

A bazaar by the women, for the women

From Akhteruzzaman Bablu

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 27: There is a unique bazaar in Sirajganj called Bou-bazaar. "Bou" means wife. So "Bou Bazaar" means "Wife Market". But one must not make a mistake that wives are sold or bought here, rather it is literally a market where both the sellers and buyers are women, mostly housewives.

The market sits everyday in the early morning at Hossainpur and Dillardhangora. It is about one and half kilometers away from Borobazar, the main and the biggest market in the district town. "In spite of that Bou-bazaar is a busy and popular market, it is becoming popular day by day," said Khadiza Begum who sells vegetables in the market since its inception.

The market started about two years back in a very unplanned manner. Some distressed women of Dillardhangora and Hossainpur used to sell vegetables in baskets on their heads in the neighbourhood.

Peak time of our business is 8am to 12pm, said Rokeya Khatun adding that they got very tried because of walking and carrying loads of vegetables.

"Sometime we take rest here on the road near the tube well, drink water, gossip and then leave the place," she said. Some time people buy vegetable from them during their rest time.

More than 80 vendors sit in the bazaar at about 6am every day and sell their goods up to 12 noon. At the beginning it was totally a vegetable market. All kinds of fresh seasonal vegetable are still available in abundance here. But recently fish, meat, rice, wheat, flour, lentils and others items are also available in the market. "We buy goods from the whole sale market of Boro-bazaar," said Khadiza Begum. The sellers of the Bou-bazaar come from low-income families. Their husbands, grownup sons and brothers are mainly rickshaw-pullers and day labourers.



It is a bazaar with a difference. All buyers and sellers are women in the Bou-bazaar in Sirajganj town. However, some males are also seen in these days. --Star photo

Scheme to supply arsenic-free water

KISHOREGANJ, Sept 27: Local Department of Public Health and Engineering has taken up a programme to install 606 arsenic-free tubewells in 13 upazilas of the district, reports UNB.

Official sources said 306 deep tubewells and 300 tara pumps will be installed in these arsenic-free upazilas aiming to supply arsenic-free water to local people.

Upazila-wise sanctioned tubewells are Sadar-67, Karmang-42, Tarai-25, Hossainpur-32, Pakundia-31, Bajipur-89, Kuliarchar-113, Nikli-11, Koti-21, Bhoirab-115, Mitamoin-19, Itna-21, and Aastagram-20.

Skilled workers from Barisal, Bhola, Pirojpur, Noakhali and other districts have been engaged to install the tubewells.

Another report from Magura

Satkhira DIARY

Man gets 10-yr RI in arms case

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA Sept 27: A man was sentenced to suffer 10 years rigorous imprisonment in arms case recently.

The accused, in brief, is that police

alleged house of Abdur Rahman of

Village Paralia in Debhabata upazila

and recovered a pipe gun from his

house on August 10, 1993. A case

was lodged with Debhabata police

station and after investigation

police submitted charge sheet

against the accused. The judge

after examining records and

witnesses pronounced the verdict.

Youth commits suicide

A youth committed suicide at

village Alipur under Sadar

recently by taking poison.

Police said Farooque Hossain, 20, son of Omar Ali of the village took his life out of frustration arising out of family trouble. He died on the spot.

Child drowns

A two-year old child drowned at village Kulia in Debhabata

upazila last week.

The victim identified as Sonamoni, 2, daughter of Salaiman Ali of the village drowned after she fell in a pond. She was playing by the side of the pond near her house. Later villagers recovered the body from the pond.

Man strangled

A man was allegedly strangled by a group of unidentified assailants at village Kadupur in Kalaroa

upazila on September 17.

The victim was identified as Shahidul Islam, 27, son of Kawasir Ali of village the village. Police said the victim left his house for his father's house at Chanduria in Kalaroa upazila in the evening on September 16 and in the following morning his body was recovered from Shekher Bagan area of the village. Motive of the killing could not be known.

Body recovered

Body of a young man was recovered from a garlic field at village Berla in Assassanupura recently.

The victim was identified as Khairul Islam, 22, son of Sabir Uddin of the village. Police sources said the man was murdered because of previous enmity. A case was filed in this connection. None was arrested in this regard.

National

Hemrom works as a day labourer to continue higher studies

From Kamran Reza Chowdhury

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, Sept 27: "Where there is a will, there is a way" - the popular proverb once again proves to be true. A student of Anthropology Department of Rajshahi University works as a day labourer to meet the expenses of his study. Santosh Hemrom, hailing from a Mahali family, a sect of Santal community, at Kakonhat upazila in Rajshahi district, was admitted into the department in 1998-99 academic session without any financial help from his parents. He manages his educational expenses by doing different odd jobs including day labourer.

He reached university level only because of his passion for education. He is the eldest of two brothers and two sisters. His parents are illiterate and the family lives on selling handicraft items made of bamboo and cane. They make the items in their house and sell them in the market.

Hemrom was also involved in the business while he was in school living with his parents at their village home. His mother, Kristina Marmur, took him to the village primary school and after completing primary education, he got admitted in the Kakonhat High School from where passed the SSC examination in 1996 in second division.

He got admitted in the Kakonhat College in the same

year. He preferred day labourer work to his parents' job because it was not profitable. Besides, according to him, the demand for



Santosh Hemrom

such items were declining in the market.

He started working as a domestic help in the well-to-do farmer families in his village. During the farming seasons he ploughs the croplands, cuts earth, sows seeds, and clear the weeds in the field. In the off seasons, he works as a supplier with the masons in building construction works.

Hemrom also passed the HSC examination in second division in

1998 in spite of doing the odd jobs. Later he got admitted into Anthropology Department in 1998-99 academic calendar in honours class with the money he saved over the years.

Now, he has been passing through financial hardship as he has to attend the classes regularly to fulfil the university's condition of attending 80 per cent classes.

In the off days and university or government holiday, he goes to his village and works as a day labourer or domestic help and in this way he manages only 50-60 per cent costs of his living. But he cannot ensure three-meals a day regularly owing to financial constraints.

Hemrom lives in a subsidised adavisi mess, made for the indigenous people, at Sagarpara in Rajshahi city as he couldn't obtain any seat in the university dormitory. He desperately needs financial help or a means of income to retain his studentship.

He has applied for scholarship to the university authorities. However, when contacted, Prof AHM Zehadul Karim, Chairman of Anthropology department, said that his quest for education is praiseworthy despite financial hardship. "We have been helping him personally, I will try my best to manage a scholarship for him," he added.

Adulterated cement floods markets

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Sept 27: A section of unscrupulous traders here have been selling adulterated cement, which has flooded local markets.

The dishonest section of traders mix sand and other components with cement, taking toll on construction work, local people said.

According to an investigation, there are at least 15 cement re-packing points in the district headquarters and Kalliganj and Shailakupa upazila headquarters. But the law enforcing agencies are virtually indifferent in this regard.

The dishonest traders collect empty paper-made bags and pack it with spurious cement. Local people said cement of many popular brands can be found spurious here in these days.

Dishonest traders mix low quality cement or extract of cement cake, dust, sand, soil and some colours to produce cement.

In the first week of this month, police recovered forty bags of adulterated cement from Shailakupa upazila headquarters and arrested two persons in this connection. They were identified as Amirul Islam and Khairul of Brahmapur village under the upazila.

Local people have urged the authorities concerned to take action against the illegal trade.

BSS from Chuadanga says: Police arrested four persons recently in the district on charges of mixing sand with cement.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided a warehouse near the Old Telephone Exchange Office and caught the four red handed while they were engaged in mixing sand with cement.

Police also recovered huge quantities of spurious cement and empty bags from the warehouse. A case was filed in this connection.

Farmers experience bumper vegetable production

KURIGRAM, Sept 27: Farmers in the district achieved bumper vegetables this year, reports BSS.

The weather was not at all favourable but the farmers by dint of their hard labour produced a total of 51,250 metric tons of summer vegetables in nine upazilas of the district against the target of 35,000 metric tones.

An official of the Department of Agriculture Extension told the news agency that initially 2,800 hectares were fixed for producing 35,000 metric tons of vegetables this year. But finally the total land area was expanded upto 4,100 hectares that yielded 51,250 metric tons, bringing a beaming smile on faces of sweating farmers.

Organised farming of guava in the district began only 3 to 4 years ago. As the item is fetching money, the farming area has been extending. As much as 3 to 5 thousand acres of land are now under guava cultivation in the district.

According to rough estimate, about 80-100 maunds of guava are produced in an acre of land.

The market price of guava

according to size and variety varies between Taka 2 and Tk 4.

Another report from Narsingdi says: Guava farming has become very popular in Narsingdi district in recent days.

People have taken to modern

methods of cultivation, as the item is now a cash crop.

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The local markets in nine

upazilas of the district are now

flooded with different kinds of

fresh vegetables, which are being

sold at prices to the satisfaction of

the growers, market sources said.

Crop production in the district has been surpassing the annual target since 1996, the official sources said.

According to rough estimate, about 80-100 maunds of guava are produced in an acre of land.

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A survey team recently visited

Rajpur, Palash and Shibpur

upazilas and came to know guava

is one of the cash crops of the

area.



Two teenagers work at a cucumber garden at village Bela Pingalhati in Jamalpur district. Cucumber cultivation has gained popularity in the district in recent days. The popular vegetable sells between Tk 8 and Tk 10 a kg in local markets. Some 40 acres of land in the village have been brought under the cultivation this season.

-- Star photo

Acute water crisis

SHARIATPUR, Sept 27: An acute shortage of drinking water has been prevailing in the town for a long time, affecting normal life of residents, reports BSS.

Shariatpur Municipality, the only authority for supplying drinking water to the tax payers, can meet the demand of only 25 to 30 percent of the consumers.

Water Supply Department of Shariatpur Municipality office sources said that fall in the underground water level is the main cause of drinking water crisis.

Another sources said installation of private tubewells in an unplanned way is also a cause for fall in the underground water level.

UNB from Kushtia says: Work

on three water treatment plants

at a cost of Tk 14.44 crore which

was sanctioned during the last fiscal year. Official sources said 7,622 tons

wheat have been distributed through

4,855 VGF cards for the

completion of the Food for Works

schemes under the supervision

of district Relief and Rehabilitation

Department. These schemes

included reconstruction of

rural infrastructure, development

of rural roads and religious

organisations, re-excavation of

derelict ponds and earth filling.

They said the schemes were implemented

from April to June this year.

Executive Engineer of PHED

said that after completion of the

water treatment plants the quan-

tum of water would increase to