

## 'Farmers ignored in budgetary process'

### Haripada Kapali receives Channel i Krishi Padak

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Channel i, a Bangla satellite television channel, yesterday conferred 'Channel i Krishi Padak 2006' on Haripada Kapali in recognition of his contribution to developing Haridhan, a new variety of high yielding and low-cost rice, in Jhenidah.

At the award giving ceremony at Biam auditorium in the city, the TV channel also gave away prizes to six winners of an essay writing competition organised to mark the third year of its popular agriculture-based programme 'Hridoye Mati O Manush'.

A book titled 'Janavashya' (peoples' voice) with 100 best essays selected from all the entries of the competition was also launched at the function.

The discovery of Haridhan has an interesting background.

Haripada Kapali, a marginal farmer of Asannagar village under Saduhati union, once went to his paddy field to check insects. He suddenly noticed a paddy plant with more sheaves and taller than the others. Being amazed, the 70-year-old farmer took special care of the plant separating it from others and stores its seeds.

In the next Aman season, Haripada planted the high breed variety and collected more seeds.

"After repeating the process for next two years, I cultivated the rice in half-a-bigha land. When other farmers saw the rice, they were impressed and began producing it collecting seeds from me. They then named it Haridhan after my name," said Haripada Kapali in a programme of Channel i.

He said Haridhan gives a yield of 16 to 18 maunds in one bigha whereas production of other varieties during Aman season in the same area is not more than 12 maunds.

"Haridhan also needs less fertilizer and insecticides," he added.

Haripada became emotional after receiving the crest and Tk 50,000 from Faridur Reza Sagar, managing director of Channel i, and Shykh Siraj, director and presenter of Hridoye Mati O Manush.

Speaking on the occasion,



PHOTO: STAR

Faridur Reza Sagar, managing director of Channel i, hands over the 'Channel i Krishi Padak 2006' to Haripada Kapali, a farmer who developed Haridhan, at a ceremony at Biam auditorium in the city yesterday while Shykh Siraj, director and presenter of Hridoye Mati O Manush, looks on.

renowned media personalities and economists termed the Channel i's unique initiative of introducing the award for significant contribution to agriculture a milestone in the development of country's agriculture sector where farmers, the heroes behind the scene, are deprived of their due rights.

"We speak of poverty alleviation, show data and statistics in research papers, but those do not reflect the real picture of farmers, their sorrows or sufferings," said Shykh Siraj.

A big portion of annual budget is allocated for agriculture, but the farmers know little about it, he said, adding that their participation in the budgetary process is ignored.

"Sixty-three percent of the total workers are agricultural farmers, but they do not have any platform through which they can place their demands," he added.

Dr Mostafizur Rahman, research

director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said the farmers with their long experiences discover new technologies and varieties which are not often taken into consideration.

Lauding the contribution of the programme Hridoye Mati O Manush to agricultural development, he said media can highlight the country's successes in this sector.

Economist Dr Atiur Rahman appreciated Shykh Siraj for his passion for agriculture sector saying his programme Mati O Manush in Bangladesh Television and Hridoye Mati O Manush in Channel i have significant contributed to make the country's agriculture sector vibrant.

"Today's macroeconomic scenario of the country could not have been so without the farmers' contribution," he said.

The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam expressed regret at the

failure of the media, particularly the print media, to focus on the needs of farmers who played the key role in GDP growth.

"We, the journalists, hope to practise people-oriented journalism and contribute to the development of agro-based industries in the country," he said, appreciating Shykh Siraj for pursuing journalism for the development of agriculture.

Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury, Dr Amr Farook of Sher-e-Bangla Agriculture University, South East University Vice-chancellor Dr M Shamsur Ali, BTV's General Manager Ali Imam and Impress Group Director Majumder Abdur Rashid also spoke at the function.

## 5 BNP leaders injured in Jhenidah bomb blast

BDNEWS, Jhenidah

At least six people, including five BNP leaders, were injured in a bomb blast at a shop near Kotechandpur upazila bus stand in Jhenidah last night.

Of the injured, five were identified as Kotechandpur thana BNP general secretary and Kushna UP chairman Golam Faruk, thana Jubo Dal president Ekramul Haque, Moazzem Hossain, Dora Union BNP president, Akhter Hossain, Kushna Union BNP general secretary, and Altaf Hossain, a BNP leader and former Poura commissioner.

The identity of the other could not be known immediately.

Police and witnesses said a gang of five to seven unidentified terrorists hurled two bombs on a shop near Kotechandpur upazila bus stand at about 7:45 pm.

Six people were injured as the bombs went off with a big bang. The wounded were admitted to local Health Complex.

## They themselves build their road

MONJUUR CHOWDHURY, Back from Munshiganj

Despite non-cooperation of the BNP government, the people of Srinagar and Sirajdikhan upazila in Munshiganj constructed a two-kilometre road in only three days to facilitate movement of some 25000 people.

From March 22 to 24, some 1000 voluntary workers participated in the construction work of the road, which is 19 kilometres away from the capital on the Dhaka-Mawa Highway.

Locals named the road as 'Protest Road', which connects Laxmibilash-Kalibari union of Srinagar upazila to the Dhaka-Mawa Highway.

While visiting the area, local lawmaker and Organising Secretary of Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) Mahi B Chowdhury told newsmen that as he an opposition lawmaker, his constituency is deprived of development by the government.

He said the district administration has cancelled the allocation of Tk 56 lakh as development work for the year 2005-2006 for his constituency as per government instruction.

"We made the road protesting the discriminatory attitude of the government," said the local lawmaker.

He also alleged that the government has cancelled projects of Tk 15 crore for his constituency.

On the occasion, BDB organised a rally on a side of Dhaka-Mawa Highway near the Protest Road.

Speaking as chief guest, BDB President Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury severely blasted the government for its step-motherly attitude towards the people of this area.

Referring to the construction of the road, Jatiya Oikya Mancha and Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain said it is a victory of the people against injustice.

He called upon people to elect candidates like Mahi in all constituencies to bring positive change to the country.

Bangladesh Tariqat Federation President Nazibul Bashar Maizbandari, BDB General Secretary Major (Rtd) Abdur Mannan, President of Jatiya Gontantrik Party Shafiqul Alam Prodhon, BDB Joint General Secretary Firoz M Hasan and Gono Forum Leader Mostafa Mohsin Montu also spoke.

## Fishing trawler capsizes in Pirojpur: one missing

UNB, Pirojpur

A fisherman remained missing and seven others were injured as a fishing trawler capsized after being hit by an oil tanker on Kacha river at Sanyasi in Zianagar, Pirojpur, early Thursday.

Enamul Haq, a survivor, told the police that seven injured fishermen managed to swim ashore, but another fisherman, Shafiqul Islam, 40, remained missing as of yesterday afternoon.

The police said a Mongla-bound oil tanker hit the fish-laden trawler at about 5:00am on Thursday. The trawler with eight fishermen on board sank instantly.

One of the injured fishermen was admitted to Sadar Hospital in a critical condition.

Receiving information, the police seized the oil tanker, but its crew managed to escape.

A case has been filed with the police.

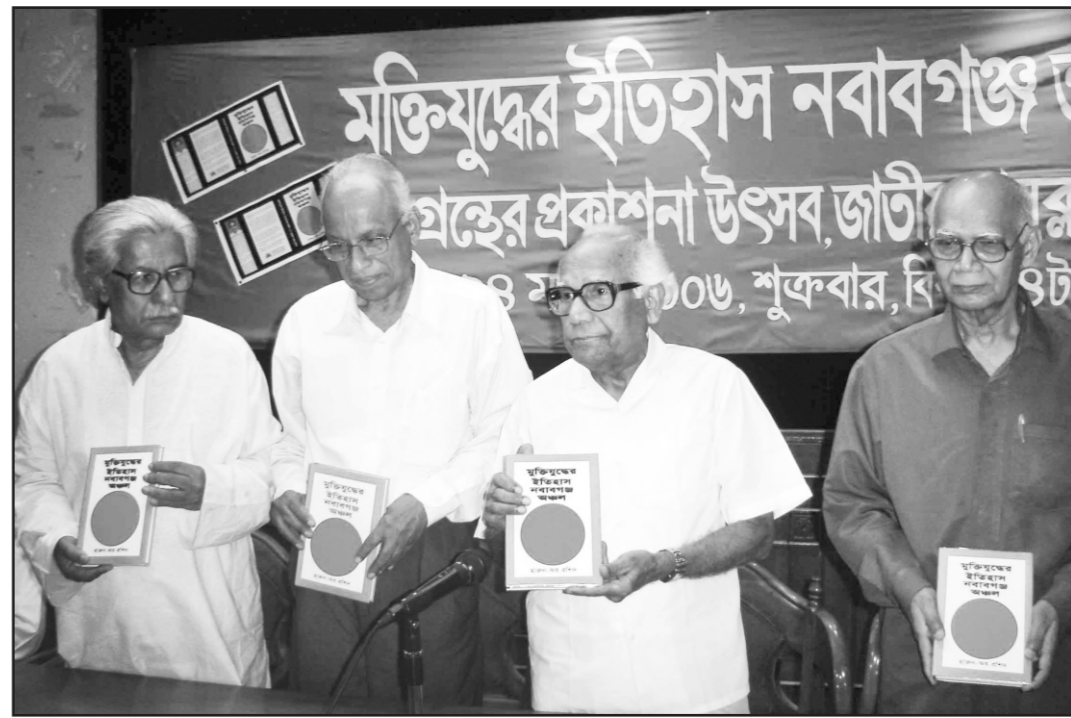


PHOTO: STAR

Justice KM Sobhan, second from right, launched a book titled 'Muktijuddher Itihas Nababganj Anchal' by Harun-or-Rashid at a ceremony at the National Press Club in the city yesterday

## '45 pc street vendors are victims of police extortion'

BSS, Dhaka

As the intensified anti-crime campaign visibly reduced high-profile criminal activities in recent time, earning credit for the law enforcement agencies, a study report yesterday revealed that 45 percent of street vendors in Dhaka are victims of extortion by the police.

"About 45 percent of 130,000 hawkers regularly pay 'toll' to police, eight percent to perpetrators of violence, four percent to student leaders and three percent to anybody whenever it was demanded," disclosed the study report presented at a workshop

on hawkers in the city.

Bangladesh Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Foundation organised the workshop.

According to the study, 46 percent of the street vendors in Dhaka are permanent while the rest are seasonal hawkers and nine percent of the total are women.

The study also found that 29 percent of vendors are illiterate, seven percent have minimum literacy skills, 24 percent studied from class VI up to SSC level and one percent up to HSC level.

The monthly income of 12 percent of vendors ranges from Tk 400 to 1,000, 25 percent earns Tk 1,000 to 2,000, 23 percent earns Tk 2,000 to 3,000, 10 percent earns Tk 3,000 to 4,000, seven percent earns Tk 4,000 to 5,000 and eight percent earns Tk 5,000 to 6,000, the report said.

Speakers at the workshop noted that 52 hawkers' markets were set up in the city to rehabilitate the street vendors, but most of them were occupied by influential people identifying themselves as hawkers.

## Rob calls for pro-people administrative system

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The key political imperative of the present day is to introduce a pro-people administrative system by bringing fundamental changes to the constitution of 1972, said Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal leader ASM Abdur Rob yesterday.

Speaking at a press briefing on 'Movement for eligible candidates' at the National Press Club, he placed a 10-point proposal for advancement of the nation.

Appreciating the civil society's initiative, 'Citizens' Dialogue', organised jointly by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), The Daily Star and the Prothom Alo on March 20 in the city, he said it would provide right direction to the countrymen ahead of the coming national election.

Rob termed the ongoing conflicts, terrorism, divisions and disunities in present politics 'a by-product of the 1972 Constitution'.

He also blamed the 'Constitutional limitations' for the failures in last 35 years, which he said paved the way for corruption and misuse.

He also demanded electoral reforms and announced that he would form a grand alliance ahead of the next election.

## Fire at packaging factory in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Panic gripped an industrial area in the city as a four-storied packaging factory was partially gutted in a fire yesterday.

Police said the fire at Khan Packaging in Tejgaon started at 5:50pm.

Eight fire fighting units from different parts of the city managed to bring the fire under control at around 7:30pm.

The cause of the fire and the extent of the damage are yet to be ascertained.

Assistant Director of Fire Services A B M Nurul Haq said the fire would have been devastating if it could come in touch with polyurethane and polymer powder kept in the factory.

The factory was closed on account of Friday.

## 'Muktijuddher Itihas Nababganj Anchal' launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

'Muktijuddher Itihas Nababganj Anchal', a book on the history of the liberation war in Nababganj region near Dhaka, was launched at a ceremony at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Speakers at the ceremony said it is a good addition to the research on the War of Liberation as it presented the real history of Nababganj in a lucid language.

The book written by Harun-or-Rashid will be a guide to the people who want to know about the freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives for the motherland during the liberation war in 1971, they added.

Unveiling the cover of the book, Justice KM Sobhan said the author has tried to portray the unforgettable events of the liberation war in simple words, which is the main power of the book.

Former secretary Dr Sheikh Maksud Ali said Nababganj was an important place for the freedom fighters and the author tried to focus on their activities in the region in his book.

"I know the real freedom fighters of Nababganj, particularly the grass-roots level fighters, so I went to them and collected information before writing the book," the author said.

Abdul Hamid Khan Majlis presided over the ceremony. Dhaka Ainjibi Samity Vice-President Sudhir Kumar Hazra, Dhaka University Professor Dr Abu Mohammad Delwar Hossain, office secretary of Awami League Abdul Mannan Khan and Krishak League Vice-President Azizur Rahman Faku also spoke.

## Fugitive convict arrested

UNB, Sathkira

Police arrested a fugitive convict at Brahmanrajpur in Sadar upazila of Sathkira district on Thursday.

The arrestee was identified as Mahdev Sadhu, 40, son of Shyamapada Sadhu.

A special tribunal sentenced him to 10 years' imprisonment in a smuggling case in May 2000, the police said.

He was tried in absentia after the BDR jawans had filed a case against him with the local police station for smuggling different goods from India through the borders in the district.

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

### Awareness campaign concludes

A 16-day campaign to raise awareness about violence against women ended in Dhaka on Thursday, says a press release.

Nari Unnayan Shakti (Women's Power for Development) organised the campaign through a series of cultural performances, rally and meetings with community members.

Similar programmes were also held in Chittagong, Bhola, Choumuhany and Pabna.

Afroja Parvin, executive director of Nari Unnayan Shakti (NUS), inaugurated the campaign with a rally at Badda in the city on March 8. Women from different professional groups, children and victims of violence took part in the rally.

A total of 164 folk singers performed in the cultural programmes along with NUS's cultural team.

SARIQ, AED, USAID, Department of Social Service, FCHD and Income Generating Programme of the NUS supported the campaign.

The objectives of the campaign were to raise awareness and motivate community people to resist various forms of violence against women and children.

The campaign also focused on a positive thrust to reduce the problems and rehabilitate the victims suffering from social stigma.

## Death anniversary

DU CORRESPONDENT



Today is the sixth death anniversary of BCL leader Kamruzzaman Sujon who was shot dead by unknown assailants in 2000.

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of main opposition Awami League (AL), will organise a discussion and milad mahfil on the occasion at Dhaka College today.

## Obituary



AHM Nurul Huda, former chairman of T&T Board, passed away on March 17 at the age of 80, says a press release.

He was also the Chief of Planning in the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications. He hailed from Comilla.

He left behind his wife, a son, two daughters, five grandchildren and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

## Abu Mohammad Sadeq



Abu Mohammad Sadeq, a businessman, passed away at Birdem Hospital in Dhaka yesterday at the age of 64, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, one son and one daughter and three grandchildren.

His qulqhwani will be held at his home at 278/A Elephant Road in the city after Asr prayers tomorrow.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers have been requested to attend the qulqhwani.

## Md Safiul Alam

BDNEWS, Chittagong

Veteran lawyer Mohammad Safiul Alam passed away due to a cardiac arrest at Birdem Hospital in Dhaka yesterday at the age of 71.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and five daughters.

Alam was a former president and general secretary of Chittagong District Bar Association.



PHOTO: STAR

Winners of Surf Excel Protibhar Lorai 2006, a painting competition for schoolchildren, pose for photograph at the National Women's Sports Complex at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday.

## BODY RECOVERED Victim identified as garment worker

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The girl who was killed after gangrape on Thursday was identified as Seema Akhter, a garment worker.

Seema Akhter, 17, daughter of Abul Kalam of Ashulia in Savar, came to Dhaka two months ago.

Police recovered her body near the boundary wall of a house at Purbamanipur in Mirpur at 3:00 pm on Thursday.

Her father identified the body of his daughter yesterday at Dhaka Medical College Morgue. He suspects that her roommate Shanty might have been involved in the killing.

## Khulna Zila school alumni directory

Khulna Zila School Old Boys' Association in Dhaka has decided to publish a directory of the former students of the school, says a press release.

Interested former students can send their CVs along with photograph to the following address: 54 Prachi Bhabhan (2nd floor), Dikusha Commercial Area, Dhaka. Phone: 9564398.

### WEATHER TODAY

## Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain mainly dry over the country and rain or thunder-showers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Sylhet division during the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 37.3 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 15.6 degrees at Ishwardi.

**The sun sets in the capital at 6:11pm today and rises at 5:57am tomorrow.**

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	34.8	21.2	43	34
Chittagong	33.0	23.2	75	67
Rajshahi	35.4	16.0	62	45
Khulna	34.8	20.6	82	41
Barisal	34.8	21.6	79	67
Sylhet	33.3	18.5	58	35
Cox's Bazar	32.0	23.2	65	71