



Two schoolgirls wading through waist-deep flood water in Ratankandi in Sirajganj Sadar upazila. Nine upazilas of the district have been affected in the third onslaught of flood this season.

# 1.5 lakh marooned as nine Sirajganj upazilas flooded

4 boys drown, diseases break out, 2000 weaving factories shut

A CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Onrush of water from the upstream and rain have again flooded many areas in nine upazilas in Sirajganj district. Over 1.5 lakh people in shoals of Jamuna, Karotoa and Fhulzhar rivers have become marooned in the third onslaught of flood in the district in the current season. At least four minor boys drowned in floodwaters in the last two days. They are Asadul, 9, of Khas Rajbari village and Ujjal, 5, of Kumerbari in Kazipur upazila; Siam, 4, of Dabaria village in Shahzadpur upazila, and

Mosharaf, 2, of Delmura village in Rayganj upazila. The worst affected areas are Meghai, Shuvogacha, Gandhail, Kuralia and Shimanto Bazar in Kazipur upazila; Rantankandi, Bahuka, Shimla, Khokshabari, Songacha, Bahuli and Ranigram in Sadar upazila; Bhuiganti, Naika and Dhangara in Raigang upazila; Naogaon, Kachikata, Magura-Bindopur in Challan Beel area in Tarash upazila; Shalanga, Salop, Sreekhola, Mahonpur in Ullapara upazila; Baghabari, Talgachi, Chobila in Shahjadpur upazila; Zoknaia, Tamai, Randhunibari,

Shahbajpur, Chala in Belkuchi upazila; Betil, Enayetpur, Ghorjan in Chauhali upazila. Areas of Sirajganj, Shahzadpur, Kazipur, Belkuchi and Ullapara pourashava have also reeled under water. Waterborne diseases have broken out in some areas due to lack of drinking water. About 2000 weaving factories have been closed as those have been inundated. According to District Relief and Rehabilitation Office (DRRO), at least 8000 houses in the low-lying areas have been fully or partly damaged by the flood that inun-

dated transplanted Aman seedlings on 7,921 hectares of land. Officials said 43 educational institutions have been damaged. These include Tenglahata Degree College, Tenglahata Primary School, Banglabazar Primary School in Kazipur. The flood affected people in different area blamed the local Water Development Board (WDB) authorities, saying the areas were flooded again at they did not repair the breached embankments of rivers.

PHOTO: STAR

## Move to resist Saidee from holding meet in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

A tense situation is prevailing in Brahmanbaria town centring today's public meeting of Jamaat-e-Islami MP Delwar Hussain Saidee. He is scheduled to attend a meeting of madrasha teachers to be held at the municipal auditorium. Protesting coming of Saidee to the town, the local unit of Sammilita Sangskritik jote started miking in the town at about 11 am, calling upon the people to resist his visit. Police seized the mike and nabbed the announcer. The Jote then brought out a procession in the town. The processionists chanted various slogans against Saidee. The Jote also held a protest rally in front of Brahmanbaria Press Club with it convenor Abdun Noor in the chair. The meeting was addressed by, among other, former municipal chairman Md Helal Uddin, district AL organizing secretary Mamun Sarker, joint suretary Major (ret'd) Jahurul Haque Khan Bir Prolhik, JSD district president Akter Hossain Sayed, CPB president Sajidul Islam, Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee convenor Poet Joydul Hossain, Jabo League president Aminur Rahman, Workers Party leader Abu Sayed, Bangabandhu Parishad president Jahangir Alam and Titas Shahitya Parishad secretary Md Monir.

## AL procession batoned in Sirajganj: 50 injured

A CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

At least 50 people were injured, six of them critically, as Awami League activists clashed with police in SS Road area in front of the district Awami League office in Sirajganj town yesterday. Five policemen were also injured. Seventeen of the injured people were taken to the Sadar Hospital while AL leaders former lawmaker Abdul Latif Mirza, Abu Yusub Surjo and Abdul Hamid were treated at a clinic. Police and AL sources raid, the clash erupted at about 10.30 am when police intercepted an Awami League procession brought out to protest the countrywide bomb blasts on August 17. With reinforcement, police charged batons and dispersed the processionists. Foreign power behind blasts, says Ershad

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad has said there is no Islamist militant group in Bangladesh which can blast 506 bombs at a time across the country. "This is not possible without the help of foreign help", he said a meeting of party leaders and workers in Jessore town yesterday. Representatives of JP and its front organisations from Jessore, Jhenidah, Magura and Narail attended the meeting, held at Jessore District Council auditorium. The bomb attacks were made by those who want to make Bangladesh a 'failed satate', he added. The former president said, conspiracy is on to re-establish one party BKSAL rule in Bangladesh, erase Bismillah from the Constitution and snatch freedom of the press. He said Jatiya Party will participate in the next parliamentary polls even if Awami League boycotts it. Presided over by the Jessore district JP General Secretary Mahbub Alam Bachchu, the meeting was addressed by, among others, Razia Faiz, Hasan Ahmed Suza, Abdul Latif, Abdur Rahim, Sharif Monir Hossain and Mostafa Faruq Ahmed.

# 'I now want body of my son, nothing else'

Mother of abducted Miraj resigns to destiny

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

'I now want the body of my son only, nothing else, enough is enough'. Noorjahan Begum, dejected elderly mother of 40-year-old Syed Miraj Ali said on Wednesday 54 days into abduction of her son. Miraj was kidnapped at gun point from his house at Fulbari village in Hazipur union of Sadar upazila by a gang of criminals led by Idu on July 8, alleged family members. They abducted him because he raised voice against illegal trade of fake currency notes, they said. 'I have been passing sleepless nights from the day of my son's abduction', shell-shocked mother of Miraj told this correspondent. In absence of Miraj, the entire family has been facing extreme financial crisis. Being the eldest son, he was the sole earning member after death of his father Akbar Ali. Miraj's wife Jesmin Sultana Kajal, mother Nurjahan and relatives tried their best to free him from abductors. Even they met both the Deputy Commissioner (DC) and Superintendent of Police (SP), but in vain. They got only their assurance from the law enforcers. 'What can we do more to get back my husband?', a despaird Kajal told this correspondent. When the family members went to Idu to know the whereabouts of Miraj, Idu demanded a handsome amount of money as ransom for his release and warned them not to go to police. The helpless family members informed the matter to local Union Parishad (UP) chairman Abul

Qashem Titop. Titop assured release of Miraj within a few days and suggested not to file any case. But Miraj was not released. After four days, they met the Sadar police station officer in-charge (OC) to file a general diary (GD).



Syed Miraj Ali

But the OC suggested them to contact the UP chairman. Finally, the family members filed a case with a magistrate's court. They held a press conference at Magura Press Club on August 21, where Miraj's mother appealed for intervention of the prime minister to rescue her son. The issue was also raised at the law and order review meeting of the district on August 24. Minister in-Charge of Magura district Barkat Ullah Bulu MP, ordered the administration to rescue the abducted person within 10 days, but to no effect. The law enforcers miserably failed to bring the culprits to book. When contacted, Magura SP Mia Lutfur Rahman Chowdhury said, 'Police hunt is going on to nab the culprits and rescue Miraj'.



PHOTO: STAR

Mother of abducted Miraj, left, with her daughter in law and two children. Miraj was kidnapped at gunpoint about two months ago.

# A little attention that changed their lot

A UNDP programme helps the poor in Kushtia

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

Even poor and illiterate slum people, if motivated, can do great things and change their life and environment. This has been proved in Kushtia town. After motivation under a UNDP programme, over 3000 people in --- area in the town now live in a hygienic environment and have launched income generating projects without any loan. They have demolished at least 150 houses and built footpaths and drains to improve their living conditions, and relocated so many shanties to build roads and ensure sanitation. They also have earned basic knowledge about hygienic living. They themselves decide things for the better and jointly implement those. The changes they brought about was beyond their imagination years ago, some of them said while talking to this correspondent.

This has been possible after the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) launched its Local Partnerships For Urban Poverty Alleviation Project (LPUPAP) in August 2000 with the cooperation of Kushtia Pourasabha. The project is being implemented by the municipality with technical assistant from United Nations for Human Settlements (UN-Habitat). "Success was not achieved easily because creating awareness was a very difficult job", Kushtia Municipality Chairman Anwar Ali told this correspondent. He is also chairman of the 'Project Coordination Committee' (PCC). After about four years, the project now covers 12 wards in the municipality. Thirty-three 'Community Development Committees' (CDCs) have been formed covering of 31,842 people of 7814 families. The slum dwellers have constructed 4499.80 meters of foot-

path, 2899.45 meters of drain, 750 drain slabs and culverts and laid water supply pipelines and installed 1996 pucca latrines in their areas, all done with their savings. The people taking loans are engaged in different income generating activities like running tea stalls and hotels, making Naxikatha (a traditional decorated quilt), raising poultry and rearing milch cows and goats and making confectionery items. Some people have done an exceptional work. They have jointly set up a spice factory, which produces grind spices with a brand name -- Community Gura Mashla' (community grind spice). At least 330 people of different ages are being trained in 24 vocations like nursing, welding, sewing, poultry raising and light engineering work at a cost of Tk 4145400, he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Slum dwellers in a Kushtia municipal ward relocating houses to construct a lane and a drain under a UNDP project being implemented by the municipal authorities

# A vet college cries for funds

Fate of students, staff uncertain as the institution not transferred under revenue budget

A CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Uncertainty has gripped the 150 students and 112 staff including 35 teachers of Dinajpur Veterinary College as the institution has not been transferred under the government's revenue budget. The institution was built under a development programme, which expired on June 30 this year. All funding for the institution has been stopped and the staff did not get their salary for the month of July, students joined by teachers' representatives told a press conference at Dunajpur Press Club on Saturday. The staff are passing days in great uncertainty after the college authorities got an official letter from Dhaka that the institution can not be transferred under the revenue budget. Students of the college earlier staged demonstrations demanding inclusion of the college in the revenue budget. At the press conference, the students demanded integration of the college with Haji Danesh Science and Technology University (HSTU) by creating a new faculty to ensure continuation of their academic life. ASM Moniruzzaman, a third year student, read out a written statement at the press conference on behalf of students and staff. Some teachers were also present.

After the press conference, the students formed a human chain in front of Dinajpur Press Club to press the demand. The then Awami League government in 1997 initiated setting up of the college on a 10-acre land beside the HSTU along the Dinajpur-Dhaka highway, five kilometer off the town under a development programme of the ministry of education. The administrative building,

hostel for the students, training facilities and staff quarters for teachers been constructed at a cost of about Tk 30 crore. Many facilities are yet to be created, the students and teachers told the press conference. The DGVC authorities at different times appointed 112 employees including 35 teachers. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia inaugurated the DGVC on April 23,

2003, when the institution began academic activities. The five-year curriculum includes one year internship. There are three departments. Fifty of the students are in the third year of their academic life at the college. Principal of the college later told this correspondent that many of the teachers are thinking to leave the institution. This has created frustration among students, he said.

Students of Dinajpur Veterinary College formed a human chain in front of Dinajpur Press Club on Saturday demanding its integration with Haji Danesh Science and Technology



PHOTO: STAR