



Malind Biswas at his broccoli field of Panisail village under Barlekha upazila in Moulvibazar.

PHOTO: MINTUDESHWARA

Broccoli farming sees success in Moulvibazar haor

A sharecropper becomes the pioneer in growing the nutritious foreign vegetable in the area

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

It was hard for any ordinary farmer to see the prospect of an uncommon vegetable in haor region where cultivation of any crops other than paddy is somewhat unlikely. However, Malind Biswas, a sharecropper of Panisail village under Barlekha upazila in Moulvibazar has gained success in broccoli cultivation, growing the foreign vegetable for the first time in the area. The dark green nutritious vegetable resembles popular local vegetable cauliflower. The arable lands around Malind's village submerges round the year except the dry season when farmers mostly cultivate Boro paddy there. "I was almost broke after losing my

paddy during floods in 2017. I cultivated paddy in last Boro season too but I could hardly see any hope of profit by cultivating the usual crop," Malind said. "Then, I heard about the broccoli and decided to cultivate it. I collected 2200 seeds of the vegetable with the help of the upazila agriculture office and planted the seeds in late October last year. The seedlings were then planted on 15 decimals of leased land. "I faced problems due to lack of experience in broccoli cultivation but Upazila Agricultural Officer Debal Sarkar and Sub-assistant Agriculture Officer Subinoy Chandra Das helped me with their suggestions. "I have already sold 1200 broccoli at Tk 37,000. There are some 1000 broccoli in

my field for sale," he said, adding that he is planning to increase broccoli cultivation in the next season. He spent around Tk 15,000 for the cultivation. "When I started cultivating the foreign vegetable, people laughed at me. But I took the risk and gained success. Now locals honour me as a pioneer. Many of them have shown interest in broccoli cultivation," Malind said. Upazila Agriculture Officer Debal Sarkar said they have taken initiative to encourage farmers to grow broccoli as the soil and climate of the haor area is suitable for it. "Malinda Biswas is cultivating broccoli using locally produced organic fertilizers. Seeds of the vegetable are sown in the

second half of October. Later the seedlings are planted. Flowering takes place within 80 to 90 days," he added. Dr Md Sharaf Uddin, chairman of agro forestry and environmental science department of Sylhet Agricultural University, said, "Broccoli is rich in vitamin K, vitamin C, folic acid, potassium and fibre, which are extremely beneficial for health. It contains sulfurophrine, an ingredient helpful for prevention of cancer." The low calorie vegetable is also useful for keeping the heart healthy, he added. The nutritious vegetable is likely to be an economically viable crop in the haor area, said Dr Nurul Haque, health and family planning officer of Kulaura Upazila Health Complex.

TC TO 18 SCHOOL STUDENTS

Probe body formed, headmaster asked to show cause

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Parbatipur in Dinajpur formed a three-member committee yesterday to investigate the issuance of transfer certificates (TC) to 18 students of different classes at Jamirhaat High School in the upazila allegedly for not attending the school's annual picnic. Abu Taher Md Samsuzzaman, assistant commissioner (Land) in the upazila, leads the committee while two other members are Merajul Islam, secondary education officer, and Anisur Rahman, youth development officer of Parbatipur. "I formed the committee after getting a complaint from six students who got TC from the school on Wednesday. A show cause notice has also been served to Jahangir Alam, the headmaster," UNO Shahnaaj Mithun Munni told the journalists yesterday. The committee has been asked to submit report as early as possible, the UNO said, adding that action will be taken after getting the report and answer to the show cause notice. The three members of the committee visited the school yesterday. They, however, declined to make any comment about their finding. Mostafizur Rahman, lawmaker of Dinajpur-5 (Parbatipur and Phulbari), also former minister for primary and mass education, is president of the managing committee of Jamirhaat High School. The annual picnic of Jamirhaat High School was held on Monday. Tk 400 was fixed as the contribution from each student but many students of the school did not attend the picnic as they failed to pay the amount. On Wednesday, the school issued TC to 18 students for 'violating the school discipline'. Talking with this correspondent on Wednesday, Jahangir Alam, headmaster of the school, said, "The 18 students participated in a separate picnic on the same day. But, their parents said that they could not pay the money for the school picnic."

Man killed, his vehicle snatched

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Unidentified criminals killed a battery-run auto-rickshaw van driver and took away his vehicle in Dhanbari upazila of the district early yesterday. The deceased, Mohammad Tara Miah, 55, father of five children, was a resident of Somotkur village under Dhopakali union in the upazila. Quoting the deceased's family members, police said Tara went out of his house with his battery-run vehicle on Wednesday and did not returned home. Locals spotted his body lying near a banana orchard at Mominpur Pashchimpara village and informed the police, who recovered the body and sent it to Tangail General Hospital for autopsy. Officer in Charge (OC) of Dhanbari Police Station Chand Miah said criminals might have stabbed Tara to death before snatching away his vehicle. Deceased's son Masud Miah filed a murder case with the police station later in the day, he added.



A team, led by Divisional Estate Officer in West Zone of Bangladesh Railway Md Nuruzzaman, faces obstacle when they went to evict illegal occupiers in Saidpur municipality of Nilphamari on Tuesday.

PHOTO: STAR

BR LAND IN SAIDPUR

Occupiers thwart eviction drive again

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

In face of obstruction by illegal occupants, an eviction drive to remove illegal structures from railway land in Saidpur municipality was suspended on Tuesday. It was scheduled to conduct the eviction drive on February 8, but the date was shifted to Tuesday in face of agitation. Earlier, a strong team, led by Divisional Estate Officer in West Zone (WZ) of Bangladesh Railway (BR) Md Nuruzzaman, made a list of 119 illegal occupiers in Haldar para and railway bazar area of the municipality and started eviction drive around 11:00am on Tuesday. Before the drive, a notice was served to the occupants 15 days ago and an announcement through loud speakers was made to move to their desired places. According to railway estate office in west zone, 447 acres of BR land and around 2,200 abandoned rail quarters in Saidpur municipality are under the occupation of influential locals. On Tuesday morning, when the eviction team accompanied by a large number of police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel and railway security staffers went to Halder para area where occupants constructed buildings to use it as residence and business centre, the occupiers and their men encircled them, said the divisional estate officer.

At that time, the officer who was enjoying magistracy power sentenced one Nadim, 28, to seven days' imprisonment for creating obstruction to the drive. Without demolition of any illegal structure, the team left the area and came to local railway market and faced obstruction by the occupants. The occupiers then sprayed pepper powder on the team. One of the accused, spice trader Hasinur Rahman, who sprayed pepper powder fled the scene when police went to arrest him. The eviction team later seized several maunds of onion, garlic, ginger and turmeric from Hasinur's shop and sold them in auction at Tk 12,000. At the time, Ershad Alam Pappu, councilor of ward no 11 in the municipality, came to the scene and repeatedly asked the officer to go to the municipality office and made cellphone call to somewhere to influence the team but the latter refused. At one stage, the officer suspended the eviction drive around 1:30pm. On contact, councilor Pappu refused to pressurize the officer and said, "I just requested him to give the victims some days so that they can take preparation to shift." Railway Divisional Estate Officer Md Nuruzzaman said, "The illegal occupants have been given 15 days to move to their desired places. Otherwise, we will start drive after the deadline."

RECONSTRUCTION OF SHAHEED MINAR

Human chain demands monument at previous location

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

People from all walks of life, including Language Movement veterans, freedom fighters, journalists and cultural activists, formed a human chain yesterday, protesting the ongoing construction work of the district central Shaheed Minar, changing it from its original location. They formed the two-hour long human chain at Mission Intersection in the town yesterday noon. Sufi Mohammad, president of Lalmonirhat Sangskritik Kendra, a cultural platform, also served a legal notice to Lalmonirhat municipality mayor in this regard yesterday. Speakers at the rally said Lalmonirhat municipality authority is rebuilding the Shaheed Minar spending Tk 16,90,937 from its development fund. They alleged that the authorities



Reconstruction work of Lalmonirhat Central Shaheed Minar is going on just behind the existing one at Thana Road in the town.

PHOTO: STAR

concerned are reconstructing the Shaheed Minar some few yards away from its original location at Thana Road so that the eye catching luxurious house of a local Awami

League (AL) leader can be visible from the main road. Speakers said reconstruction of the Shaheed Minar is going on at a corner behind its original location

which will not be visible for the passer by. Advocate Hafizur Rahman, member secretary of Lalmonirhat Sangskritik Kendra, said they will continue their agitations till their demands are fulfilled. Locals said the central Shaheed Minar was built at Thana Road in Lalmonirhat town in 1972. There is an old tree behind it, but its reconstruction is going on at a spot just behind the tree. Contacted, Suman Khan, former deputy publicity secretary of district unit AL, said the allegations brought against him are baseless. It's not him, but the municipality authorities who will decide where the Shaheed Minar would be rebuilt, he said. Lalmonirhat Municipality Mayor Riazul Islam Rintu said reconstruction of the Shaheed Minar is going on according to the design and make it more attractive.



The Sutang river flowing like a narrow canal contains pitch black liquid, thanks to the mindless dumping of industrial wastes. The photo was taken from Sutang Bridge area in Habiganj Sadar upazila on Wednesday.

PHOTO: STAR