

IRRI-boro paddy plants under pest attack in Habiganj

From Our Correspondent

HABIGANJ, Feb 2: The IRRI-boro paddy plants in Nabiganj and Baniyachong thanas of the district have been attacked by pests.

As a result, the paddy plants are becoming yellowish. The farmers said that the concerned authority depends on the report of block supervisors who prepare report of pest attack without visiting the affected areas. As a result, timely action can not be taken, causing loss to the farmers. The farmers also informed that the insecticides available in the local markets are adulterated.

In Baniyachong thana, boro plants on thousands of acres of land are being destroyed by the insects. No positive result is achieved despite use of insecticides. The farmers are silent and helpless spectators seeing the ruination of their paddy fields in which they have invested hard labour and hard earned money. They have failed to prevent destruction of their paddy plants.

Official sources, however, confirmed the pest attack but failed to mention the actual extent of damage.

The helpless farmers have resorted to offer special prayers and arranged milad mahfils to seek mercy of Allah.

Agri inputs, money given to farmers

The government has started distribution of money to the farmers for the implementation of post-agri-rehabilitation programme in Habiganj district, according to official sources.

Aman and IRRI-boro crops were damaged here for consecutive six seasons due to devastating floods. As a result, Habiganj, which is popularly known as surplus district in food, turned into a deficit area. To meet this deficiency in agri output the government has allocated Taka 40.44 lakh at the first phase and Taka 54.91 lakh in the second phase.

In the first stage the farmers were given agricultural inputs and in the second stage money was distributed.

Thana-wise allocation of money in the first and second stages were Taka 1120965 in Habiganj sadar, Taka 1464143 in Madhabpur, Taka 727895 in

Chunerghat, Taka 662675 in Bahubal, Taka 1415307 in Nabiganj, Taka 1353609 in Lakhal, Taka 1768612 in Baniyachong, and Taka 1200394 in Ajmiriganj.

In the first phase, for boro cultivation, 15 kg of seeds, 72 kg Urea, 54 kg TSP, 27 kg of MP and two kg Zinc Sulphate were given per acre of land. For transplanted Aman, 39 kg of Urea, for wheat 48 kg of seeds, 72 kg of urea, 30 kg of TSP, 33 kg of MP, 24 kg of Zipsum and two kg of Zinc Sulphate were given per acres of land. For corn cultivation 4.5 kg of seeds, 48 kg of urea, 36 kg of TSP, 21 kg of MP and 24 kg of Zipsum and for dal cultivation, 15 kg of seeds, 12 kg of urea, 39 kg of TSP, 12 kg of MP were given per acres of land. Besides, for maize cultivation 12 kg of seeds, 78 kg of urea, 36 kg of TSP, 21 kg of MP, and 21 kg of Zipsum were given per acre of land.

In pursuance of the government policy to give agricultural inputs to the farmers who own one bigha to one acre of land under the agricultural rehabilitation programme, 7644 acres of land has been

brought under Rupa aman, boro, wheat, corn, maize and dal cultivation in the district.

Sab-e-Barat observed

Holy Sab-e-Barat was observed throughout Habiganj district with due religious fervour recently.

Different socio-cultural, educational and religious institutions had arranged different programmes to celebrate the occasion in a befitting manner.

The programmes included Quran Khawani, Zikir Mahfil, discussion meetings on Meraz occurrence of the Prophet Muhammad (SM).

The 12th death anniversary of Sultanul Arefin Hazrat Moulana Nazmus Sayadath Siddiki Peer-e-Fur-Fura Sharif (India) was observed at Habiganj with due solemnity recently.

The devotees of Habiganj chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the occasion.

The day-long programme included Quran Khawani, special prayer, Zikir/Ajkar, and milad mahfil.



NATORE: Prominent educationist Prof Safiuddin Sarder speaking at a reception accorded to him at the local Islamic Foundation auditorium recently. — Star photo

Residents suffer for want of amenities

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Feb 2: Chandpur pourasava is beset with multifarious problems causing untold suffering to about one lakh residents.

The residents had long been deprived of basic civic amenities due to lack of government patronisation and fund constraint.

Recently pourasava authority raised various taxes and promised to ensure civic amenities but it had failed to fulfil its commitment.

Water tax and holding tax are now almost doubled. The residents demonstrated against the increase of taxes. The residents submitted memorandum to municipal authority several times.

Most of the roads under the pourasava area are still kucha and cracks and potholes have developed at many points causing problems to the movement of vehicles.

The pourasava area has recently been extended towards east side of the town but no development work has been undertaken.

The pourasava could not hold election for a long time. The Deputy Commissioner is running the pourasava administration.

The garbages are dumped here and there causing health hazards as most of the dustbins are in bad condition. In the absence of proper maintenance most of the drains have become silted up and water remains stagnant.

Buses and trucks are found parking on the main roads of the town causing traffic jam. Bus and truck stations should immediately be shifted outside the pourasava area.

Most of the light posts of the pourasava have no bulbs. There is no park at the town. The town has got no modern auditorium.

Another report says: The sale of bidis without bandrolls in all the seven thanas of the district is going on causing heavy loss to the government.

The bidi factories in the district which employ hundreds of workers are selling bidis without bandrolls. The sale of bidis has increased during recent times due to rise in the prices of different brands of cigarettes. As per existing law Taka .37 must be paid as excise duty for each hundred packets of bidis but the owners of the bidi factories supply their products to the markets without bandrolls.

Govt firm to make CHT a isle of peace

GUIAMARA (Khagrachhari), Feb 2: The government is committed to turn the Chittagong Hill Tracts into an isle of peace with wholehearted support of the local people, said Communication Minister Oli Ahmed here on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Oli, who is Chairman of the Parliamentarians' Committee on the Chittagong Hill Tracts, gave a clarion call to the CHT inhabitants to be in the stream of development and carry the nation forward.

The minister was addressing a public meeting which was also addressed by Syed Wahidul Alam MP, Chairman of the Local Government Council Samiran Dewan, district BNP leaders Abdul Waqud, Nurunabi and Konglur Chowdhury.

The Communication Minister said, the government had been taking a number of significant steps to bring back peace and tranquillity in the

hill districts. "People have already started witnessing the positive effects of the steps," he said, adding "the government is doing all these as it wants all the people of the country to reap the benefits of democracy equally".

"We are in the government to serve, not to betray with your interest, will and expectation," the minister said. He further said the government had been taking steps to bring a radical change in the field of communication and completed construction of 50-km metalised roads, about 700 metres of bridges and culverts at a cost of nearly Taka 73.72 crore under Maiyani Valley Project in Khagrachhari.

Earlier, the minister addressed a review meeting on the progress of development projects in the hilly region. Prasanta Tripatha, a tribal representative, also spoke on the review meeting.

District roundup

PATUAKHALI

Diarrhoea claims 10, attacks 300 more

Feb 2: Diarrhoea claimed 10 lives and affected 300 people in the district during the last 25 days, says UNB. According to local people, the disease that broke out in an alarming proportion since first January of this year is spreading fast causing concern among the people.

Hospital sources said, 27 people were attacked in sadar, 16 in Kalapara, 48 in Bauphal, 19 in Galachipa, 73 in Dasmina, 49 in Mirzaganj and other 48 people were admitted to Patuakhali General Hospital.

District Civil Surgeon office sources said, 99 diarrhoea treatment centres including one temporary hospital have been opened in the district to combat the disease and at least 22 physicians have been working in those centres.

Some NGOs have been working in the affected areas and distributing oral saline packets among the affected people.

Another BSS report says: police recovered a country-made pipe-gun with 7 rounds of ammunition from the kitchen of a house and arrested the house owner at village Machhuakhali of Dhakhalai union under Khepupara thana of the district recently.

Acting on an information, Khepupara police raided the house of one Dulal Talukder at village Machhuakhali and recovered the arms and ammunition.

Police also have arrested Dulal Talukder, from the spot. A case has been registered.

B'BARIA

7 get life imprisonment for dacoity

Feb 2: Seven people were sentenced to life imprisonment for committing a dacoity and killing a man, court sources said Wednesday, reports UNB.

The convicts were also fined Taka 1000, in default, to suffer six months rigorous imprisonment more.

According to prosecution story, on the night of July 15, 1980, a gang of dacoits entered the house of Giasuddin of Fulbaria village in sadar thana, tied the inmates of the house and looted valuables including cash Taka 80,000.

On hearing hue and cry, the villagers rushed to the spot and gheraoed the dacoits. At this, the dacoits opened fire killing Kadir Miah on the spot. The villagers, however, managed to round up two dacoits — Abdul Gafur and Fazul Karim — from the spot. The mob then beat Fazul Karim to death.

The Additional District and Sessions Judge Binoy Kumar Bose after examining the evidences and records awarded Shahjahan, Mustafa, Salu Miah, Abdul Gafur and three other absconding accused — Anu Miah, Nunu Miah and Harun — life imprisonment in a judgement delivered recently.

SATKHIRA

Office-bearers of BSS assoc

Feb 2: Election of the Satkhira district BSS Association was held in the bar association hall on Sunday, says BSS.

Advocate Abul Hossain was elected president of the association for the next term. Two vice presidents were also elected. They are Advocate Abus Sattar and Nowsheer Ali.

The election was conducted by Advocate Mostaq Ahmed. He was assisted by Advocate Zillur Rahman and Janab Gazi Lutfar Rahman.

BARISAL

BKB to give Tk 43.84 cr agri loan

Feb 2: Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) of Barisal region has undertaken a programme to disburse Taka 43.84 crore as rabi crop loan among the farmers in the region during the current rabi season, reports BSS.

The region covers Barisal, Jhalokathi, Bhola, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, Barguna, Faridpur, Rajbari, Gopalganj, Madaripur and Shariatpur.

According to an official source, the loan is meant for the cultivation of winter crops like, boro, potato, wheat, mustard, sweet-potato, maize, ground-nut and vegetables.

Meanwhile Taka 22.20 crore has already been disbursed among the farmers.

PABNA

Progress on re-excavation projects

Feb 2: Works on four re-excavation projects under Food for Works programme are progressing fast at a cost of 988 metric tons of wheat, official sources said, reports UNB.

The projects are re-excavation of Ichhamoti river, Tarapasa, Burupit and Sujaganar WAPDA Burupit canals.

Deputy Commissioner, Asikur Haque Chowdhury inaugurated the project works on Monday at a simple function.

Among others, District Fisheries Officer Anisur Rahman, Thana Nirbahli Officer, Muzibur Rahman and Thana Fisheries Officer Amir Ali were present.

With the completion of the projects, fish worth about Taka 50 lakh will be produced.

CHITTAGONG

Nasiruddin greets new mayor

Feb 2: The outgoing mayor of Chittagong, Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin, Tuesday congratulated his successor A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury as well as the city dwellers, says UNB.

In a statement, he said, he was grateful to all the city residents for cooperating with him during his 31 months in the office of mayor. "I got about cooperation from the people in implementing the development progress initiated by the present government."

He assured continued cooperation in making Chittagong into a beautiful city. "I had planned to turn the city into a 'Garden City', although I was not elected, I will extend my support and cooperation towards materialising my plans".

B'BARIA

One commits suicide, 3 fight for life

Feb 2: A young girl died and three others are fighting for their life when they took alleged attempts to commit suicide in Nabinagar thana, hospital sources said recently, reports UNB.

Kulsum Begum, 15, daughter of Shaheed Miah of Gopalpur village allegedly committed suicide by taking pesticides on January 2. The reason behind the suicide could not be known.

Josna Begum, 18, daughter of Abus Sobhan of Kathalia village and Pearsa Begum, 35, a housewife from Bagdhar village, took poison on January 2 and 5 respectively.

Madhu Miah, 22, son of Fazul Miah tried to kill himself by taking an overdose of sleeping pills on January 6.

Collection of stones yet to be started

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Feb 2: Collection of stones from three quarries in Gowainghat and Jaintapur thanas has not yet been started as no effective measure has been taken up to end the crisis even after 3 weeks.

More than 5000 stone labourers and boatmen have become jobless following the sudden closure of stone collection in Jaintapur, Sirpur and Rangpani quarries of Sylhet on January 7 last. As the extraction was stopped following a clash between local and non-local truck drivers.

Pourashava takes up 38 projects

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Feb 2: Natore pourasava has taken up 38 development projects at a cost of Taka 32 lakh, official sources said.

The works on the projects include reconstruction of roads and culverts and repair of highways.

Government grant and own fund of the pourasava will be utilised for the implementation of the projects.

The works of the 38 projects is expected to be completed by coming March.

Indian pesticides on open sale

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Feb 2: Despite government ban, Indian pesticides are being sold in different markets of the district.

The farmers are using these sub-standard and spurious Indian pesticides namely Thoiding, Thiroil, DDT and XN 50, Helbhis in their lands due to its lower prices causing adverse effect on standing crops.

They are less interested to buy the indigenous pesticides at a comparatively high price, sources said.

According to agri-scientists, extensive use of spurious smuggled pesticides decreases production capacity of the land. These substandard pesticides are also causing health hazards, they added.

Local pesticide producers urged the authorities concerned to take action against those who are responsible for marketing Indian pesticides.

Frequent cattle lifting

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Feb 2:

Cattle lifting has become rampant in bordering villages of the district for quite a long time causing immense suffering to the local farmers and hindering cultivation, reports UNB.

The farmers said about 250 cows were stolen from different parts of the district during the last three months.

They alleged a well-organised gang were engaged in cattle lifting in the areas causing most of the local farmers to pass their night sleepless at their cowshed.

Local farmers urged the authorities to take measures immediately to stop cattle lifting.

Another report adds: Gastro-intestinal and skin diseases have broken out recently in an alarmingly proportion in the rural areas of the district.

Medical sources said, a large number of patients have been pouring into the health centres everyday for treatment.



SYLHET: An international Islamic organisation has constructed 39 kuncha houses in Balaganj village of the district recently, under its flood rehabilitation programme. — Star photo

Employment opportunity less in Madaripur

Erosion-hit people struggling hard for mere survival

By Masud Hasan Khan Back from Madaripur

a seven-member family is not that easy", he expressed.

He says that the erosion has hit hard the small, marginal farmers and the share-croppers who are majority in number.

Most of the erosion-hit people have moved to the Madaripur, Faridpur towns and some have sailed for Dhaka to earn livelihood. They now pull rickshaws, vans and work as day labourers.

Like Zafarabag village in sadar thana, river-side areas in Shibchar, Rajoir and Kalkini thanas of the district have also fallen prey to severe erosion.

The district administration

30 injured in road accident

KUSHTIA, Feb 2: At least thirty persons were injured in a bus accident Monday on Kushtia-Meherpur road at Katlamari, reports BSS.

The bus turned turtle and fell into a ditch.

Nehaj Uddin Biswas 60, Monirul 22, and Fikr Pramanik were admitted to Kushtia General Hospital in a critical condition. The rest were admitted to Meherpur and Mirpur health complexes.

officials informed that 24 unions out of the total 58 unions of Madaripur had been affected by the erosion.

The situation is worst in Shibchar. Half of the area of the 18 unions of the thana have been devoured by the erosion of the river Padma and Arialkha.

The residents of Madaripur estimate that about 40 villages, many hats and bazaars of four thanas of the district are in river. Some 1.41 lakh people of the district are landless who are victims of erosion.

Madaripur town itself is under the threat of the river Arialkha. A considerable part of the launch ghat of the town has already been devoured by the river.

Deputy Commissioner of Madaripur Abus Sattar Miah pointed out that the erosion was the main reason behind the district's high rate of poverty. Besides there is shortage of agricultural land, absence of mills and industries, he said.

He suggested that immediate steps should be taken up to combat the erosion and re-excavation of the silted-up canals.

A broad-based economic programme is needed to alleviate poverty and generate self-employment opportunity, the DC added.

(to be continued)



EROSION VICTIM One Asmat Ali Mollah of village Jafarabag under sadar thana of the district looking at the river which has made them homeless and helpless. — Star photo

Cow owners face losses for milk price reduction

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Jan 2: The management of Baghabari Milk Vita Factory in Sirajganj district has reduced the purchasing price of milk from Taka 13 to Taka 8.70 per litre causing financial loss to the cow owners.

It is gathered that the authority of Eastern Milk Producers Ltd at Baghabari factory have reduced the purchasing rate of milk abnormally. But the purchasing rate of milk at Takerhat, Manikganj and Tangail remains at Taka 13 per litre. The retail price of pasteurised milk remains unchanged.

About 30,000 members of 115 milk producers' co-operative societies at Shahzadpur and adjacent areas supply 50 to 60 thousand liters of milk everyday to Baghabari factory. About 70,000 cows are used to supply milk to the factory by rotation.

At present, supply of milk is the factory is satisfactory and pasteurised milk, butter, ghee and powdered milk are made here. The factory is now a profitable one.

The authority in a recent circular has reduced the pur-

chasing rate of milk at Taka 8.70 from Taka 13 per litre. But the rate at other purchasing centres including Tangail, Manikganj and Takerhat remains at Taka 13 per litre. The rate has been reduced only at Shahzadpur and adjacent supply centres.

Such disparity have created rage among the members of local co-operative societies.

According to the milk producers, with the rise in fodder price, the production cost of milk is gradually increasing. Production cost of each litre of milk is Taka 11 at Shahzadpur and adjacent areas. The sudden reduction of rate is causing loss to the producers discouraging the milk production.

At present, the selling rate of one litre of pasteurised milk is Taka 22. Butter, ghee and powdered milk are also sold at a satisfactory rate. But the purchasing rate of milk is reduced only at the adjacent areas of the factory.

The milk producers' co-operative societies have urged upon the authority to reconsider the decision to encourage milk production in Sirajganj and Pabna districts.

Erratic power supply hampers production

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Feb 2: The frequent power failure at local town has affected economic activities causing immense sufferings to consumers for the last two weeks.

It is informed that production in all mills and factories have been stopped. Sales in shops and markets have been hampered while service in commercial organisations including bank and insurance companies have largely been affected.

Reports received from different sources indicate that meanwhile, generator have been set up in banks and shops to shift dependence on power supply during peak-hours. Candle has become popular substitute of power to avoid the trouble. Its use is most extensive in all shops markets and business centres not to speak of households after the sunset.

Sources said that power supply has become so uncertain that sometimes it is given for a minute and remains off for hours together without prior announcement.

Sources also said that the entire town plunges into darkness throughout the night giving opportunities to miscreants.

It is learnt that minimum requirement of power for the town is forty megawatt but the supply is only twenty to twenty five megawatt.

Shortage of power supply from national grid accounts for the situation. Situation outside the district is no better.

According to source, cultivation of IRRI, boro, wheat and winter crops have been seriously affected due to erratic power supply by Pelli Biddut Samity (PBS) recently.

When contacted, a source of PBS told that failure to get adequate power supply from national grid is the cause of this problems.