahi city unit of Bangladesh Chhatra Maitree recently brought out a procession in the city demanding immediate renovation of Rajshahi town protection embankment.

—Star photo



Magura district unit of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) brought out a procession in the town recently as part of the party's out-government movement.—Star photo