

## National

## Indian clothes' invasion of Rajshahi

From Abdul Wadood

RAJSHAH, Sept 12: Sale of country made clothes is decreasing day by day in the markets of Rajshahi in the wake of aggression of foreign goods, local cloth market sources said.

Low quality and higher price of the country-made clothes, smuggling of Indian clothes, problem of carrying clothes from Dhaka and elsewhere in the country and cheating of the wholesalers are the main reasons behind the alarming fall of business of the country made clothes, sources identified.

When contacted, cloth merchants of Shahab Bazar told this correspondent that quality of most of the common items of clothes made by local factories and weavers was low.

"Especially colour of our clothes is a big problem," said the salesmen of Alam cloth stores at Shahab Bazar in the city selling exclusively lady's clothes.

"Colour of the country-made clothes is very much raw that is washed away during the first washing making the cloth discoloured and fade within a few days," he said. Printing, designs are also not much attractive, he said adding that price of the country-made clothes was higher in respect of quality of the clothes. "Though the country-made clothes

are comparatively long lasting, the customers are not willing to buy these only for higher price and in fear of discolouration," he said.

On the contrary, Indian clothes, mainly coming through smuggling, are very much attractive in colour and design though do not last long.

"Most customers usually choose showy clothes on confirmation that the clothes will not be discoloured soon. We cannot assure the customers of colour in case of Bangladeshi clothes," said Nurul Islam, owner of Islam Cloth Stores at Shohel Bazar.

A huge amount of Indian clothes and readymade garments are being smuggled for many years. But this is showing alarming threats to business of the country-made clothes now-a-days, the cloth merchants said.

"Each and every kind of Indian clothes are now available in Rajshahi and are openly sold in the shops," said an office bearer of Rajshahi Cloth Merchants Association (RCMA) on condition of anonymity. He informed that there were some traders whose main business was to smuggle Indian clothes and sell those to the retail traders.

When contacted, RCMA general secretary Saldur

Rahman Chand said, avoiding the question of smuggling, "customers wish to buy goods of better quality at a considerably lower price and the businessmen want to keep and sell those goods which have good demands to ensure more profits."

Another office bearer of RCMA, who is not willing to be identified said that they were dead against smuggling of clothes. "But keeping the borders almost open, one should not raid the markets," he said and added that both the government and the producers should have arrangements for better quality and lower price of their products to check smuggling of clothes from India.

Farhana Rahman, wife of a government official, who was buying an Indian silk saree, said that they were undone. "Yes, it is a question of moral obligation, but what can we do when our income is much less?" She bought on Indian silk saree at Taka 700. "She, a Bangladeshi saree of the same quality will cost at least Taka 12000, ask the salesman," she said. The salesman nodded affirmatively.

RCMA general secretary Saldur Rahman Chand said that deterioration of law and order, toll collection by the terrorists transport workers and police, hartial and many other hindrances had made transportation of clothes from Dhaka, Chittagong, Narayanganj, Pabna, Kumerkhali and elsewhere in the country troublesome. "These problems cost in terms of money, time and sufferings that ultimately raise the price of cloth unnecessarily," he said.

Some cloth-merchants also alleged that the wholesalers seldom gave them actual information about the quality of the clothes. "So what we say to the customers often goes false. Then we are losing confidence of the customers," they said adding "that is why the customers do not trust us. Even when we advocate for genuine good quality products, it becomes very hard to make the customers trust."

The cloth merchants suggested extensive and drastic actions to check smuggling at first along the borders and then in the markets. At the same time the government and the producers should take steps to improve quality of the products and lower the price as low as possible, they said.

"Why should we not keep and sell country-made clothes if these have demands, when we want to make profits?", they asked.

## Integrated water, sanitation programme

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, Sept 12: NGO Forum, a non-governmental organisation (NGO) has been working in five districts of Mymensingh region and Tangail district under Integrated Water and Sanitation Programme (IWSP) through partnership with other NGOs since 1988.

The forum is working in 312 unions in 58 upazilas of six districts.

A total of 2,592 hand tube-wells, 50 Tara pumps, 200 deep set pumps, had been distributed free of cost so far by the NGO Forum.

A woman caretaker for every tube-well has been appointed to look after the tube-wells. But one male and female have been appointed for every Tara pump and deep tube-well.

The NGO Forum has established 15 iron removing plants in Kalihati of Tangail and Karimganj upazila in Kishoreganj district, sources informed adding a total of 30 ring wells have been set up in the hilly areas of Jhenai and Nalitabari upazilas of Sherpur district to make easy pure drinking water for rural people.

Moreover, 20 Rain Water Harvesting Tanks (RWHTs) to contain arsenic free water have been sunk in the hilly areas of Sherpur where 95 per cent ring wells established by government went out of order.

Of the 20 RWHTs, 10 contain 2,000 litres of water each and 10 others contain 3,200 litres each.

The forum has also set up 80 bucket treatment units for pure drinking water in Tangail and Kishoreganj district.

The NGO Forum has given loan of 23 lakh taka to 46 NGOs on establishment of village sanitation centre to serve latrines to the rural people at a reasonable price.

The NGO Forum is also working in 30 schools of six districts to create awareness among the students so that they can teach their family members and others about the use of latrine and pure drinking water. Some 50,000 tube-wells have been supplied to the people.

Punardhan Madhu, Regional Officer, NGO Forum of Mymensingh region, quoting a survey report told The Daily Star that at villages Paragoan, Palgoan, Kamalt and Berunia in Bhaluka upazila in Mymensingh. The survey report reveals a very poor condition of latrine facilities in rural areas.

Training has also been given to 38 trainers on construction of sanitary latrine materials, added the Regional Officer. He also said that people of rural areas of the region are getting habituated in using sanitary latrines and in consuming pure water from tube-wells and other sources installed by NGO Forum. "Our activities on sanitary latrine facilities and easy supply of pure drinking water will continue" the official said.



Training underway on construction of sanitary latrines at a village in Mymensingh district.

--Star photo

Innumerable cracks and potholes have been developed along the road in front of Mukterpur ferryghat in Munshiganj district. Hundreds of passengers coming from Munshiganj, Tongibari, Balagan and Louhajong suffer a lot while motor vehicles ply at risk. But who cares?

--Star photo

## Jute price makes growers unhappy

From Our Correspondent



A jute grower of village Khulumba in Jhenidah district carrying his produce towards Saikupura bazaar, 10 kilometre away from his village, for sale. But will he receive fair price of his produce? Probably no, because most of these unfortunate farmers come back frustrated getting no fair price. Who will ensure their fair price?

--Star photo

JHENIDAH, Sept 12: Jute growers in the district are facing trouble with their products as they are compelled to sell the 'golden fibre' below production cost.

According to market sources, jute now sells between Taka 290 and Taka 320 a maund.

AED sources said a total of 6,175 hectares of land were

when plants were growing. Besides, the farmers faced scarcity of water for decomposing jute plants.

Although newly harvested jute has started arriving in markets, the number of purchasers is scanty, forcing the growers to sell their product below production cost.

Abul Hossain, 45, a farmer of village Khulumba under Shalakupa upazila said farmers are losing interest in jute cultivation due to low price. Many are opt for other crops, he added.

However, jute stalk is in demand instead of fibre, he said. The jute stick is used for setting up betel leaf farms. It is also used as firewood.

**Our Faridpur correspondent adds:** Some varieties of jute have started arriving in the local markets, but the price is much below the rate fixed by the government. Tosa variety is selling between Tk 320 and Tk 340 a maund.

However, traders cannot afford to purchase jute due to lack of fund. Different jute mills owe a huge amount of money to jute traders.

Md Siddique, a farmer of village Hajji Dangl under Char Bhadrasan upazila, said at least Tk 400 is required to produce a maund of jute fibre, but we are selling our products below production cost.

According to farmers, sufficient rainfall was not available

## বাংলাদেশ উচ্চ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

## Bangladesh Open University

বোর্ড বাজার, গাজীপুর-১৭০৫

বাটুবি/প্রশা/নি-৮(২৬)/৯৭২৫৪৩ তারিখ: ১২-০৯-২০০০

## নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ উচ্চ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে নিম্নে বর্ণিত স্কুলে শূন্যপদে পথি মোতাবেক প্রদেয় অন্যান্য ভাতাদিসহ নিম্নে নির্ধারিত ফরমে দরখাত আহ্বান করা যাইতেছে।

স্কুল অব এডুকেশন

১। সহকারী অধ্যাপক (স্থায়ী পদ)

৭২০০-২৬০-১০,৮৪০/-

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পদের স্থান্ধ্য

ইতিহাস

০১টি

পদের নাম

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