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Tea in, tobacco out

Northern district of Nilphamari sees new era

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Tea is fast replacing tobacco in Kishoreganj upazila of Nilphamari as favourable weather and soil conditions along with a ready market next door mean large profits for farmers.

Panchagarh, a neighboring northern district, has already emerged as a top producer after the traditional tea-growing regions Sylhet and Chattogram.

Now, Nilphamari follows with tea finding ideal conditions in these sub-Himalayan northern districts.

Upazila Agriculture Officer Md Habibur Rahman said the tobacco cultivation area is shrinking in Kishoreganj upazila every year as more and more tea is being cultivated.

This year, tobacco was produced in only 420 acres of land in the district -- down from 625 acres five years ago, he added.

Tobacco farmers said a yield of around 25 maunds of tobacco from an acre earns them Tk 60,000 on average; but nearly 50 percent of this is spent as production costs.

They also suffer from a sense of stigma, as they unwillingly contribute to harming human health.

This shift from tobacco to tea gradually came due to local leadership taking note of the prevalence of tobacco cultivation in the district.

The then Kishoreganj upazila parishad chairman Rashidul Islam said former UNO Siddikur Rahman, noticed during his tenure in 2015 that local farmers were interested more in tobacco cultivation since it was considered a cash crop.

"He discussed with me about replacing tobacco and



Workers plucking tea leaves from a tea garden in Nilphamari's Kishoreganj upazila. Because of favourable weather and conditions, tea cultivation has spread in the area, gradually replacing tobacco farming. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ASADUZZAMAN TIPU

While in coma, army official promoted on retirement day

DWOHA CHOWDHURY

On the day Lt Col Dewan Mohammad Tasawwar Raja, who has been in a coma for more than seven years, was supposed to retire, he was instead promoted to colonel.

On March 11, 2013, Tasawwar, the great-grandson of mystic poet-songwriter Hason Raja, suffered a cardiac arrest after almost 24 years of service in the army. He was a month away from being promoted to colonel.

The cardiac arrest led to hypoxic ischemic brain injury, which in turn led to a coma that he has been in since May 12 of that year, Combined Military Hospital (CMH) doctors said.

This year, October 12 was Tasawwar's day to retire from the army. Instead, he



Col Dewan

Back from the dead

Pronounced dead by doctors, newborn found alive before burial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A newborn girl, declared dead by a doctor at Dhaka Medical College Hospital early yesterday, was found alive hours later, just before she was about to be buried at a city graveyard.

The doctor declared the premature baby dead minutes after Shahinur Akter, 27, gave birth to her around 4:45am after six and a half months' pregnancy.

"There was no pulse after her premature birth, and so she was declared dead," DMCH Director Brig Gen AKM Nasir Uddin told The Daily Star.

He added that the baby was readmitted to the hospital and was doing well.

"We will investigate the incident," he said.

The father of the baby, Yeasin Mollah, a driver by profession, told this paper that hospital staffers put the "dead" baby in an

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Bangladesh enters UN as observer



Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman presiding over the first day of the two-day meeting of Awami League Parliamentary Party held at the Institute of Engineers on October 17, 1972.

October 17, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGLADESH GRANTED PERMANENT OBSERVER STATUS

Bangladesh has become a permanent observer of the United Nations, informs a spokesman for UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim. Bangladesh is the seventh permanent observer. Kurt Waldheim's office says permanent observer status is granted on the basis of participation in UN bodies and acceptance as a nation by the international community. The other permanent observers in the UN are West Germany, Switzerland, South Korea, South Vietnam and the Vatican.

ALPP BODY TO SCRUTINISE AMENDMENTS

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman maintains

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Over 3 lakh recovered from Covid

Shows DGHS data; 15 die, 1,527 test positive in a day

UNB, Dhaka

One thousand five hundred and nine people recovered from Covid-19 in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, taking the total number of recovery cases to 300,738.

The recovery rate stood at 77.89 percent, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The health authorities reported 1,527 new cases of Covid-19 after testing 13,577 samples in those 24 hours. So far, the country has recorded 386,086 positive cases.

During the same 24 hours, 15 Covid-19 patients died, raising the death toll to 5,623.

The fatality rate was recorded at 1.46 percent, said the DGHS.

So far, 21,40,129 samples have been tested and 18.04 percent of them

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Scientists throw lifeline to world's rarest primate



AFP, Paris

Hainan gibbons -- the rarest primates on Earth -- were already teetering on the edge of extinction in 2014 when the most powerful storm to lash China's coast in half a century ravaged their island oasis.

Decades of economic development, along with logging and deforestation, had reduced their habitat by more than half.

What primary forest remained was also fragmented, further hemming in the tailless apes, which travel exclusively above ground.

But the massive mudslides unleashed by super typhoon Rammasun made things worse, gouging

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College girl gang-raped in Gazipur

10-yr-old raped by neighbour in Khulna

STAR REPORT

A college student was gang-raped in Gazipur on Thursday evening and a 10-year-old girl was raped in Khulna on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, police arrested four people in connection with rape cases in three districts yesterday.

In Khulna, the 10-year-old girl was raped allegedly by her 32-year-old neighbour.

Members of Khanjahan Ali Police Station arrested the accused -- Ershad Munshi -- as a rape case was filed against him.

According to police, Ershad knew the third grader victim as they were neighbours. On Wednesday, he took the girl to a nearby paddy field luring her with chocolates and raped.

The victim's mother filed a case against the accused yesterday morning.

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RAPE, SEXUAL ASSAULT

Protesters begin long march to Noakhali

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-rape protesters started their long-march programme from Dhaka to Noakhali's Begumganj upazila against the growing incidents of rape, sexual harassment and violence against women across the country in recent times and the culture of impunity.

Around 450 protesters, including left-leaning parties, socio-cultural organisations, students, youths and rights activists, started their long march under the banner of "Bangladesh against Rape

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Activists united in protesting rape and the culture of impunity start a long march from the capital's Shahbagh yesterday morning. They will march to Noakhali, where the incident of the gang rape of a woman took place and sparked protests against the epidemic of violence against women.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

US ELECTION 2020

Trump, Biden spar over virus response

Biden accuses the US president of doing 'nothing'; nearly 18m cast early votes

AGENCIES

President Donald Trump delivered a combative defense on Thursday of his Covid-19 response while election challenger Joe Biden -- offering a glaring contrast in style in a rival town hall -- accused him of doing "nothing" to end the pandemic.

The dueling appearances, scheduled at the same time on rival television networks, showed Biden giving unflashy, empathetic, often in-depth answers to voters in the audience, while Trump delivered a fiery, sometimes agitated defense of his presidency.

Trump, who trails in the polls ahead of the November 3 election, was especially under pressure about the coronavirus that has killed over 217,000 Americans and inflicted deep economic damage.

"We're rounding the corner," Trump insisted with his usual optimism, even as swaths of the United States see sharply rising caseloads.

But pressed by the host of the NBC town hall in Miami, he became quickly frustrated, especially when asked about his previous lukewarm denunciations of extremist

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PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 17

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-45	12-45	4-15	5-45	7-15
JAMAT	5-20	1-15	4-30	5-50	7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION