

Good harvest of aman paddy expected from N-districts

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Aug 20: A total of about 36.88 lakh metric tons of aman paddy is expected to be harvested during the current season in 16 northern districts of Rajshahi Division. The harvest may exceed the target, officials and farmers hoped.

According to official sources, a target has been fixed to bring 16.88.896 hectares of land under aman paddy cultivation this year in Rajshahi Division. Out of the total, high yielding variety (HYV) and Borro paddy will be transplanted in 12,03,196 hectares of land and conventional variety will be sown and transplanted in 4,85,700 hectares of lands.

A total amount of 36.87-970 metric tons of aman paddy will be produced from these lands of both varieties this year in 16 northern districts of Rajshahi Division, a surplus area for paddy in the country.

According to the BADC sources, weather has so far remained favorable. Early floods in most of the districts have made the transplantation of saplings a little late. But the time has not passed. Floods have made the lands fertile and let the farmers plough their lands in flood waters free of irrigation cost.

While visiting some areas of Rajshahi and Naogaon districts farmers are seen to be too much busy preparing lands and transplanting paddy saplings all day long. They have no time even to talk as the season is about to pass away.

According to the sources, the most suitable time for transplantation of aman saplings extends from the 15th of Bangla month of Ashar to the 15th of



RAJSHAHI: Women are seen busy planting paddy saplings in a field.

— Star photo

Bangla month of *Sraavan*. The time may be extended upto the 30th of *Sraavan* without much harm.

In fact, when it needs for unavoidable reasons like floods, or if weather favours aman transplantation has been proved suitable even upto the 15th of Bangla month Bhadra. This year, the same situation as it happened last year is prevail-

ing in the northern districts of the country. About 25 per cent lands are yet to be cultivated, sources said.

Some areas of Rajshahi, Natore and Chapainawabganj are, however, suffering from shortage of rains which is hampering aman transplantation to some extent in those areas.

Shortage of saplings is also

hindering aman cultivation, specially in flood-stricken areas as the seed-beds were damaged by floods in those areas. BADC has distributed seeds among the farmers to compensate the loss.

Meanwhile, Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank (RAKUB) and other commercial banks have undertaken extensive loan programmes on aman cultivation.

Village shalish attacked: 10 wounded

From Our Correspondent
BRAHMANBARIA, Aug 20: At least ten persons were injured while rival party attacked a *Grammo Shalish* at Dathmondol village under Nasirnagar thana of the district on August 16, it was reported.

Of the injured persons, four were admitted in the Nasirnagar thana health complex in critical condition and the rest were released after first aid.

According to sources, on July 17, one Sharat Chandra Das allegedly stole Taka 95 thousand from a grocer shop of Chanu Lal Deb. Next day in the morning Chanu Lal caught the thief Sharat with money. Sharat returned only 69 thousand Taka. As a result Chanu organised the rural arbitration with ex-MP Kaptan Mia in chair at Dat Mondol Arfania Madrasa field.

Five held for stealing goat

From CHT Correspondent
GUIMARA (Khagrachhari), Aug 20: Police has here rounded up five persons recently allegedly for stealing a goat at Jaliapara in Guimara thana of the district.

The persons arrested were identified as Shanti Dhar, 25, Osman Ali, 27, Uttam Paul, 30, Iqbal, 26 and Musa Miah, 37. The accused, reportedly the inhabitants of Hathazari thana in Chittagong district, were sent to Khagrachhari court, Guimara thana police said.

According to police, the accused while on the way to Chittagong from Khagrachhari by an autorickshaw picked up a grazing goat from the road at Ballyachhari in Matiranga thana of the district.

While fleeing with the booty, the auto-rickshaw they were travelling with turned turtle after hit a pedestrian at Jaliapara in Guimara thana of the district, police added.

Owner of the goat Shamsul Haque, lodged a case with Guimara thana police in this connection.

Two killed in two separate incidents in Narsingdi

NARSINGDI, Aug 20: Two people, including a UP member, were killed in separate incidents in two thanas of the district last Sunday night, reports UNB.

Police said Abdul Haque, 45, a member of Jessore Union Parishad in Shibpur thana, was killed near his Sristighar village. The body was recovered yesterday morning.

Family sources said Haque was called out from his house by some unidentified miscreants at dead of night and they found his body in the morning.

In another incident, Raipura police recovered the body of a middle aged man, Mohammad Miah, from near a pond at Hairmara village in Raipura thana yesterday morning.

Police said, some unknown assailants called Mohammad Miah out of his residence on Sunday mid night and later stabbed him to death.

The bodies were sent to sadar hospital morgue for autopsy. Separate cases were filed with the local police.

Re-writing answer scripts: 7 held

From Our Correspondent
GAIBANDHA, Aug 20: Seven HSC candidates including three women were arrested by Sundarganj thana police on August 12 while they were allegedly re-writing answer scripts of last HSC examination at the house of Shajahan Ali, lecturer of English Department in Sunderganj College.

The said lecturer was appointed as examiner of last HSC examination English literature under Rajshahi Board. On being informed the said candidates rushed to the house of Shajahan and engaged in re-writing the script. The matter, however, was exposed in the area that created much gossip.

On getting information Sundarganj thana police raided the house and arrested seven candidates from the house. They are Rupa Begum, Lily Begum, Habiba Akhter Bantu, Emdadul Huq, Abdus Sobhan, Hafizer Rahman and Omar Faruk. The house owner remain absconding since then. The arrested persons were later removed to Gaibandha jail.

One killed, four injured in clash in Habiganj

HABIGANJ, Aug 20: An old man was killed and four others were injured, two of them seriously, in a clash between two rival groups at Shaillighas village in Chunarughat thana of the district, reports UNB.

Police and witnesses said, the clash took place on August 14 as a sequel to a long-drawn boundary dispute.

On the day, heated exchanges disrupted a village arbitration, which culminated in a violent clash between two groups with lethal weapons.

During the clash, Abdul Basir, Talukder, 60, died on the spot and four others received injuries. Among them Ful Miah and Jitu Miah were admitted to Sylhet Medical College in a critical condition.

A case was filed with Chunarughat thana in this connection.

A tale of a tiny village

From Rezaul Hoque

GAIBANDHA, Aug 20: Rahmatpur, a tiny village of Fazlupur union under Fulchhari thana situated into the river bed of Brahmaputra basin where 108 families are still living despite frequent attack of erosion and flood hit.



Genda Sheikh collecting firewood for his livelihood. — Star photo

Fulchhari thana is the most erosion prone area of Gaibandha district where four unions out of seven have already gone into the river following wide spread erosion. Once eroded, the lands need at least a decade or more time to reform as char-land.

Four unions of Fulchhari thana are still lying into the river bed in the shape of tiny islets. These are frequently hit by erosion round the year. The affected inhabitants seek for new places for their shelters. All these small villages of this areas may be seen as make-

shift village. Many of such villages survived erosion for years together but it is quite unknown when the erosion will hit the areas.

The inhabitants of said villages leads a hard life. They have no alternatives other than fishing, plucking fire wood, grazing cattle and working as labourers.

The sandy land is not suitable for cultivation of any sort of crops.

Some of the villages miraculously escaped from erosion for some consecutive years. The inhabitants there are able to grow a few crops like kawn, China teel and ground nut only during winter season. These lands remain under water for long six months every year.

While visiting the village Rahmatpur this correspondent witnessed miserable life lead by some 108 families. During the recent flood all the dwelling

houses went under five to six feet deep water.

Sometimes water level reached the roof of many of the huts. Many of the dwellers were compelled to leave the areas for safe shelter.

An inhabitant, Ensor Ali, 36, told this correspondent that during the recent flood nobody gets regular meals. Sometimes we live on a single meal per day. Many of the families even could not arrange such a meal and fully depends on help from local chairman or some other sources.

Another fellow, Genda Sheikh, 50, narrated that they had to live with poisonous snakes around them during flood. When asked why they take such risk of staying behind, Genda replied, we cultivate a kind of grass for the construction of houses. If we leave the place other people take them away.



GAIBANDHA: Picture shows inhabitants of village Rahmatpur under Fulchhari thana. — Star photo

No step to repair tubewells

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Aug 20: Despite loss of innumerable lives caused by diarrhoeal diseases every year in Jamalpur district, the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) has still been apathetic towards their responsibilities to ensure drinking water supply.

It is said that the DPHE is entrusted with the task of sinking tubewells, repair those and maintain them properly, to provide adequate supply of drinking water. But it is alleged that they hardly visit rural areas to survey the condition of the tubewells and take any effective measure to halt rampant stealing of spare parts giving a sharp rise to disordered tubewells. At present, a total of 2182 tubewells remain inoperative all over the district.

According to reliable sources most of the tubewells in rural areas are not provided with proper care and maintenance

and lifting of spare parts are learnt to be the main reasons behind the mechanical disorder of the tubewells. As such, most of the people in rural areas are now forced to take water from

Decomposed body recovered

From Our Correspondent
BRAHMANBARIA, Aug 20: Brahmanbaria thana police recovered a decomposed body of an unknown woman, from Chanpur beel under sadat thana of Brahmanbaria district recently.

Acting on an information, police of Brahmanbaria sadar thana rushed to the spot and recovered the decomposed body of a woman. The police assumed that the woman was forcibly drowned to death.

An UD case was filed with Brahmanbaria police station.

rivers, canals, ponds and tanks falling easy prey to various intestinal diseases.

The Department of Public Health Engineering has, however, taken a scheme to install only 50 tubewells during the current fiscal year which are quite inadequate to meet the demand.

It may be mentioned that diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases break out in flood affected areas of the district.

There are many villages in the district where many tubewell will be found out of operation.

According to survey, one third of tubewells throughout the district have been lying out of order.

The villagers told this correspondent that the existing tubewells are quite meager and many of them are unable to lift water as per their capacity.



MANIKGANJ: Different parts of Manikganj face severe threat of erosion. The picture shows a part of a village in Harirampur under such a threat. — Star photo

River erosion attacks fresh areas in Manikganj

From Our Correspondent

MANIKGANJ, Aug 20: Vast areas of four thanas of the district have begun to be eroded as the water in the Padma, Jamuna, Dhaleshwari and the Kaliganga are increasing for the second time.

The erosion has been taking place in about 20 kilometre long areas from Bachamara union of Daulatpur thana to Dhulshura union of Harirampur thana. Fresh areas are being eroded everyday.

The very recent erosion which has begun in Bachamara, Baghuta and Charkatari union of Daulatpur thana Shibbalaya, Teota and Aroya union of Shibbalaya thana, Balla Maluchi, Gopinathpur, Harukandi, Boira, Ramkrishnapur and Dhulshura union of Harirampur thana and Gorpara union of sadar thana has already taken five hundred houses under water leaving about fifteen thousand people homeless.

Thousands of affected people look shelter on the embankments, road-side slums and in different educational institutions. But a vast areas of the embankments have already been grabbed by the rivers leaving

hundreds of people shelterless.

According to the local people neither proper steps were taken to check the erosion and nor sufficient relief was given to the victims.

One awarded 6 yrs for possessing illegal drugs in Pabna

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Aug 20: One person was found guilty of possessing contraband drugs and was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for six years and fined an amount of Tk 5,000 recently, it was reported.

According to prosecution, on February 19 1993 police contingent raided a Dhaka bound night coach and recovered 126 bottles of phensedyl and arrested Abdul Hannan, of Charghat Rajshahi.

After completing investigation police submitted chargesheet and the accused was awarded the said punishment.

Workshop on creating awareness on iodine deficiency

From Our Correspondent

GAIBANDHA, Aug 20: A day long work-shop on growth of latent talent for self development and creating awareness on iodine deficiency concluded here at Livestock Training Institute on August 14. The work-shop was largely attended by district level officers, teachers, social workers and NGOs.

The work shop held under joint auspices of Gaibandha foundation, Rotary Club Gaibandha and the hunger project. Presided over by Shahjada Awoerul Kadir the work-shop was addressed by Shafer-raj Hossain, Deputy Commissioner, G.C. Dev Nath, ADC (Gen), Rafiqul Islam Sarker, Senior News Producer, Bangladesh Television. The work shop was conducted by Dr. Badul Alam Majumder, Country Director, The Hunger Project.

The audience discussed about different diseases and physical disabilities originated from iodine deficiency. They also prescribed a number of suggestions on how to overcome the problem through a motivational drive in this respect just to create awareness on iodine problem.

BDR jawan allegedly shoots himself down

From CHT Correspondent

MATRANGA (Khagrachhari), Aug 20: A member of Bangladesh Rifles has here reportedly shot himself down with the rifle issued to him at Khedachhora in Matiranga thana of the district, Matiranga thana police said.

Mamnoon Khan, 30, a jawan from 34 battalion of Bangladesh Rifles stationed at Khedachhora in Matiranga thana of the district has reportedly committed suicide by shooting himself down with his own rifle in the early hours of Wednesday, August 14, the duty officer of Matiranga thana told this correspondent when contacted the following day over telephone.

The body of the deceased was sent to his village home in Kishoreganj district after having an autopsy in Khagrachhari sadar hospital Thursday, police sources said.

The reason behind the killing of Mamnoon reportedly by himself on-duty could not be available till writing this report.

A case was lodged with Matiranga thana police in this connection bearing number 5 of dated August 14, 1996.

175 meritorious students receive stipend

From CHT Correspondent

RANGAMATI, Aug 20: With a view to boost up education in the district, the Rangamati Hill District Local Government Council (RHDLGC) has here distributed stipends on Friday, August 9 last with a tune of Taka 4,90,000 to some 175 meritorious students of the district studying in the different institutions in the country.

The formal stipend awarding ceremony held in the conference room of the council, arranged by its Education and Religious Affairs Committee was chaired by the chairman of RHDLGC Rabintra Lal Chakma Suzan, participated by the awardees and their guardians.

Out of 175 stipend awarded students, 75 were from Higher Secondary stage, 50 from the graduation level and the rest 52 were from the post-graduation level studying in the different educational institutes in the country. 669 students applied for stipends for 1995-96 academic year, officials said.

In continuous process, the RHDLGC has so far awarded stipends to some 658 students with a tune of Taka 16,26,800 starting this programme in 1991-92 till this year, officials added.

Tk 3 lakh looted

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Aug 20: A dacoity was committed in the house of one Sharifuddin Tagore close to Madhukhali bazar in Madhukhali thana on the night of July 29, according to police source.

It is learnt that a gang of dacoits numbering 6 to 7 armed with lethal weapons entered the house by breaking open the door at dead of night. They tied up the inmates and beat them mercilessly. They looted cash and gold ornaments worth over Taka three lakh and decamped with the booty.

A case was lodged with Madhukhali thana in this connection.

Police super visited the place of occurrence, vigorous police investigation is going on.

Alarming decline in cultivable land in three hill dists

From CHT Correspondent

RANGAMATI, Aug 20: Economic problems in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region have been deepening over the last few years and the people both tribal and non-tribals are faced with an uncertain future, according to the Local Government Council sources.

Population boom, depletion of forest resources, decline in pisciculture and loss of cultivable land as well as fertility are stated to be mainly responsible for the deepening crisis in the three hill districts of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban.

The report received from the districts information offices said population in the region has increased from two lakh in the beginning of this century to above eleven lakh recently.

About one lakh people had displaced by the Kaptai hydro-electric project in 1960 submerging peoples habitation, dense forest and reducing cultivable plain land.

Local Government Council sources said only 1,04,305 acres of land were at present available for cultivation in three hill districts. This was very alarming specially for the majority of agro-base population here in 3 districts.

A 'Horticulture Development Project' was established in the hilly land with a view to encourage fruit production. But the project did not succeed for various reasons in this insurgency battered region.

Depletion of forest resources, particularly bamboo plantation has caused top-soil

to be washed away by rain-water reducing fertility, many local as well as foreign experts observed. Local people do not know how to use bio-fertiliser properly, which also caused reduction in food production.

The region has no significant industry except the Karnaphuli Paper Mills and Rayon Mills.

Many people, who lived on extraction of trees and logging have become destitute after the government imposed restrictions in 1991 upon cutting trees and bamboos.

Local leaders said the long and short-term and effective development plans should be undertaken urgently to avoid famine, communal disharmony and social unrest.



Mufazzal Hossain DG, BRDB and Morimasaka Namarau Resident Representative of JICA signed a MOU on Tuesday for strengthening the activities of Model Rural Development Project in Homna and Daudkandi of Comilla. High officials of JOCV and BRDB were present on the occasion.

Pourashava authorities of Jamalpur fail to provide minimum amenities for its citizens

From Md Meherullah

JAMALPUR, Aug 20: Hazardous road communication has long been a major problem in Jamalpur district town hindering all uplift activities. Despite spending a bulk of money and allocation of rice and wheat, no noticeable development was observed in this sector due to allegedly massive misappropriation of money, malpractices and mismanagement by the concerned administration.

Most of the road, lanes and by-lanes in the town have turned unserviceable as innumerable cracks and ditches have developed. Following a slight rainfall the roads become muddy impeding easy movement of pedestrians and transports. The main roads need to be metalled immediately to ease road communication in the town.

It is alleged that the concerned authority hardly cares for the maintenance of the roads.

Gogown roads, Bazrapur Road, Islampur Road, New College Road, Bush Para Road, Boghat Para Road, Kacharipara Road, Middhapara Road, are all in a very bad condition.

All the markets of the town remain in poor shape. Markets were not widened during the last 5 years. As a result the shops could not be installed systematically. There is also a want of sheds compelling the sellers to occupy the open spaces meant for buyers movement. Besides the fish markets of these bazars are seldom cleared and cleaned.

Frequent failure of electricity and fluctuation of voltage have become almost a regular phenomenon in Jamalpur town.

Lack of adequate number of street lights in Jamalpur town is another problem causing much inconvenience to the town dwellers. Though the town was given power connections several years ago most of its roads are yet to be provided with electric connections. Some areas having power connections also plunge into darkness due to absence of bulbs in the light posts. The Jamalpur town has no proper water supply system. The existing tubewells can meet only 25 per cent of the local requirement.

Seven pipe guns recovered

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, Aug 20: Brahmanbaria thana police launching a special drive and recovered seven pipe guns recently.

According to police sources, a special team of the police recovered seven pipe guns which were abandoned in different places. None was arrested in this connection, police handout said.

Absence of adequate number of dustbins is causing constant environmental pollution. Moreover due to the absence of public toilet people respond to the call as nature at road sides polluting the atmosphere.

The people of the Jamalpur district urged the concerned authorities to look into the matter immediately.