

## CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

## No Baishakhi fair this year, earning eludes potters

HABIBUR RAHMAN, Pirojpur

The ongoing global pandemic of coronavirus has brought added worry to the potters, especially earthen toy makers in Pirojpur, as the items made for sale during the Baishakhi fair will remain largely unsold due to ban on gatherings to check the infection.

Keeping in view the traditional fair marking the Bangla New Year, potters have made different types of earthen items including toys of birds, animals and fruits and earthen pots used to keep saved money.

"Usually two months before Baishakh, we start making different earthen items including toys. After burning, we colour the toys a few days before the fair," said Shambhu Nath Paal, a potter at Palpara in Pirojpur town.

"But this time, we have piled up the burnt clay items at different places as there is no hope of selling them in coming weeks," he added.

Usually a potter can sell the products worth Tk 30,000 to Tk 50,000 this season but now they are facing a tough time.

"To manage the investment money including the cost of raw materials, many potters have to take loan from others as they make a good number of toys with hope to get better profit. This year we will have to



Earthen items are kept piled up at a spot in Palpara of Pirojpur town as there is no prospect of their sale due to suspension of the traditional Baishakhi fair marking the Bangla New Year amid the outbreak of coronavirus.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

face untold sufferings if we cannot sell the toys," said Suvash Paal, another potter of the

same area.

During this season every year, women at the

potters' houses remain busy in colouring toys till the day before Pahela Baishakh as the fair

sees huge sale of the items.

Besides, wholesale buyers from different areas come to buy the items from Palpara a few days before the festival.

But this year, no buyer has contacted them due to the adverse situation amid the outbreak of coronavirus, said local toymakers.

"With the passage of time, the taste of people has changed and demand of earthen products has decreased. During the recent years, our production cost has also increased but the prices of earthen items have not increased proportionately," said Namita Rani Paal of the area.

"Most of the potters have switched to other professions but some of the traditional potter families in our area still depend on the trade. During this time, we remain busy giving the finishing touches to the toys as people buy different earthen items during yearly Boishakhi fair. But now we are passing idle time as there will be no fair," she said.

Matilal Paal, a local at the potters' neighbourhood in Pirojpur town, has demanded that the government give compensation to the potters to help them survive during the crisis period.

## COVID-19 FALLOUT

## Jobless weavers facing starvation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

About 300 weavers and over a thousand of their dependents in Debiganj upazila of Panchagarh are now facing starvation due to the countrywide shutdown since last week of March.

The weavers in Sundardighi union of the upazila are going through severe hardship after five handloom factories they worked at had to be closed.

The factories -- located in Tantipara, Hajipara, Basuniapara and Bandarpara villages -- usually pay each worker between Tk 300 and Tk 350 daily.

As almost all their income is spent on essentials every day, the craftsmen can hardly set aside any money for savings. As a result, they face extensive sufferings whenever they go out of work.

Under the circumstances, food relief needs to be sent to the area urgently to save most of the weavers and their families from starvation.

Till date, the craftsmen did not receive any food assistance from the government due to insufficient allocation of relief materials for Sundardighi union.

Paresh Chandra Roy, chairman of Sundardighi Union Parishad, told this correspondent that last week he received government relief materials for only 150 people -- an allocation that is insufficient for a large number of people who went jobless due to the shutdown in his union.

The materials have already been distributed to some of the affected people including rickshaw-van pullers, day labourers and employees of small shops.

He said if a second consignment of relief materials is allocated for the union, after distributing those to the worst affected, he might be able to distribute the same to 25 to 30 weavers.

While visiting Basuniapara area in Sundardighi union, weaver Kalpana Rani said she and her rickshaw-puller husband are struggling to feed their family of five as her husband had been staying home while her factory had been shuttered amid the nationwide

shutdown.

They did not receive any sort of assistance from anyone, she said, adding that her weekly income at a handloom factory was around Tk 2,100 a week.

Prodipta Basunia, another weaver from Bandarpara village, said his weekly income used to be Tk 2,500, with which he used to provide for his family of six members.

With no work for over a week now and no relief from anyone, he and his family members have been passing each day in immense sufferings.

Many of the weavers said work

this year, they will incur a massive loss.

Hand Touch, located in Basuniapara village, is one such factory that employs 120 weavers. Its manager, Munir Hossain, said their employees went out of work on March 24 when they closed the factory amid fear of spreading the Covid-19 pandemic.

The factory will now count huge losses due to cancellation of a large number of work orders that were made ahead of the Pahela Baishakh, he added.

Abdul Mazid, owner of another handloom factory named Touch Fashion, said he would lose Tk 8 lakh



Devoid of any weavers, a handloom factory remains shuttered in Bandarpara village of Panchagarh's Debiganj upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

orders for handloom cloth increase in the months prior to the Pahela Baishakh festivities, celebrated on April 14, when demand for local clothing items see the sharpest rise compared to their demand throughout the rest of the year.

Because the demands remain nominal through the rest of the year, this is the time of the year they look forward to for some extra earnings, they lamented.

The owners of the handloom factories echoed the same sentiment. They said the major share of their revenue is generated on the occasion of the Pahela Baishakh. But with their factories shuttered before the festivities

for cancelling deliveries intended for the Pahela Baishakh.

While he has been pondering over the ways he can stand by the weavers in their difficult time, he said he was also worried how he would repay about the same amount of money that he had loaned from different sources including several non-governmental organisations.

Asked, Debiganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer Prottoy Hassan said they were following the prime minister's directives in setting priorities for sending out assistance to the people affected due to the shutdown in the upazila and eventually they will send assistance for all the jobless.



TOO CALLOUS TO CARE: A large number of people throng a marketplace in Akkelpur upazila of Joypurhat yesterday, defying the ongoing ban on all kinds of gathering aimed at checking the spread of highly contagious viral disease Covid-19. The area sees almost a similar picture daily.

PHOTO: STAR

## INADEQUATE SUPPLY OF OMS RICE

## Many return empty-handed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Many of the consumers, mostly from the low and fixed-income groups, have been returning home empty-handed from the Open Market Sale (OMS) outlets in Lalmonirhat town due to insufficient supply of rice against its ongoing rising demand.

A large number of people are seen standing in queues in front of the OMS outlets to buy rice at Tk 10 per kg every day.

The government started the OMS through 12 selected dealers in the town from Sunday, allocating each of the dealers a maximum of 834 kg of rice per day.

"After standing in queue for couple of hours today I had to return home empty-handed as the outlet ran out of stock very fast," said Meherun Begum, 44, wife of a rickshaw puller in College Bazar area.

Abdul Matin, an OMS dealer in

College Bazar area, said they are receiving only 834 kg of rice every day which is not sufficient.

Another OMS dealer Abdul Rahim said due to the Coronavirus pandemic they are witnessing a huge demand of OMS rice in the recent days.

Sadar Upazila Food Controller (UFC) Ayub Ali said a total of 10 tonnes of rice is being sold at 12 OMS outlets in the town every day and three days in a week.

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer  
Sadar, Panchagarh

Memo No. 236

Date: 07/04/2020

## Invitation for Tender

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from experienced Manufacturer, Suppliers to Medical & Suppliers Requisite (MSR) under the controlled office, Office of Upazila Health & Family Planning, Sadar, Panchagarh for the financial year 2019-2020 as per PPA-2006, PPR-2008. Terms and conditions are as follows:

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
2	Agency	Director General of Health Service, Dhaka-1212.
3	Procuring entity name	Office of Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer Sadar, Panchagarh.
4	Procuring entity name	Panchagarh.
5	Invitation for Tender & Package Name	MSR (Grops wise, 5 Grop) & Others.
6	Invitation Ref. No. & Date	Director General of Health Service, Dhaka-1212, Memo No. 1997 date: 25-11-2019.
7	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OPT).
8	Budget and source of funds	GOB (Revenue & Development) with hospital service management or any other funds (Additional Budget).
9	Financial year	2019-2020.
10	Tender Package No.	Group Ka, Kha, Gha, Umo & Cha 05 (five) as below.
11	Tender start selling date	07/04/2020 (after printing paper/as per publication).
12	Last selling date	26/04/2020 at 2.30pm.
13	Tender submission date and time	27/04/2020 at 1.00pm.
14	Tender opening date and time	27/04/2020 at 12:00am (Tenderer or their authorised representative may remain present at the time of tender opening).
15	Name & address of the office(s) -Selling tender document (principal) -Receiving tender document (others) -Opening tender document	Office of Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer, Sadar, Panchagarh.
16	Brief description of goods or works	Goods of MSR (5 Group). Group Ka, Kha, Gha, Umo & Cha.
17	Description of related services	Terms & conditions as follows.

18 Price of tender document (Tk)							
Group No.	Identification of group package	Tender schedule/ document rate (TK) non-refundable	Tender security amount (Tk) refundable	Last tender schedule/ document & time	Receiving tender/document last date & time	Opening schedule date & time	Remarks
Ka	Medicine (Drugs) Out of EDCL	750/-	10,000/-	26/04/2020 at 12.00am	27/04/2020 at 12.00am	27/04/2020 at 1.00pm	
Kha	Surgical Equipment & others	750/-	5,000/-	26/04/2020 at 12.00am	27/04/2020 at 12.00am	27/04/2020 at 1.00pm	
Gha	Gauge, Bandage & Cotton	750/-	2,000/-	26/04/2020 at 12.00am	27/04/2020 at 12.00am	27/04/2020 at 1.00pm	
Umo	Chemicals & Reagent	750/-	2,000/-	26/04/2020 at 12.00am	27/04/2020 at 12.00am	27/04/2020 at 1.00pm	
Cha	MSR Furniture & Repairs	750/-	2,000/-	26/04/2020 at 12.00am	27/04/2020 at 12.00am	27/04/2020 at 1.00pm	

19 Purchase of tender document in the form of Treasury Chalan with CTR to the DAD, Barguna in favour of Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer, Sadar, Panchagarh, differently Code No. 1-2711-0000-2366 to Sonali Bank, Panchagarh Branch, Panchagarh.

20 Method of payments: To be paid by Bank Draft/Pay-Order in favour of Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer, Sadar, Panchagarh.

21 Name of official invited tender: Dr. Afroza Begum.  
22 Designation of official inviting tender: Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer, Sadar, Panchagarh.  
23 Address of official inviting tender: Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer, Sadar, Panchagarh. Any information regarding the concerned tenderer can be collected from office of the undersigned. Tele No. 0568-61255.

24 Eligibility of tenderer:  
a) Tenderer submit the sample with tender document.  
b) Terms & conditions of the tender & other information will be available with schedule (As per PPA-2006, PPR-2008).  
c) Work order will be issued of the fund availability condition, no argument will be allowed.

25 The procuring entry reserves the right to delete-reject all tender: The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject in part or whole of any tender.

26 Special conditions: a) If the tenderer submits any false, incorrect or any forged certificate the tender security may be forfeited as per rules.

27 Tender schedule is to be received showing the original documents:  
1. Value added tax as a supplier (VAT) registration certificate.  
2. Valid trade licence (2019-2020).  
3. Documentary evidence of having successfully completed at least 3 (three) contract of similar goods & related services.

Dr. Afroza Begum  
Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer  
Sadar, Panchagarh

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