

National

Nor'westers play havoc in districts

Massive relief drive in Netrakona

By Staff Correspondent

Nor'westers lashed different districts of the country killing one person in Kurigram, another girl in Mymensingh and injuring many others in Rajshahi, Mymensingh, Munshiganj, Faridpur, Rajbari and Jhenidah during the last few days.

Our Mymensingh correspondent says: Several nor'westers which lashed the villages of all 12 unions of Haungajha thana from April 18 to 28 caused a serious damage to Boro crops, watermelons and vegetables. Hundreds of dwelling houses, educational institutions and mosques were also damaged totally or partially.

Nor'westers hit different areas of the thana with heavy rain and hailstorm several times last month. At least one girl was killed and over 25 people were injured during the storms.

The victim was identified as Kulsum, 7, daughter of Md. Shamsul Islam of village Billora.

According to Thana Agriculture Office sources, Boro paddy on 13,950 hectares, water melon on 1,200 hectares and vegetables on 510 hectares of land were damaged totally or partially. The loss was estimated over one crore taka.

A total of 52 educational institutions which include schools and madrasas were damaged totally and 58 educational institutions were damaged partially.

Some 31 masques were also affected following the nor'westers.

Following heavy rainfall and hailstorm, Boro paddy and watermelon on a vast tract of land went under water and are being rotten causing serious loss to the growers.

The homeless storm victims were passing their days under the open sky without any relief. Local people also said that if the educational institutions were not repaired immediately education in the remote areas would be hampered seriously.

However, local Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources said, Boro paddy on 6,000 hectares of land were damaged totally and the loss was estimated at about Taka eight crore. Watermelon on 3,000 hectares of land went under water following heavy rainfall causing loss of several crores of taka.

DAE also said that 393.74 mm (15 inch) rainfall was recorded in April this year which was the highest rainfall

in comparison with those of last three years.

The storm hit people need adequate relief and construction materials to build their damaged houses.

Our Rajshahi Correspondent adds: More than 700 houses were destroyed and 5,000 houses partially damaged as nor'westers lashed about 100 villages in different parts of the district recently.

Standing Boro paddy on a vast tract of land was also damaged in the storms accompanied by hail and heavy rain.

Besides, banana, papaya and betel leaf, other main cash crops in the northern region were also damaged, much to the frustration of farmers.

However, the storm-affected people are passing very hard days. Thousands of homeless people are living under the open sky. They even face food shortage.

The government has so far allotted only five tons of wheat and Taka 25,000 in cash for Bagmara and Mohanpur upazilas.

Member of Parliament from Bagmara-Mohanpur constituency Abu Hené at a press conference on May 2 demanded allocation of 1,200 tons of wheat and Taka 11 crore in cash for the victims.

Ex-minister Sardar Amjad Hossain also demanded five bundles of corrugated tin and Taka 5,000 for each affected family.

The devastating storm hit Bagmara and Mohanpur upazilas on last April 28 at about 8:30 am.

Within few minutes north-western clouds covered the whole sky, bringing in strong wind and slight rain, residents of Madya Doublatpur village in Shua Denga union of Bagmara upazila.

Another nor'wester hit the areas for the second in the afternoon on the same day. According to witnesses storm lashed Bashupara, Bhabaniganj, Shuvodanga, Maria, Gaikandi and Hamirkutsa unions.

A total of 20,313 people of 4,511 families were affected as the storm completely or partially damaged their houses. Besides, 12 educational and religious institutions were affected.

Boro paddy of 250 hectares of land, banana on 70 hectares, betel leaf of 12 hectares and pulses on 135 hectares were damaged completely. About 2,000 trees, including fruit

bearing ones were either uprooted or broken. The total loss in Bagmara upazila was estimated at about Taka 90.30 lakh.

The badly affected villages are Madhya Doublatpur of Shuvodanga union, Kamnagar, Depnagar, Deola, Nondanpur and Sridharpur of Bashupara union, Shujapara and Dargahmaria of Bhabaniganj union, Hamirkutsa, Purbapara, Kalupara, Raipur, Taigharia and Konabarria of Hamirkutsa union, Telepukur and Polashi of Gaikandi union and Gangopara of Maria union.

In Mohanpur upazila, six unions—Dhuvoi, Ghasigram, Raighati, Meregachi, Bakshimoi and Jahanabad—were hit by the storm, official sources said.

A total of 25,200 people of 5,600 families were badly affected in the upazila. 29 educational institutions were damaged.

Boro paddy on 1,275 hectares of lands was damaged either completely or partially. Among other crops, vegetables on 71 hectares and betel leaf on 19 hectares of lands were damaged.

The total loss of agriculture was estimated at about Taka 1.31 lakh in Mohanpur upazila.

The affected villages are Nohishkund, Shampur, Bakshimoi Shenkoa, Barisha, Nakoi, Kesharhat, Hatra, Raighati, Dhurail, Dhamin, Naogaon, Jahanaab, Maldia, Gopai, Halidagchi, Goalpara, Shinghara and Palsha.

State Minister for Women and Children's Affairs Zintunnessa Talukder and other government officials visited the storm-hit Bagmara and Mohanpur upazilas.

Devastating storm hit Tanore, Charkhat, Bagha, Durgapur and Putia upazilas last week twice.

Accompanied by hail and heavy rains, the nor'wester caused massive damage to the standing crops in the areas.

More than 150 houses were damaged either completely or partially in Tanore upazila. Azizpur, Balika, Kandar, Shankarpur, Dargadonga, Pachcudar and Amgho villages were badly hit by the storm.

About 100 houses were damaged in Charkhat and Bagha upazilas. The affected villages are Arifpur, Naotika, Bausha, Tetulia and Arani of Bagha and Belgharia, Kakalkati, Boduria, Mukterpur in Charkhat upazila. Out of the crops, mango was severely damaged.

Some 4,000 thatched and semi-pucca houses were damaged and 5,000 trees uprooted by the tropical storm.

A number of educational institutions, including Komorhangi High School, Charphulbari Secondary School, Jadurchar and Char Shoumlari colleges were razed to the ground.

The most affected areas included Badijamalpur, Gobardhankuti, Balatarai, Kalarbhita, Bamandanga, Kaliganj and Madarganj in Nageshwari, Astamirchar, Natarkandi and Datiairchar in Chilmari and Mirzapara, Dublabari and Kalaikandi in Roumari upazilas.

About 50 houses were razed to the ground and a large number of trees uprooted at Amghata village in Mollakandi union under Sadar upazila of Munshiganj district when a tornado lashed the area on Tuesday night.

According to police sources, the tornado hit the village at around 11 pm and lasted for a few minutes.

No casualty was, however, reported.

At least 20 people were injured, a large number of kutchha houses were affected, huge number of trees were uprooted, standing crops on a vast tract of land were damaged when a nor'wester swept over four

Living in disaster prone area

Sixteen persons were killed in a devastating nor'wester which lashed Netrakona district on April 20 last. Photo shows the damaged Muktal Hossein High School at Challisha under the Sadar thana.

— Star photo

Unabated copying in Moulvibazar HSC exam centres

From Rajat Kanti Goswami

MOULVIBAZAR, May 8: Most of the examinees in several centres in the district are adopting unfair means in the ongoing HSC examinations.

Activists of various student organisations are backing the corrupt students, local people said.

In upazila colleges, unruly examinees and activists of student goon rampage. They also threaten on duty invigilators.

A total of 39 examinees were expelled from different centres in the district till April 30, officials said.

According to official sources, 3,655 students enlisted themselves for the examinations this year.

Of them 1,277 candidates including 263 females enlisted from Moulvibazar Government

Stolen goods recovered

From Our Correspondent CHITTAGONG, May 8: Stolen electronics and sanitary goods worth about Tk 5 lakh were recovered in the city on Thursday.

Police also arrested six people in this connection.

Police in a 60-hour drive that ended Thursday evening recovered the goods from different warehouses and sanitary shops at Hazipara, High Level Road, Kaucha Raster Matha and Jubilee Road area.

Three-day Rabindra Joyanti programme at Shahjadpur From Akhteruzzaman

SIRAJGANJ, May 8: A three-day befitting programme has been arranged at Shahjadpur Rabindra Kuthibari by Sirajganj district administration to celebrate Rabindra Joyanti.

The programme starts at 4 pm which includes cultural functions (recitation, music, dance and drama) by Shahjadpur Sammilati Sangskritik Jote on May 8.

A drama "Taltalar Math" an adaptation from the original story of Rabindranath Tagore, directed jointly by A K Ajad, Anu Islam and "Shapmochon", a musical drama of Rabindranath Tagore and directed by Laurence and Papri will be staged at 7 pm on May 9. Both the programmes have been arranged by Sirajganj Shilpkala Academy. Discussion on life and works of the poet will be held on May 10.

Meanwhile, Comilla Education Board authority in special arrangement has permitted 87 HSC examinees of Maulana Mofazzal Hussain Women's College at Panchgaon village under Rajnagar upazila to appear in the examinations at their own college which is not an examination centre. The decision has been taken as the college is situated in remote area, authority said.

According to the directive of the education board, the college will be treated as an 'extension hall' of Rajnagar Degree College examination centre.

But some people said the decision was taken only to manipulate the results. The college is situated five kilometres from Rajnagar Degree College, they said, adding that Maulana Mofazzal Hussain Women's College could have provided its transport service to the examinees.

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Bumper output of IRRI-Boro paddy expected in Chandpur

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, May 8: Bumper production of IRRI-Boro paddy is expected in both Chandpur and Matlab Meghna-Dhanga Irrigation projects during the current season.

According to Agriculture Extension Department sources, initially a total of one lakh 10 thousand hectares of land have been brought under IRRI-Boro paddy cultivation under the

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