

Local AL, JP leaders demand

# Declare 2 flood affected Rajshahi thanas distressed area

From Abdul Wadood

RAJSHAHI, Oct 3: Local Awami League (AL) and Jatiya Party (JP) leaders in separate statements demanded of the govt to declare Bagmara and Mohonpur thanas of Rajshahi district distressed area.

BNP and other opposition parties exempted the thanas from their anti-government movement programmes.

Meanwhile, the overall flood situation in five thanas of Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj and Naogaon districts is unlikely to deteriorate.

The situation in other flood-affected areas is slowly improving with fall in water level of the rivers.

Onrush of flood waters inundated almost all the areas of Mohonpur and Bagmara thanas of Rajshahi and Manda thanas of Naogaon when people of Tanore thanas cut a dam at Tangra village two days ago to drain out flood waters from their areas.

More than four lakh people including about 1.02 lakh in Mohonpur and 1.85 lakh in Bagmara thanas have been hit by flood, official sources said. In these two thanas, in all 22 unions measuring more than 326 square kilometers have been inundated. A total of 21,750 houses and crops on 14,000 hectares of land have been damaged. When some journalists visited Jahanabad Union Parishad chairman Islam Ali Sardar, said that they had lost everything. The floods spared none, he said and observed that relief and rehabilitation works should be started immediately to save people from famine.

Mouga Union Parishad chairman Sohrab Ali Khan said in the same tone. Sorat Ali Pramanik, chairman of

## News snaps



A typical scene of a rural home where housewives are seen winnowing Aus paddy following its threshing. The picture was taken recently from village Balidia in Mohammadpur thana of Magura district.

— Star photo

### AL rival factions clash: 10 hurt

CHANDPUR, Oct 3: Two rival factions of Awami League clashed at Alagiittar union in Haimchari thana over leadership of party's union unit on Friday leaving 10 people injured, police said, reports BSS.

Two of the injured, Habibur Rahman and Goutam, were admitted to Haimchari thana health complex while others were given first aid. Police were called in from the district headquarters amid a tense situation after the clash.

### Three child traffickers held

PATUAKHALI, Oct 3: Police arrested three child traffickers from Morichbunia village in sadar thana on Friday, reports BSS.

Police and witnesses said local people caught red-handed the traffickers while they were trying to take away two children — Ilias, 8, and Shaheen, 6, sons of Afzal Mridha of the village. They were handed over to police. The arrested were identified as Kashem, 70, Yusuf, 35, of Chunakhal village in Amtali thana of Barguna district and Noor Banu, 32, of Morichbunia. Yusuf admitted that his wife had been serving in Dubai and engaged in child trafficking since long. Mother of the children Rashida Begum filed a case with the police.

### Rat-killing campaign

NAOGAON, Oct 3: The National Rat-killing Campaign '99 sponsored by the Agriculture Extension Department began last week, reports BSS.

The inaugural function was held in the auditorium of Sapahar Upazila Parishad on September 20. The function was presided over by Sapahar upazila BNP president Abdul Noor. District production specialist officer of the Agriculture Extension Department Chanchal Kumar Bose was the chief guest in the function. Upazila Nirbahi Officer Syed Mizanur Rahman and Upazila Agriculture Extension Officer MM Amzad Hossain, among others, spoke on the occasion. Another function to mark the rat-killing campaign was held at Patnitola Upazila Parishad premises.

### Agri-rehabilitation scheme

JUYPURHAT, Oct 3: Local agriculture office is going to take and agriculture rehabilitation programme in a bid to recoup the output losses caused by the recent flood, reports BSS.

The office has sought Tk 46 lakh to bring some 1,250 hectares of land under the agriculture rehabilitation programme. Official sources said transplanted Aman on 6,481 hectares of land out of 71,000 in five thanas have been damaged by the recent flood. Under the proposed programme, 500 hectares of land would be brought under mustard cultivation while 300 hectares under wheat and 450 hectares under Boro cultivation. The officials said some 9,375 farmers would be benefited if the programme could be implemented successfully.

### Youth falls from bus roof, dies

THAKURGAON, Oct 3: A youth died after he fell down from the roof of a Panchagar-bound coach coming from Dhaka to Bhulli in Sadar thana here on Thursday, reports BSS.

Abdul Majid, 18, son of Abul Hossain of Balarampur village in Atoyer thana, was travelling on the roof of the bus. He was hit by electric wire in the early hours killing him on the spot. Many night coaches in the northern region, including Thakurgaon and Panchagar, carry passengers on roofs at cheaper rate.

### Workshop for women, children

BHERAMARA, Oct 3: A two-day workshop on the development of women and children and mass communication organised by Kushtia district Information Department was held in the auditorium of Bheramara Upazila Parishad last week, reports BSS.

The workshop was inaugurated by Additional District Magistrate Kushtia Mohammad Abul Hossain. The workshop was addressed, among others, by Upazila Family Planning Officer Jebun Nesa and Medical Officer of Bheramara Pourashava Dr Santosh Kumar Saha. The participants included teachers of different schools, imams of mosques and NGO workers.

### Defeated candidate 'elected'

BARGUNA, Oct 3: The local election tribunal here on Wednesday declared a defeated candidate elected as UP member after two years of the election, reports BSS.

Official sources said the returning officer declared Abdul Karim Akond elected in December 1997 Union Parishad election, as member of Betagi union against his rival Lucky Akhter. After the result, Lucky Akhter lodged complaint with local election tribunal. After examining the evidences, the tribunal judge, Jalal Uddin Ahmed, declared Lucky elected.

GOVINDAPARA, Oct 3: Local Parishad of Bagmara thana said that floods had left little places dry. "They are virtually living in water and starving", he said. Union Parishad member of Maria Al Mamun burst into tears and said that his family and the neighbours had been starving. Five ponds of fish, his only living means, have been washed away by floods.

In Chapainawabganj, flood situation deteriorated in Gomastapur and Bholahat thanas, as the River Punarvaba continued to rise. Onrush of flood waters from across the border has made the situations more serious. Road communications of the two thanas have been disrupted completely due to inundation and damage the roads.

In Bholahat thana, three embankment-cum-roads have been broken down by floods at Poladanga, Baburtola, Bindupar and Baraipara over flooding vast area. Out of total 81 square kilometer areas of the thana, 58 square kilometer areas went under flood waters. Standing crops on 3,243 acres of land and 15,324 houses have been damaged so far by floods. A total of 12 shelters have been opened, but no relief materials reached for the flood-hit people.

Meanwhile, overall flood situation in other thanas of Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj and Naogaon districts improved a little. But sufferings of the flood affected people increased. Scarcity of food, drinking water, medicine and fuel has become very acute in the flood affected areas. Relief works of the government and also of the non-governmental organisations are not satisfactory, local people said.

## T-Aman on 13,000 hectares under pest attack

KURIGRAM, Oct 3: Farmers are suffering from a problem that is all too familiar to other parts of the country: pest attack, reports BSS.

When the farmers were expecting a good harvest this year, pests have been raging through their croplands cutting a swath of destruction.

Officials said transplanted Aman on some 13,000 hectares of land came under pest attack squandering the chances of a bumper harvest.

Earlier, standing Aman on about 28,135 hectares of land was damaged by floodwaters.

The officials said some 1.19 lakh hectares of land have been brought under Aman cultivation this year, of which cultivation on over 1.15 lakh hectares has already been completed.

An agriculture official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said he visited different areas of Sadar thana, Ulipur and Rajbari thanas and found that Aman plants have widely been damaged by the pest attack.

The official attributed the epidemic to the high birth rate of pests caused by lack of potassium and zinc in croplands and it's widely seen in the lands, the quality of which is regarded as No. 11.

He suggested the farmers to install poles in croplands alongside using light-trap to keep majora at bay and use tilt for preventing the roots from rotting and use Nagos, Dimecron, potassium and urea for preventing the leaves from drying up.

According to relevant sources, a total of 2.12 lakh hectares have been earmarked for the cultivation of Aman in this district this year. Meanwhile, 1,79,268 hectares have been brought under this programme till September 12 and the cultivation is going on to exceed the target.

Different types of insects have attacked the crops. At least 2.18 thousand hectares have already been attacked by 'Pamari' and 345 hectares by 'Majora' insects, the sources added.

The insect affected areas are: Patuakhali Sadar, Galachipa, Kalapara, Baufal, Dashminia and Mirzaganj thanas of the district.

According to district Agriculture Extension Department sources, a total of 152 squads have been formed for spraying the insecticides on an emergency basis in the affected areas of this district.

Besides, the department took up measures to check the insects under 'Food for Pamari' programme here, the source added.

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