

National

Poor farmers at money lenders mercy

MADRIPUR, Jan 22: Poor farmers and the low-income group people all over the district are becoming victims of the high-interest money lending business, reports UNB.

During the months of Chaitra and Baisakh, the farmers are forced to take high-interest bearing loans from the moneylenders.

It is alleged the interest rate charged by the local money lenders are more than 200 per cent.

The interest extracted by the money-lenders on a Taka 100 loan is either Taka 20 per month or 1.5 maunds of paddy.

Paddy fields, houses, cattle and gold ornaments are also collected as collateral for the loans made.

Another report says: Despite government restrictions, trees are being used as fuel in the brickfields hastening the process of deforestation.

Local people alleged that brickfield owners are using

trees despite availability of coal in the depots.

They said bamboos are used as fuel in the 10 brickfields of the district while age-old pine-trees, mango and other fruit bearing trees are also pulled down for brick burning.

Indiscriminate felling of date trees are also affecting production of molasses, they added.

Experts and environmentalist fear that the unabated trend to pull down trees will affect the ecological balance of the area.

Local people urged the authorities to take immediate action against the lawbreakers.

Meanwhile, About 1,500 ponds in ten thanas of Madaripur and Shariatpur districts could yield fish worth about Taka 3 crore per annum if developed under proper pisciculture.

About 50 per cent of the ponds under share ownership is silted and dried up due to a lack of maintenance and dispute among the owners.

41 FWP projects implemented

PATUAKHALI, Jan 22: Implementation of 41 projects under Food for Works Programme has been completed in Baupha thana, official sources said, reports UNB.

About 750 metric tons of wheat were utilised for the execution of the projects which included construction and repair of kuchcha roads, embankments, bridges and tree planting.

It is further reported that 15 projects will be implemented in the thana during the current fiscal year. A total of 490 metric tons of wheat has been sanctioned for execution of the projects.

Meanwhile, Local Government Engineering Bureau will construct 86 primary schools, financed by Asian Development Bank in Barisal district during the current financial year at an

estimated cost of Taka 81 lakh.

The repair works of 54 primary schools have already been completed recently.

Another report says:

Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) has taken up a programme to construct TCCA Bhaban at Daulatkhan thana in Bhola district during current rabi season.

According to Agriculture Extension Department, of the total land, 2,400 acres will be brought under high yielding variety and 3,600 acres under local variety.

Official sources said, Taka 15.10 lakh has been sanctioned under Bhola Irrigation Project to construct the bhaban. The construction work will be started soon.

Another amount of Taka 23.11 lakh has been sanctioned for construction of BRDB residential quarters in the same thana in the current financial year.

Besides, a number of infrastructures will be constructed by BRDB in the thana soon.

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