

Child workers increasing

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Jan 30: The number of child labourers is increasing every day.

Most of the child labourers come from poor families. This group of labourers are forced to leave home as they have lost their land by river erosion or have failed to repay loans they had used for cultivation.

For their survival parents as well as the children seek work. Children between the age of nine and 15 are mostly found working in restaurants, small mills and factories, motor garage, welding shops. Sometimes these children are seen working as shoe polishers, rickshaw pullers, mechanics at cycle repairing centres.

These children are paid very little either as trainees or part timer. Most of the job seekers are bound to work at small salary, as they have got no other alternative.

According to International Labour Law, children under 15 years of age are not allowed to take up hard work. This menace has been continuing for quite a long time. At times, these innocent kids are seen working at late night without any break.

Poverty is the main cause of such situation as observed. There are about 30 thousand such children who are employed in various jobs in the district and over 90 per cent have reasons of poverty.

Many of these children who arrive in bigger towns have no shelter but to accommodate themselves in slum areas or beside railway lines.

Social workers are for the rehabilitation of these poor children.

Cattle, poultry bird exhibition

BARISAL, Jan 30: A day-long cattle and poultry bird exhibition was held in the Government Syed Hamed Ali College playground Monday, reports BSS.

Mosarraf Hossain Shahjahan, State Minister for Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control, inaugurated the exhibition.

Ten stalls were set up for the non-government dairy farm, ten stalls for non-government poultry farm, 250 stalls for high yielding varieties of cattle, one stall for the government poultry firms, one stall for artificial breeding and one stall for district livestock office.

Shahjahan gave away the prizes among the participants in the exhibition. Some 68 farms got prizes in this exhibition.

Life imprisonment for killing wife

NAOGAON, Jan 30: A man was awarded life imprisonment for killing his wife, court sources said here on Sunday, reports UNB.

The convict was also fined Tk 5000 or in default to suffer three years RI more.

The case, in brief, was that Molnuddin poured petrol on the body of his wife and set afire killing her on the spot on January 16, 1990. He was reportedly in love with his sister-in-law whom he wanted to marry.

The District and Sessions Judge M M Munsef Ali awarded the punishment.

Annual sports of schools, madrasas held

NAOGAON, Jan 30: Annual sports of schools and madrasas of the district was held at the local stadium last week, reports UNB.

Deputy Commissioner Mahmood Hossain Alamgir inaugurated the sports programme as chief guest on January 19.

Students of 11 educational institutions of the district took part in the sports event. Later the DC distributed prizes among the winners.

Teachers, guardians, sports fan witnessed the games.

Another report adds: Naogaon Sonali Atit Khelior Samity accorded a warm reception to Zakaria Pintoo, a national celebrity of the recently concluded sixth SAF Games, at the local Eidgah Nawjoan Maidan on January 16.

Pintoo, who lit the torch of the SAF Games, held in Dhaka during December 20-27, hailed from the district and is also the Captain of the Sadhin Bangladesh Football team.

The function was chaired by prominent football player of the locality and president of the Samity Kazi Rafiqul Islam Tinu. General Secretary of the Samity Md Salimullah Khan and Abdus Subhan spoke on the occasion.

Later a friendly football match was played between the samity president and samity secretary teams.

Pintoo played for the secretary team. The match ended in a 1-1 draw.

Repayment of loan making marginal farmers landless

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 30: The number of debt-ridden persons is increasing day by day in the district.

About 90 per cent of the debt-ridden persons are farmers and the rest 10 per cent are weavers and small traders. All of them are now struggling for survival.

Indebtedness took a serious turn in 1984 due to natural calamities especially the devastating floods which hit every year during the last few years.

The farmers have become indebted due to the sky high prices of agricultural inputs, other daily essentials, natural calamities and dowry system in the rural villages.

The poor farmers have mortgaged their agricultural land to local wealthy persons and the agricultural bank to receive loans to meet their various expenses including marriage of daughters.

Many of them have sold their cultivable land and dwelling houses to repay the loan.

A large number of cultivators have become destitute after repaying their loan. Some indebted farmers receive loans from local money lenders finding no other alternatives.

In some cases, needy cultivators produce fake documents to take loan. They know that they would not be able to repay the loan as their economic condition is going on downwards.

The weavers borrowed

money from mahajans (money lenders) to purchase looms and raw materials. They are now unable to repay loan because of their dull business.

Those who received loans from the banks are now under pressure to repay the loan. To avoid certificate cases they sold cultivable lands at low prices to repay bank loan.

Besides, those who take money from village money lenders are now under pressure to repay loan. Finding no other alternative, cultivators give their land in lieu of debt.

Another report says: The blacksmiths of thirteen thanas of Kishoreganj district have been facing manifold problems to continue their ancestral occupation.

The poor farmers have mortgaged their agricultural land to local wealthy persons and the agricultural bank to receive loans to meet their various expenses including marriage of daughters.

Science students say that it is impossible to get better results without the help of the tutors. Favouritism is shown in examination result of students by private tutors, it is alleged.

Besides, the teachers of the schools and colleges other educated unemployed persons are practising private tuition on commercial basis.

Meanwhile, private tuition has become a commercial practice in the town and other twelve thanas of the district.

Teachers of both the government and non-government schools and colleges are engaged in private tuition business to earn extra money, it is learnt.

Local guardians alleged that teachers hardly teach the students sincerely in the classes.

As a result, the students find it difficult to understand their lessons taught in the classes. The guardians are compelled to engage private tutors to get their wards academically fit for the higher classes.

The students belonging to affluent families usually employ their school-college teachers as tutors for improved studies and making good results in the examinations.

Local elite feel that private tutorial practice has become an extra professional business of most of the teacher here, particularly the science and commerce teachers who get a large number of students for coaching in batches.

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It may be mentioned here that the blacksmiths produce different kinds of agricultural inputs like daos, nails, sickle axes etc. which are essential for the agricultural purposes.

In some cases, needy cultivators produce fake documents to take loan. They know that they would not be able to repay the loan as their economic condition is going on downwards.

Due to lack of necessary fund, they are facing numerous problems to continue their occupation and many of them have already left their profession.

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