

# Drought jeopardises afforestation programme in CHT region

From CHT Correspondent

The supply of seedlings and stamps to the government, semi-government, private and autonomous bodies, different institutions as well as private planters might be hampered causing an impasse on plantation in the on-going season as the forest nurseries are the dependable, chief and virtually only source of supply of seedlings of different species.

RANGAMATI, May 17: Afforestation target in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region under Rangamati Forest Administrative Circle might not be achieved in the on-going plantation season due to prevailing severe drought, officials said.

Plantation of over one crore seedlings of different species including teak, sal, bamboo, etc. is the target for the administrative divisions of Rangamati Forest Circle in both the rural and urban areas. The seedlings are drying up for want of irrigation, rainfall and sunshine in the severe three-month long continuous drought. The nurseries have already choked up due to abnormal fall in underground water level, a high forest official said adding his apprehension to the effect that the supply of seedlings and stamps to the government, semi-government, private and autonomous bodies, different institutions as well as private planters might be hampered causing an impasse on plantation in the on-going season as the forest nurseries are the dependable, chief and virtually only source of supply of seedlings of different species.

The three-month long severe drought has not only been jeopardising the on-going plantation but also damaged a countable quantity of saplings and tendered trees planted in 1993-94 and 1992-93 in Kaptai Pulpwood Plantation Division (KPPD), said Alauddin

Biswas, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of KPPD. Plantation on an area of 3,700 acres was raised in KPPD in 1993-94 with about 44.5 lakh seedlings and stamps, which are getting damaged through drying up in the drought. The KPPD has got a plantation cover of 44,000 acres of forest

against a target supply of 15 lakh cft. Biswas said.

In performing pre-plantation task, the KPPD, has faced a half in stacking an important pre-plantation task, as the soil in most places has turned very hard due to absence of rainfall. Jungle cutting, burning, debris collection and reburning

Circle has also taken elaborate plantation programmes to cover a vast track of denuded hills.

The Rangamati Forest Circle has got a forest area of 7,48,161.57 acres, with 5,96,778.44 acres of reserved forest and 1,51,383.13 acres of unclassified state forest in the



A group of plantation workers at Gaidha in Razvilla range of KPPD. —Star photo

land mainly with short rotation trees and it supplies pulpwood to Karnafuli Paper Mills Ltd (KPM) for manufacturing papers. During past ten months of the present financial year, the KPPD, exceeding the target has supplied 16 lakh cubic feet (cft) of pulpwood to KPM and earned taka two crore

were done for stacking, he said.

The KPPD has been going ahead with a target of tree plantation on an area of 33,148 acres in this year, plantation is normally completed by the end of June every year, Biswas said. The other five forest divisions of the Rangamati Forest

six forest divisions of Chittagong Hill Tracts Forest South Division, Chittagong Hill Tracts Forest North Division, Rangamati Jhoom Control Forest Division, Rangamati Unclassified State Forest Division, Kaptai Pulpwood Plantation Division and Khagrachhari Forest Division.

## Arrested man snatched away

SUNAMGANJ, May 17: An arrested man was snatched away by a group of political activists from Sadar thana of the district on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Police sources said the group numbering 30 to 40, reportedly the activists of Jatiyatabad Chhatra Dal, snatched away the accused Nurul Haq, 28, from police custody immediately after his arrest.

He was arrested by Sadar thana police from Jamtala area of the town in connection with a case filed against him with the Chhatrak thana police station.

The unruly mob also pelted stones at the DC office and assaulted on-duty police constables. Constable Abul Hossain was admitted to sadar hospital with minor injury.

A case was filed with the police in this connection.

## Tk 60 lakh given among villagers to encourage small business

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, May 17: Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) has distributed Taka 60 lakh for beef fattening, paddy husking and small business projects in six thanas during last three months.

Further more, BRDB authorities recovered Taka 40 lakh 35 thousand from the loanees as outstanding dues, the source said.

Another source said, Facilities Department of the Ministry of Education is implementing projects at a cost of Taka two crore in greater Jessore district.

According to sources, they are implementing the projects under financial assistance from Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Facilities Department had also taken a programme to construct 10 secondary schools in Saikupa thana of Jhenidah district at a cost of Taka 78 lakh which is expected to be completed by June this year, the source said. About three thousand students will be benefitted after completion of the work, the source added.

## School teacher beaten to death while in bed with wife

RANGAMATI, May 17: In compensation for polygamy a school teacher was beaten to death on May 7 midnight while in bed with his second wife at his second wife's house by an unknown group of miscreants.

An armed group of miscreants numbering about five/six raided the house of Rahima Khatun, 35, midnight of May 6 while she with her recently married husband Hussein Ali Khan 45, was sleeping, started beating them with iron rods, hockey sticks and other lethal weapons. On hearing groaning the neighbours rushed for their help, but by that time the miscreants left leaving both of them critically wounded. The injured couple was sent to Rangamati hospital immediately by the neighbours, where Hussein Ali Khan succumbed to his injury the following day, police and hospital sources said.

The deceased, a teacher of Betchhari government free primary school married Rahima Khatun, a divorcee of another school teacher after two years of affairs which the first wife of Hussein Ali, Almas Begum, 38, mother of eight children could not accept, the neighbours said.

## Office bearers of Moulvibazar Sports Assoc

From Our Correspondent MOULVIBAZAR, May 17: The election of the Moulvibazar District Sports Association (DSA) was held recently.

Direct polling was held for 20 posts, while two posts of women representatives were elected unopposed. Post of president of the 23 member executive body of DSA was ex-officio reserved for the deputy commissioner.

Candidates contested in the DSA-election in two separate panels. Panel of Sajjad-Sawkat-Joinal has captured 18 posts, 55 out of 57 voters cast their votes in the election.

Elected office bearers of the DSA are Md Abu Sayeed — president (ex-officio), Sajjadur Rahman and Shafiqul Wahed Sawkat — vice presidents, Joinal Hussain — general secretary, Abdur Rouf Kola — joint secretary, A M A H Abdullah — Treasurer. Elected members are — S B M Danial, Khairul Ahsan, Asiqur Rahman, Jahirul Islam Khan, Ankar Ahmed, Churuk Miah, Yousuf Ali, Captain (ret) Sajjadur Rahman and Ataur Rahman.

# Hot illegal drug business

From A K M Zahoorul Huq

RANGAMATI, May 17: Due to absence of any control over chemical and drug business, several hundreds of pharmacies and drug stores displaying banners of different disciplines have been running their businesses selling contrabands, narcotics, liquors and harmful medicines threatening the health of the consumers as well as crippling the moralities of the youths of CHT region.

Several hundreds including 450 medicine drug stores and pharmacies have been running their business without any drug licence and trained pharmacists in the three hill districts of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban viola-

ting the action of those and sold to the patients, physicians alleged. Hardly, five per cent of the pharmacies out of about 1500 follows the directions written on the body of medicine box.

Contraband including sedative tablets, liquid, injections and other drugs for addiction are sold in different places without any prescription. Date expired medicines are also reportedly sold here. Ban on these drugs has already encouraged the unscrupulous traders to sell those drugs as those can fetched 5/6 times higher the price.

The corrupt and dishonest

water and leveling life-saving drugs on it, those dirty traders including quacks and vendors locally known as 'convenor' have been making their fortunes trading with the sufferings and life of the ailing patients," said Abu Siddique Sabuz, Rangamati correspondent of The Daily Inqilab.

Besides, unauthorised pharmacies of any discipline, sedative tablets and alcoholics liquors are also sold in some other sorts of shops including pan-shops, he said.

In the name of medicine, health damaging drugs and drugs without any test standards and registration are sold



A vendor selling his home made medicine claiming to cure all sorts of diseases at the premises of DC, Rangamati office during the office hours early last week. The medicine he sells are made from roots of hundreds of trees. —Star photo

the drug administration rule of the country before the noses of the local administration, the social workers and the local leaders alleged.

Medicines, chemicals, injections and vaccines are stored in these pharmacies and shops ignoring the directions for storage. Even the injections and vaccines supposed to be stored in deep freezes with certain specific temperature like tetanus and other similar drugs are found kept in the racks and almirahs damag-

pharmacy owners have been polluting pharmacy business sectors killing the health and morality of the people," said Arati Chakma, Assistant Director of Social Welfare Department at Rangamati.

The pharmacy and medicine shop owners are reportedly making brisk business for forming their fortunes playing with the life and deaths of the people by selling sub-standard and adulterated medicine before the eyes of the administration. "Botting the colour-

by the vendors and quacks in bazars of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban. There seems to be no authority to look into the sensitive matter, like the health of the people.

With the continuous deteriorations of the economical strength of the people of this region, the mushroom growth of unauthorised pharmacy of any discipline and brisk business of quacks were observed, said Abul Bashir Talukdar, the Principal of Talukdar Commercial Institute.

# Kushtia sees no improvement in law, order

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, May 17: Security of life and property is virtually absent in six thanas of the district following further deterioration of law and order and failure to control crimes.

The inhabitants of the district have been passing their days in fear as they can be victims of terrorism any time.

Untoward incidents, free movement of terrorists carrying lethal weapons, murder and gun battle in broad day light, stabbing, raping, hijacking, toll collection and campus violence have become common feature.

Illegal sale of wine and consumption of rectified spirit by youngsters as alcohol, cultivation of ganja, and other immoral activities are also on rise.

Campus violence in the educational institutions have led to several killing including a guardian who was killed by gun shot during a gun battle in Islamic University campus recently. Campus violence in Islamic University has led to the resignations of the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Dr Abdul Hamid and treasurer, and other staff, recently. Clashes among underground parties have also vitiated the atmosphere.

On the day of Eid-ul-Azha gun battle erupted between two groups at Kuthipara in the town where one person was stabbed.

Deputy Commissioner, Md Nazrul Islam while addressing Eid-ul-Azha congregation at Eidgha maidan lamented on the stabbing incident and gun battle in the morning and said that our police force are engaged in prevention of terrorism. But no arrest was made so far.

When contacted the thana in charge officer said that no case has been filed by any party although victim of stabbing had been admitted in general hospital in critical condition.

Police conducted several raids to curb crimes but the law enforcing agencies failed to check the crime. During raids, police picked up innocent people, it is alleged.

Unofficial sources informed that over 1000 cattle were stolen from different villages of the district during last one year. It is also informed that some organised gang of miscreants demand ransom to free the cattle.

Armed clashes often occur at different places where gangsters were found using different kinds of fire arms. Police however, failed to recover any arms so far. In most of the

cases clashes occur between groups locked in a battle to establish their supremacy over the area or in connection with collection of toll from the contractors or wealthy parsons in the area.

Last December three brothers were murdered in village Aburi in Mirpur thana as a result of enmity between two underground groups. Police however could not arrest any person in this connection.

On May 8 a group of armed dacoits committed dacoity in 25 houses and killed one in village Dalua in Juniadah union of Bheramara thana. The dacoits sent letters demanding huge money from the villagers earlier but the victims failed to pay the ransom.

In Daulatpur thana armed miscreants also sent letters demanding huge sum of money from businessmen who are passing sleepless nights.

Meanwhile, two persons have been killed in Bheramara thana when they failed to meet the demand. On May 2 a dacoity was committed in the house of Gazi Mahaldar of Dharampur union of Bheramara thana where Fazlul Hoq 35 was killed in a bomb attack and another two, Aked Ali 40, and Shahanur, 36, were severely injured. Dacoits looted valuables worth Taka 70 thousand. High police officials visited the place of occurrence but none has yet been arrested.

On the same day a group of terrorists set on fire the houses of Abdul Hannan and Soltaman of village Talbaria under Daulatpur thana. Earlier on March 20 this terrorist

group headed by Nazrul Islam looted the houses of 10 persons when a village salis went against Nazrul. The victims lost everything but no police help came to their rescue. Now the life of the victims were threatened, it is reported.

Meanwhile one person was beaten to death in village Charaikole under Kumarkhali thana by his rival group in connection with taking water for irrigation in the field. Victim Mashur Rahman died on the spot. Nobody has been arrested although case has been filed with Kumarkhali police station.

On April 26 two cattle lifters were caught by the villagers in village Bashgram and one of them was beaten to death.

In the meantime, political atmosphere has become hot and each party is preparing for ensuing parliamentary election.

One political leader on condition of anonymity alleged that law and order will further deteriorate as the ruling party has decided to release criminals now in jail in order to allow them to join BNP and work for winning in election.

The source further disclosed that these miscreants now undergoing detention are expected to join BNP.

The district administration has nothing to do but release them as per order of the higher authority, the source further added.

During last one year beginning from January 1, 1994, to

December 1994 44 murders, were recorded in six police stations of the district.

Number of injured in clashes and terrorists activities were over two thousand. But the number of arrests were very low in comparison with the crimes committed. Out of total 44 murder cases, 21 persons were killed by gunshot while

23 murders were committed using sharp weapons, severe beating or by other means. In Mirpur police station, there are two groups of underground parties believe to have been committing murders one after another, when-ever the residents fail to meet their demands.

Out of total 712 cases filed during the year, 11 dacoities, 22 robbery, 42 burglaries, 23 theft, 61 riots, 6 riots involving murder, 40 arms cases, 24 cattle lifting, 24 smuggling, 11 kidnapping and five police harassment cases were recorded in six police stations of the district.

Local people alleged that actual number of incidents will be double the figure recorded with police stations. They also alleged that anti-social activities of the outlawed Sarbahara Party members as well as Biplobi Communist Party members have increased in Mirpur and Khoksa thanas as well as Meherpur district.

Police have failed to control law and order in Mirpur where one after another murders is being committed every month. When ever local people fail to meet the demand of the outlawed party members some one is killed.



SYLHET: Anandakol arranged a session of Tagore songs in observance of Rabindra Jayanti at the Blue Bird High School premises recently. —Star photo

# STOL service likely to start next August

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, May 17: The operation of the private sector Short Take-Off and Landing (STOL) service is likely to start by August this year.

Apart from few problems, the government authority concerned at last decided to open all the domestic routes scheduled for STOL service in the

the government and the private entrepreneurs lost their interests for launching STOL services and for months together works on this sector remained suspended.

According to decision of the concerned ministry, seat capacity of STOL aircraft has been raised from 20 seats to

soak device have so far been installed here for STOL service.

Taka 20 crore has been allocated for the development works of Barisal Airport, meantime, additional Taka 10 crore has been allocated for further development, an official source informed.



BARISAL: A partial view of the runway of Barisal Airport at Rahimatpur. —Star photo

country. So far, it is learnt STOL services will only be operated in those places where Biman is not operating.

Mentionable, government earlier approved the proposal of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) for opening domestic skylines for some private airlines in August 1993 to operate STOL service in some scheduled destinations. Following that decision, Provisional Air Transport Operating Licence (PATOL) were given to six private companies to start STOL services soon. Now, the number of PATOL holders are eight concerned authority said.

Sources said, destinations for STOL service were selected in Barisal, Lalmonirhat, Samshernagar, Thakurgaon, Ishardi, Comilla and Dhaka.

Meanwhile, CAAB has almost completed the necessary development works of the almost abandoned airstrips for STOL services with an expenditure of crores of taka. For several reasons both,

80 which will be more viable for the private airlines owners. In a recent meeting, the state minister of the concerned ministry and some representatives of private entrepreneurs came to a decision for lifting of few restrictions imposed earlier by the government to operate STOL service.

According to Civil Aviation Authority, works of almost all the prescribed airstrips have already been completed and are ready to operate STOL service.

In Barisal, at Rahamatpur, construction and extension works of runway, terminal building and other sections are going on in full swing and expected to be completed by June next. Meantime, 2600 feet of runway has already been completed but for ATP service at least 6 thousand ft runway is necessary, sources said.

Meanwhile, VHF system for air to ground communication, HF communication system, Inter Tower Radio Transmission (ITRT), high power security light including wind

## Former police inspector sent to jail

SIRAJGANJ, May 17: A former police inspector was sent to jail on Tuesday for allegedly torturing and grabbing property of his first wife, says UNB.

District and Sessions Judge ATM Fazley Kabir Tuesday ordered to send the accused, Sahidul Islam Jhunu to jail when he sought bail after nine months of his absconding for two cases.

Sahidul Islam allegedly got married for the second time on February 13 this year without prior consent of his first wife Kanij Fatema, whom he married in 1974.

Sahidul allegedly and beaten his first wife and taken away 15 tolas of gold, and other household articles of the first wife.

Kanij Fatema filed a case against him last February.