

Jute sells below cost of production

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, July 27: Farmers of the seven thanas of the district are selling new jute at a price below of cost of production for want of buyers.

Consequently, the growers have been facing losses or they are deprived of the fair price.

According to sources, jute has already started to appear in different markets of all seven thanas of the district.

But Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC), Bangladesh Jute Corporation (BJC) and other private agencies have not yet come to the purchasing centres. The organisations are still waiting for the jute policy at the government, it is learnt.

Most of the small traders have not yet started buying jute as the main buyers are yet to decide.

At present, only a few middlemen are dominating the jute market who always try to exploit the growers. They are fixing the jute price as their own sweet will studying the situation. These kinds of traders

have introduced two kinds of rates — one cash and other on credit. The rate on credit is much higher than that at the cash. The poor growers meet cash and that is why they prefer the cash though the margin is wide.

Some jute traders informed this correspondent that the last year's situation is likely to continue during the present season.

In the absence of any government initiative, the poor growers will be deprived at the reasonable price of their products.

Some jute growers informed this correspondent that the present rates of jute are far below the cost of production. If the jute policy is not reviewed jute cultivation will be affected in future in different areas of the northern part of the country.

It may be mentioned here that jute production target was fixed at 10,000 bales in the district.

Massive aman cultivation programme undertaken

RISHOREGANJ, July 27: Over 5.55 lakh hectares of land have been brought under aman cultivation in five districts of Chittagong Agriculture Zone during the current season, reports UNB.

According to Agriculture Extension Department, of the total land, over 3.48 lakh hectares have been brought under high yielding variety and 2.07 lakh hectares under local variety.

The sources said, 1,87,150 hectares have been brought under aman farming in Chittagong district, 69,550 hectares in Cox's Bazar, 1,14,100 hectares in Noakhali, 69,250 hectares in Feni and 88,054 hectares in Lakshmipur districts.

About 11,80,760 metric tons of aman paddy will be produced during the season, it is expected.

The Agriculture Extension Department (AED) will set up 968 demonstration plots in all five districts under Chittagong zone to acquaint the farmers with the modern methods of cultivation.

Of the total, 497 demonstration plots will be set up in Chittagong, 101 in Cox's Bazar, 191 in Noakhali, 110 in Feni

and 69 in Lakshmipur districts. Meanwhile, 607,240 hectares of land have been brought under intensive aman cultivation in five districts under Mymensingh Agriculture Zone during the current season, official sources said.

Of the total, 3,68,240 hectares have been brought under high yielding variety and the rest of the 2,39,000 hectares under local variety.

Agriculture Extension Department sources said, 2,73,500 hectares have been brought under aman cultivation in Mymensingh district, 78,750 hectares in Jamalpur, 77,600 hectares in Sherpur, 1,06,600 hectares in Netrakona and 70,790 hectares in Kishoreganj districts.

AED has also set up 1352 demonstration plots in all the five districts.

Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation will supply seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and other necessary inputs to the farmers at a fair price for successful implementation of the programme.

The production target of aman paddy has been fixed at 12,79,100 metric tons.



NEW HOME, NEW LIFE: This woman carrying her eight days-old baby arrived in Tabalchhari of Khagrachhari district recently to start a new life after spending more than eight years in refugee camp in the Indian state of Tripura. Some 50,000 Chakma refugee returnees would be rehabilitated in the district building new homes.

— Star photo by Anisur Rahman

Poor power supply in N-dists, industries worst affected

From Our Correspondent

DINAJPUR, July 27: Life in 16 northern districts in Rajshahi Division have been paralysed by the continued power crisis affecting many mills and factories many of which have already been closed down.

As per available information, the situation will worsen further in the coming days.

Hundreds of industries and factories of 16 northern districts of Panchagarh, Thakurgaon, Dinajpur, Nilphamari, Rangpur, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Joipurhat, Bogra, Sirajganj, Pabna, Natore, Naogaon, Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj are on the verge of closure due to frequent failure of electricity. As a result, the price of rice and many other agricultural products are on gradual increase.

The biggest industrial town of the region is Bogra which has been the worst sufferer. The town requires 15 megawatts of electricity whereas the supply is only four megawatts. In Dinajpur, the necessity of electricity is 10 megawatts whereas the supply is only three megawatts. In Rangpur, the supply is four megawatts whereas the demand is 12 megawatts. In Pabna the supply is three megawatts instead of required nine megawatts and in Rajshahi the supply of electricity is only four megawatts in place of 12 megawatts.

The total demand of the electricity in 16 districts is 55 to 60 megawatts. But the authorities concerned can supply 16 to 20 megawatts which is

also very irregular, as alleged. The private industries owners' samity sources said the northern zone incurred a loss of Taka 100 crore due to irregular electricity supply during the last three months.

The Power Development Board authority in an advertisement published in some national daily newspapers recently, hoped that the crisis may be overcome by June next.

The Saidu and Thakurgaon Diesel Power Stations (DPS) are the only sources power for eight districts of Dinajpur and Rangpur zones. The three units of Saidu DPS are now generating hardly six megawatts of electricity and the three units of Thakurgaon DPS generate four megawatts.

Snakes from Sundarbans to be exported

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, July 27: The Sundarbans Forest Division has taken up a scheme to export snakes which can fetch Taka 100 crore annually, said official sources.

According to the forest division sources, more than 40 species of snakes are available in the Sundarbans. Among these Kobra, Shankhachura, Python, Seahora, Gokhra, Bora and Darash are popular.

The eyes, tongues, skin and poison of the snakes have high demand in the world markets.

These snakes will be exported to China, Japan, Thailand, Hongkong, Korea and Burma, sources added.

Eight killed by miscreants

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, July 27: Eight persons were killed by a group of miscreants in different areas of Tala thana of the district during the last 25 days. The conflict between the two outlawed Purbia Bangla Sarbaha Party and Biplobi Communist Party over taking control of these areas is said to be the cause of the killings.

It is reported that Gopal Chandra Ghosh, 22, son of Manindra Nath Ghosh of village Raipur and Maniruzzaman, 18, son of Mohammad Ali of village Machhiara both from Tala thana were shot dead by a group of miscreants at dead of night near at Natherpur shrimp gher of the same thana on July 8. Rawshan Ali 40, of village Satpakiya under Tala thana was shot dead by a group of miscreants near Shakhari para ferry ghat of the same thana on July 5. The victim, Rawshan Ali was the joint secretary of Krishak Sangram Samity, Khulna district unit. On July 1, one Noor Hossain, 25, was killed by the miscreants.

Four persons namely Nazrul Islam 30, Salam 27, Habibur Rahman 25 and one Shafiq 24, were shot dead by a group of miscreants at Atari village in Tala thana on June 12 last.

Smuggled carpets worth Tk 1.4 lakh seized

BRAHMANBARIA, July 27: Ashuganj police seized Indian smuggled carpet worth about Tk 1.40 lakh and 230 kg electrical wires worth Tk 57,000 at Ashuganj Ferry ghat last week, reports UNB.

Police acting on secret information raided a Dhaka-bound night coach on July 19 and recovered 114 yards of Indian carpet from the rooftop of the coach.

On the following day, police following a tip-off also seized four bundles of aluminium wire from a Dhaka-bound bus at the same ferry ghat from the rooftop of a bus.

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, June 27: Production target of raw cotton will not be achieved during the current season in 16 N-districts following complexity in seed collection, inadequate co-operation and assistance of field workers.

It is gathered that the soil of some parts of the northern region of the country is suitable for cotton cultivation.

During the current season, Bangladesh Cotton Development Board (BCDB) brought 10,600 hectares of land under the scheme which include Rajshahi zone — 4000 hectares, Rangpur zone — 3000 hectares, Bogra zone — 2100 hectares and Pabna sub-zone — 1500 hectares.

Production target was fixed at 10,600 metric tons at the rate of one metric for per hectare.

According to a source of the Cotton Development Board (CDB), cotton has been cultivated in only 40 per cent of the targeted land. But in practice, only 25 per cent of the targeted land was cultivated due to complexity in seed distribution and abnormal low price of products in the open market. The market price was considerably lower than that of the cost of production.

Besides, the field workers of BCDB allegedly did not extend proper co-operation and

assistances to the growers which have caused lapses in interest of growing cotton. While contacted, some cotton growers told The Daily Star that a bright prospect of cotton cultivation in the northern region of the country can not be utilised.

Wine, Phensidyl syrup bottles recovered

FENI, July 27: Two people were arrested and 2,655 bottles of wine, phensidyl syrup and other intoxicants worth Tk 3.25 lakh were seized in two separate raids in the town on Saturday, reports UNB.

According to official sources, the joint Task Force of customs, BDR and Police acting on secret information, raided Udayan Paper House of Trunk road and Taj Hotel of Masjid road and recovered the contraband items.

The raids were conducted for five hours. Two cases were lodged with the police.

Ruppur Atomic Energy Project plays no role

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, July 27: The Ruppur Atomic Energy project in Ishurdi thana in Pabna district not yet implemented even in long 33 years. The government has to spend Tk 14 lakh per year which brings no return in practice.

It is gathered that in 1961, the then government took up an atomic energy project at Ruppur in Ishurdi thana in Pabna district. About thirty two acres of land belonging to 546 families were acquired at the cost of Taka 35 lakh. Seventy two buildings, including office building, officers' and staff quarters were constructed at village Shahpur on Pabna-Ishurdi road. At present, only seven quarters are used. The rest of the quarters and office buildings are facing damage

due to lack of maintenance. While visiting the area it was found that 17 employees including one officer and one engineer are posted in the office. The government is spending Taka 14 lakh every year which include salary of staff, Taka one lakh as land revenue and taxes and Taka three lakh as electricity bills.

A source of the project told The Daily Star that meetings were held with seven countries but no positive results of implementing the project were ascertained.

Knowledgeable sources have appealed to the higher authority to take necessary steps for implementing the Ruppur Atomic Energy Project to make the best use of government money.

Tk 104cr BWDB project goes into operation in Naogaon

NAOGAON, July 27: The Naogaon flood control, drainage and irrigation project, a multi-purpose project of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) has been completed in June this year. Spread over Naogaon, Mohadebpur, Atrai, Rani Nagar and Manda thanas of Naogaon district, this project has a total command area of 46,100 hectares of land, says a press release.

On completion of the project an additional yield of 48,985 metric tons of food grains will be produced in the area worth about 14.76 crores of Taka according to international rate. The project created job opportunity of 83 lakh of mandays during implementation and will go on providing seven lakh mandays per year during the coming 30 years of operation and maintenance of the project. It will give a tremendous boost to the socio-economic condition of the area and will help set up cottage industries in the area. It has already improved the road communication system of the area and will help develop the area as a beautiful tourist spot. Moreover, large scale tree

plantation in the area will contribute to preservation of the ecological balance of the area. More than one lakh saplings have already been planted on the embankments. Prospects of pisciculture in the area is also bright.

Construction of 32.31 kilometer of new embankments and re-construction of 34.26 km of embankments, re-excavation of 35 km of main canal and 163 km of secondary canals, construction of three major regulators, brick masonry-cum-revetment of 7510 cubic metres along the bank of the Jamuna, construction of 57.21 Km of road, five flushing sluices, two water control structures, four cross-regulators, 141 delivery out lets and eight road bridges are among the principal components of work of this project.

The project has been implemented at an estimated cost of Taka 104 crore with a foreign exchange component of four crore 66 lakh Taka. Taka 16 crore 90 lakh have been given by the government while Taka 82 crore 43 lakh have come as Reimbursable Project Assistance from IDA.



The main regulator of the flood control and irrigation project in Baradhar

District roundup

NARSINGDI

5 get life term for killing woman

July 27: Five people were awarded life term imprisonment on Saturday for killing a young woman at Patharpara of Sadar thana in the district, reports UNB.

The convicted are: Jamir Ali, Mohammad Ali, Abdur Razzak, Mohabbat Ali and Inul Haque (Absconding). The court also fined them Tk 5000 each, in default, to suffer one month RI more.

The case, in brief was that Jamir Ali along with his accomplices abducted Fatema Begum of Patharpara on July 5, 1991 and killed her on the following day.

Jamir Ali earlier gave a proposal to marry Fatema which was turned down by her parents.

Later police recovered the body of the victim from a beel of Patharpara. A case was filed and police charge-sheeted against six people.

BARISAL

35 police camps set up in Barisal Div to curb criminal activity

From Staff Correspondent

July 27: Twenty five police camps have been set up at different spotted crime zones as well as at Sharbahara Party active areas in six districts of Barisal Division.

Of the total 21 camps alone were set up in Barisal district.

According to police sources, each camp is being provided with a platoon of range force. According to Ziauddin Ahmed, DIG, Barisal, more police camps will be set up to curb the criminal activities in the areas particularly of the Sharbahara Party activity.

Police source further said, 4,876 persons were arrested on various charges of which 148 were Sharbahara Party members during last six months from six districts of division.

SATKHIRA

2 held for alleged involvement in dacoity

July 27: Police arrested two people for their alleged involvement with the inter-district dacoity recently, reports UNB.

The accused were identified as Lutfur Rahman of Keshbpur in Jessore district and Enayet Karim of Babuganj of Barisal district.

Police suspected that they were involved with the dacoity at Satkhira New Market on last December in which gold ornaments worth Tk 5 lakh were looted from a jewellery shop.

Meanwhile, police rescued a teen-aged girl from the house of Abdur Rashid at Kishimari village of Kalaroa thana on Sunday.

The victim, identified as Halima Khatun, student of class seven of Nabarun Girls High School and daughter of Abdul Wajed of Kamalnagar village in Sadar thana was abducted by a gang of miscreants on June 17.

Police arrested Abdur Rashid and sent him to jail here. A case has been filed with the local police.

Another report adds: Bangladesh Rifles recovered smuggled goods worth Tk 8 lakh from different border areas of the district in the last one week.

The goods including saree, sugar, cattlehead, bi-cycle, spare, medicine, drug and cinema carbon etc were deposited with the customs office.

JAMALPUR

Tree plantation programme inaugurated

July 27: Tree plantation programme of Jamalpur District unit of Bangladesh Muktiyodhya Sangsad was formally inaugurated recently, reports BSS.

Freedom fighter Faizur Rahman, municipality chairman inaugurated the programme by transplanting meghni sapling in sangsad premises.

The function was presided over by unit convenor Syed Haroonar Rashid. Faizur Rahman also handed over a cheque of Taka one thousand to the widow of late freedom fighter Siddique Rahman.

Muktiyodhya central command council sent the money. Faizur Rahman disclosed that a fishery project would be taken up to rehabilitate jobless freedom fighters residing in municipal area.

An eleven member project committee was formed with Syed Haroonar Rashid as convenor and Alhaj Manwar Hossain member secretary.

CHAPAINAWABGANJ

2 killed in road mishaps

July 27: Two people were killed including a minor boy in separate road accidents on Chapainawabganj-Rajshahi highway, police said, reports UNB.

The dead were identified as Kausar (8) of Horipur village and Durul Huda (30) of Dhairelia village.

Kausar was crushed under the wheels of a speeding truck near Horipur while crossing the road.

Durul Huda also died on the spot when he was hit by a speeding microbus from behind on the same day.

Two cases were filed with the police.

COMILLA

Over 91 thousand to appear in HSC exams

July 27: A total of 91,240 including 29,607 female students will appear at the HSC examinations scheduled to begin from August 1, reports UNB.

According to the Comilla Board, the examinations will be held in 182 centres including 56 centres in greater Comilla, 37 centres in Sylhet, 28 in greater Noakhali and 61 centres in Chittagong.

Another report adds: The non-govt primary teachers of the district decided to observe work stoppage from August 6 for indefinite period if their demands are not met immediately.

The decision was taken at a rally of the teachers held in the town hall premises last week to press home their 4-point demand.

Organised by the district unit of Primary School Teachers Association, the rally was presided by Nurul Haq, president of the organisation.

Another report says: Principal Abul Kalam Majumder, Awami League leader, said that the demand for caretaker government was to ensure the people's right of adult franchise in a free and fair manner.

He was addressing a public meeting at Belghar school premises in the town on Friday.

Presided by Habib Ullah Bhuiyan, the meeting was addressed, among others, by district Krishak League leader Ali Taher Majumder and Suruj Mia Majumder.

MAGURA

Rival groups clash leave 20 injured

July 27: Some 20 people were injured, 11 seriously in a clash between two rival groups at Ramchandrapur village in Sadar thana recently, reports UNB.

The quarrel ensued between the groups as a sequel to gambling. Both the groups attacked each other with bamboo sticks, knife, ram dao which left 20 injured.

The injured admitted to Magura Sadar hospital were identified as Alamgir Hossain (16), Solaiman (20), Billal (25), Abu Bakar (28), Abdul Awal (32), Abdus Sobhan (22), Khalilur Rahman (30), Motahar Ali (28), Sohar Ali (25) and Ali Kader (35).

No case has been filed with the local police in this connection.

Another report adds: A preparatory meeting of the workers of Bangladesh Krishak League, district unit, was held recently to hold its ensuing conference successfully.

Presided by Chand Ali Miah, it was addressed, among others, Aftab Hossain, Saifuddin Zaman, Bachchu, Lutfur Rahman and Abu Taher.

A convening committee was formed with Chand Miah and Lutfur Rahman to conduct the annual conference of the party.

BRAHMANBARIA

One killed, 25 hurt in road mishap

July 27: A man was killed and about 25 people were injured, 3 seriously, when a coaster fell into a road side ditch near Sahagpur bridge in Ashuganj thana recently, reports UNB.

Witnesses with said the Dhaka bound coaster coming from Brahmanbaria met the accident when the driver lost its control. The coaster turned turtle and plunged into the ditch killing the unidentified man on the spot.

Among the injured 11 were rushed to Sadar hospital where eight people were released after first aid.

The driver and the helper of the bus managed to escape. A case has been filed with the police.