

## Landlords taking agri loan in fictitious name

NOAKHALI, Aug 24: The existing rule for advancing loan to the marginal cultivators of Noakhali district through passbook is not working properly, it is alleged.

Landlords and a section of middle class people are taking agricultural loan in fictitious names depriving the genuine poor and marginal cultivators who are unable to produce security bonds. They (landlord and middleclass) lend money to the poor peasants at a high rate of interest.

Meanwhile a large number of cultivators of the district consisting of six thanas have become landless and destitute due to recurrent torrential rainfall draught. Thousands of cultivators pass their days in misery of following their indebtedness to the local bank.

Natural calamities coupled with abnormal low price of agricultural products made the cultivators unable to repay the loan, they had taken from dif-

ferent banks, cultivators informed.

Meanwhile, several commercial banks including Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) issued notices to the cultivators to repay their loan within the specified period while the district was seriously affected by the devastating floods and torrential heavy rainfall for several times during last few years.

Being perplexed by the notices, cultivators were compelled to sell their land and other belongings to repay the loan as they incurred heavy loss of crops due to other natural calamities.

Due to oppression of landlords and money lenders who are the shylocks of the age the poor cultivators had to sell out their land which were mortgaged to them due to financial stringency. Most of them are now living on begging.



SIRAJGANJ: An erosion affected area in Simla under Kazipara thana of the district.

—Star photo

## Woman killed by stepson in Sylhet

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 24: A woman was allegedly killed by her stepson in Kanaighat thana Sunday last.

Ekhlasuddin, a young man of village Kaptanpur under Jhingabari union reportedly, upon returning from the fields, asked his stepmother for food. When she took her time to serve him, he became agitated and assaulted her severely.

The victim, Fatema Begum, 30, died the next day.

Police arrested Ekhlasuddin yesterday.

## Madrasha student held

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 24: Shahjadpur police arrested a madrasa student with two country made pistols from Gopalpur boat ghat recently, reports UNB.

Police said Nazrul Islam (16), student of Puspopara Aliya madrasa of Bonogram in Pabna district reached Gopalpur ghat by a boat on the same day at 10 am. When the boatowner, demanded fair Nazrul threatened them with pistols. At this they cried for help.

On hearing the hue and cry, local people and patrol police rushed to the spot and caught Nazrul red-handed.

A case has been filed in this connection.

## Prices of essentials up in Chandpur

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Aug 24: Prices of essential commodities have registered a sharp rise with the beginning of the rainy season in different thanas of the district affecting the low income group of the people.

According to market sources, price of rice has increased on an average Tk 2 to 4 per kg. While meat has increased by Tk. 5 to 10 per kg. The price of fish has shot up manifold according to size and variety.

The supply of fishes in different markets have declined. The price of hilsa fish is very high. A big size hilsa sells between Tk.100 to 150. In some markets fishes are not available even at a high price.

The prices of all types of pulses have increased. Masur is being sold between Tk. 30 to 35 per kg and mug is being sold between Tk 33 to 36, and the prices of khesari, chola have also increased.

Prices of garlic, chili and other spices have also registered sharp rise. Prices of powder milk and condensed milk have also increased.

Local people alleged that a section of unscrupulous traders created artificial crises in the markets. The traders informed that short supply of goods are one of the reasons behind the price hike.

## Five thanas of Sherpur dist Farmers sell standing jute at lower price

SHERPUR TOWN, August 24: The poor peasants in five thanas of the district are selling their standing jute in the field in advance at a very low price and other household articles due to economic hardships.

The drought victim farmers are selling their jute which is still standing on the fields between Taka 100 to 110 per maund whereas the jute is now selling at Taka 180 to 210. The peasants of these areas are not getting agriculture loan from the Krishi Bank, Janata Bank, Agrani Bank and other commercial banks as some dishonest bank staff harass them on various grounds, it is learnt.

Reliable sources said that minimum thirty per cent inhabitants of the district passing their days without food. According to information received by The Daily Star correspondent from different corners of the district famine is knocking over the district and already twenty per cent poor farmers has been victim of famine. Sadar Thana Nirbahi Officer admitted such information partially and sanctioned six tons of food. The poor people of the district urged the government and concerned authorities to take immediate measures to save them without delay. Deputy Commissioner

Md Ataur Majumder told The Daily Star that the scheme of project allocation submitted to the higher authority. After having the allocation administration will start the work with the suggestion of the Member of Parliament.

But the local people alleged that despite during this famine like situation no parliament member are staying over the areas. Most of them stay in the capital, they added. The five thanas of the district were badly affected by prolonged drought. Seasonal Aman paddy cultivation and jute rotting has been seriously hampered for want of water.

Cultivation in the five thanas of the district and its adjoining areas has come to a halt due to non-availability of water in agricultural fields. The seedlings in seed beds has grown old and turned grey due to delayed transplanting. This district and its adjoining areas did not experience any rain during our current rainy seasons. Aman plants require sufficient quantity of water in the fields. Insufficient rainfall in the district failed to meet requirement of targeted land yet to be cultivated. Aman plants of the total thirty per cent become grew yellow and are be-

ing reduced to straw for want of water. Seedlings transplanted earlier has been old on the seed beds.

Despite hard struggle of the farmers it will not be possible for them to bring the targeted and cultivable land under the aman cultivation as there is no sufficient number of deep and shallow tubewells in the district. Besides it will not possible to operate all the existing deep and shallow tubewells machines due to internal dispute and personal ownership of the machines.

On the other hand, the jute growers did not start reaping of jute for want of water for rotting. The Agricultural Extension Department and BRDB are yet to take any initiative to lift ground water.

To fill up canals and swamps to make the water bodies fit for rotting of jute. The farmers of riparian areas are planning to set jute plants in river water which will cause widespread environment pollution in the areas. At present hot spell is prevailing in the district instead of usual rain. Rural people could not go out of their house due to scorching heat as the situation has become intolerable both for the human being and domestic animals.

## 600 more families homeless in Jamuna erosion

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 24: About 600 families of Chauhali thana of the river Jamuna yesterday reports UNB.

Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) of Chauhali, Rezaul Karim Tarafdar, said, an old man died and about 45 people have been ravaged by different water-borne diseases including diarrhoea in the last eight days. 56-year-old Rustam Ali died of diarrhoea during the period.

He said about 10,500 people of 2,600 families became homeless due to erosion in the last eight days. Five villages were completely devoured by the erosion and 17 villages were affected.

The villages affected by erosion today are Omarpur, Hatail, Mirkuta, Parshimulia, Pathraail, Hapania, Charpathuria and Dupulia.

The TNO said the affected people were living under the open sky and some of them had taken shelter in different primary schools and highways. He could not help the erosion victims properly for want of fund, he added.

## B Chowdhury calls for awareness to fight AIDS

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 24 Deputy Leader of Parliament Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury said here yesterday awareness of common people should be ensured to save them from the clutches of the killer disease AIDS.

The advanced and conscious section of the society should come forward to take up the responsibility, he added while addressing a seminar on AIDS at the Sylhet M A G Osmany Medical College as chief guest.

The function was also addressed by Prof Abdul Ahad Chowdhury while Prof Golam Kibria, Principal of the College presided.

Prof B Chowdhury also attended the installation function of the medicine club of the college.

Khondaker Abdul Malik MP and Begum Fatema Chowdhury MP also attended as special guests.

Presided over by Anisul Haque Sayem, convener of the club, the function was also addressed by Prof Golam Kibria, Colonel Fahim Ahmed Chowdhury, Prof Syed Lokman Ali, Dr Md Shamimur Rahman, Dr AKM Fazlul Bari and Arifur Rahman Arif.

Earlier, the college teachers association accorded a reception to Prof B Chowdhury.

## Day labourer beaten to death in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 24: A day labourer was beaten to death at Borokira village in sadar thana Sunday for taking a boat of farmer without permission, reports UNB.

The labourer Amir Hossain (35) took the boat of covillager Abul Hossain in the morning and went to a char at Jamuna for cutting grass.

But when Amir returned home in the afternoon, Abul Hossain along with his supporters went there and picked up a quarrel with him for taking the boat without his prior permission.

At one stage Abul and his men became furious and dragged Amir outside his house and beat him mercilessly causing his instantaneous death.

The body was sent to morgue for autopsy and a case has been registered with the police.

Another report says: a passenger died when he fell down from the rooftop of a running train at Dilpaer Bridge on Sirajganj-Ishurdi line today.

## District roundup

### GAIBANDHA

#### Conference of Sonali Bank branch managers

From Our Correspondent

Aug 24: A conference of Sonali Bank branch managers, Gaibandha region was held at the regional office recently. It was presided over by Abdul Khaleque, local AGM. On the occasion Shamsuzzoha Mahmud, General Manager, Rajshahi Division was present.

The conference pointed out that the people of Gaibandha region mainly depends on agriculture for their livelihood. So bank credit should be extended in agriculture sector together with industrial loan. The conference emphasised on the development of poultry, fishing and dairy farm where bank will provide financial help.

### KUSHLIA

#### Businessman shot dead

Aug 24: One trader was shot dead by some miscreants near Sargopur bridge, eight miles away from sadar thana recently, reports UNB.

The victim Taizal Ali (35), son of late Sher Ali of Alampur village in sadar thana was coming from Poradaha bazar after selling betel leaf.

The reason behind the killing could not be ascertained immediately. The body was sent to morgue for autopsy.

A case has been lodged with the police. Another report adds: Erosion of the rivers Padma and Goral has started afresh with the receding of water and devoured new areas of Chilmari, Ramkrishnapur, Phillipnagar and Maricha union of Daulatpur thana rendering hundreds of people shelterless.

Local people said some 7,000 acres of cropland including standing aus crop have already been eroded.

Erosion of the river Gural has also started at Kaya Kumarkhali town and Janipur bazar. The badly affected area is Saheb Nagar village of Talbaria union in Bheramara thana.

Meanwhile, an alternative road has been opened connecting Paksey Ferry ghat as the existing road has been disrupted on account of erosion.

Local MP Ahsanul Huq Mollah visited the affected areas on Sunday and assured necessary help to the victims.

### MAJDEE COURT

#### Discussion to mark Fish Fortnight

Aug 24: A discussion meeting was held recently at local PTI auditorium on the occasion of the countrywide Fish Fortnight — 94 reports UNB.

Deputy Commissioner of Noakhali Md Mashur Rahman inaugurated the district and thana-level programme. He formally released fish fry at PTI tank, Collectorate tank and Noakhali Government College tank.

A large number of fishermen, fish merchants, government officers and local elite attended the opening ceremony.

Another report adds: A total of 2211 metric tons of wheat have been allotted for different uplift projects under Food for Works Programme in six thanas of the district during the current fiscal year.

Thanawise breakup of the allocation is as follows: Sadar-622 metric tons, Begumganj-664 mts, Chatkhill-206 mts, Senbag-229 mts, Hatua-314 mts and Companiganj-176 mts.

The allocated wheat is being disbursed against earth work, construction and reconstruction of different rural roads under the programme, officials said.

### NARSINGDI

#### '90 pc of country's population fundamentalists'

Aug 24: The conspiracy for eliminating the fundamentalists will be suicidal for both Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina, warned a leader of the pro-Islamic Combined Action Council, reports UNB.

Addressing a rally at Bhaur crossing in the town Tuesday afternoon, Council Secretary General Maulana Fazlul Huq Amin said the Islamic movement was not directed against any group or party.

'It is against atheists, 'murids' and the conspirators engaged in undoing the independence and sovereignty of the country.'

He said that 90 per cent of the country's population, including Begum Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina, are fundamentalists.

The government has expedited its own death by sending Taslima Nasreen to Sweden, Maulana Amini predicted.

Presided over by Maulana Abdur Rashid, the rally was also addressed by Prof Mutalib Akhand, Junaid Al Habib, AKM Hemayetuddin, Maulana Tajul Islam and Maulana Shahidullah.

### SIRAJGANJ

#### Land handed over to Bar Library

From Our Correspondent

Aug 24: The Public Works Department (PWD) has handed over 2605 square feet of land for Sirajganj district bar library office.

Zahangir Alam, Executive Engineer of PWD in a simple ceremony handed over the documents of land located in between the collectorate office and the district judge court building.

Among others ATM Fazle Kabir, District and Sessions Judge, Syed Abdul Malek, Deputy Commissioner, Mukhlisur Rahman, Police Super and Bar members were present. The government has also sanctioned Tk three lakh for construction works of the Bar Library building.

### KURIGRAM

#### Conference of Muktijoddha held

From Our Correspondent

Aug 24: A grand conference of the freedom fighters of Kurigram district was held at the Zila Muktijoddha Sangsad recently.

Serajul Islam Tuku, Commander Kurigram District Unit of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangsad was in the chair.

Shahiduzzaman Tara, a central leader of the Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangsad was present as the chief guest while Fazlur Rahman (father of Shaheed Muktijoddha Khaibar Ali of Kurigram) and Humruz Ali Sarker were the special guests.

A large number of muktijoddhas and people from all walks of life from all over the district attended the conference.

### CHUADANGA

#### Imam confce held

From Our Correspondent

Aug 24: An imam conference was held here at the auditorium of Islamic Foundation, Chuadanga recently.

About 100 imams of mosques from four thanas of Chuadanga district were attended the conference.

The conference was presided over by Mohd. Shahidul Islam, Deputy Director, Islamic Foundation, Chuadanga.

Mohammad Abdul Haque, Deputy Commissioner, Chuadanga was present in the conference as chief guest while Maulana Abdul Jalil, Principal, Bakibillah Alia Madrasa and Maulana Badiul Alam, Principal, Chuadanga Alia Madrasa were present as special guests.

Maulana Abu Shama was the main speaker in the conference.

### SYLHET

#### Installation ceremony held

From Our Correspondent

Aug 24: Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni has called upon the affluent section of the society to come forward to help change the fate of the downtrodden and distressed people. He said, different voluntary organisations have set some example by running different development projects to achieve social development.

The Deputy Speaker was speaking as chief guest at the ninth installation ceremony of the Rotary club of Jalalabad at a hotel in Sylhet town recently.

The function began with the recitation from the Holy Quran by Rotarian Ashfaqur Ahmed. Address of welcome was placed by Rotarian Dr Manjurul Haque Chowdhury.



SYLHET: Attorney General of Bangladesh, Aminul Haque inaugurating a tree planting programme of the Rotary Club of Sylhet. A deodar sapling was planted inside the Bagbari Orphanage premises recently on the occasion.

—Star photo

## 5000 AL JP workers, leaders join BNP

BARURA, Comilla, Aug 24: Some five thousand leaders and workers of the Awami League (AL) and Jatiya Party (JP) including nine union parishad chairmen of Barura thana under the Comilla district have joined the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) on August 21 expressing their solidarity with the nation building programmes and ideals of the BNP and confidence in the leadership of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, reports BSS.

They joined the BNP at a public meeting held at the Nawab Ali Pilot High School premises here. BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Co-operatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukder was the chief guest at the meeting. It was also addressed by Energy Minister Dr. Khondaker Mosharrar Hossain, Shipping Minister MK Anwar, Forest Minister Akbar Hossain, president of Comilla Zila BNP Begum Rebbya Chowdhury, MP, AKM Abu Taher, MP and ATM Alamgir Hossain, MP.

Abdus Salam Talukder welcomed and congratulated the new-comers to BNP and urged them to work untidely for the successful implementation of the nation building programmes of the party.

Those who joined the BNP included Abdul Hamid Bhuiyan, chairman, Galimpur Union Parishad, Anwar Hossain, chairman, Adda Union Parishad, Delwar Hossain Nasu, chairman, Poyalgacha Union Parishad (South), Siddiqur Rahman, chairman, Poyalgacha Union Parishad (North), Md Ansar Ali, chairman, Bhabanipur Union Parishad (South), Md Idris, chairman, Bhabanipur Union Parishad (North), Abul Bashar, chairman, Jalam Union Parishad (South), Shamsuddin, chairman, Adra Union Parishad, Md Solaiman, chairman, Silmuri Union Parishad (South), Akber Ali, an Awami League leader, Zillur Rahman, Amir Hossain and Bazlur Rahman Bhuiyan of the Jatiya party and Haji Mukhlisur Rahman.

## Mushroom growth of pathological laboratories in Kishoreganj

KISHOREGANJ, Aug 24: Mushroom growth of unauthorised pathological laboratories in 13 thanas of Kishoreganj district creates great health problem to the patients.

Most of the pathological laboratories exist only in the name and they have no experienced pathologists. As a result, patients are not getting proper diagnostic reports from these laboratories.

There are about 80 pathological laboratories in different thanas including sadar of the district. But only 10 to 15 have qualified pathologists and other staff.

As per government rules if anybody wants to establish a pathological laboratory, he has to submit a duly filled up form mentioning the name of the doctor, experiences, educational qualification, arrangement for supplying water, electricity, space of the room, particulars of pathological apparatus etc, but these pathological laboratories do not fulfil these requirements. Most of the pathological laboratories have been running their brisk business without licences.

It is alleged that the non qualified technicians of the laboratories examine urine, stool, blood etc and give wrong reports and the incharges of the pathological laboratories only sign the examination re-

ports.

Besides, some doctors of the town and different thanas established small pathological laboratories in their chambers for extra earnings.

While talking to local doctors they said that most of the reports provided by these laboratories are wrong. On the other hand, necessary equip-

ment are absent in these laboratories and the proprietors of these laboratories are taking excessive fees from the patients violating laboratory regulations.

Experts, opined that in the absence of proper rates, the owners of these laboratories are taking advantages.

## Condition of hotels worsens in Chapainawabganj

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Aug 24: The condition of hotels and restaurants including the residential ones of the town have been deteriorating day by day causing health hazard and concern to the town dwellers, reports UNB.

Local people said with the development of the town and consequent increase in the population, these hotels have sprung up in lanes and by lanes haphazardly posing threat to public health.

Most of these hotels are dirty and not cleaned regularly. Foods supplied by these hotels are in most cases prepared and stored in a most unhygienic manner, it is alleged.

Besides, since there is no good residential hotel in the town local people and outsiders have no other choice

but to go to these hotels for their food or lodging.

The town dwellers have urged the district administration to take necessary steps to improve the conditions of these hotels and restaurants without further delay.

Another report says: The people of the district have been facing much inconvenience due to frequent power failure and load shedding for the past two months.

Town dwellers said power failure has become a common feature and electricity disappears seven to ten times every day hampering the production in mills and factories.

Besides, irrigation is being seriously affected as the deep and shallow tubewells remain inoperative most of the time due to the power failure.



SYLHET: MA Rajaque Chowdhury, President, Sylhet Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) speaking at the general meeting of the chamber held recently.

—Star photo