

Farmers lose interest in cattle farming as grazing fields shrink

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Farmers are losing interest in cattle farming as grazing fields are rapidly disappearing in the face of a fast population growth.

Once a common and lucrative farming occupation in all the twelve upazilas in Mymensingh district, many farmers have now sold out their cattle and shifted to other occupation due to lack of fodder and grazing areas. As a result, dairy products have become more expensive and children are being deprived of this easily accessible vital protein source. Price of beef has also shot up, as it is now sold between taka 70 and 90 per kilogram in rural hats and bazaars.

In the shoal areas of the district, once considered ideal ground for cattle farming, the scenario has changed significantly. With rapid expansion of villages, and burdened with larger families, farmers are now opting for high yielding paddy farming.

Ahmed Ali, a former cattle farmer in Char Durgapur, said that he had to abandon his occupa-

tion due to lack of natural cattle feeds. He said for centuries they had raised cattle and earned a living in the natural way. Ali said he had left cattle farming due to lack of fodder and grazing fields.

Rapid growth of population has forced the farmers to use the grazing fields as arable lands or expanding the villages.

Lack of day labourers has also forced the farmers to sell their cattle heads in many cases. For the more affluent farmers renting out pump machines or power tillers has replaced cattle farming.

For poor farmers there are not many options. They have mostly joined crop sharing or working as simple day labourers.

Khokon Fumer and Shefali Rani from Char Gobindapur adjacent to the Old Brahmaputra river in Sadar upazila said that they had to give up cattle farming due to lack of fodder and grazing fields.

Only a few years ago milk was sold at around Tk 10 per litre. Disappearance of cattle farmers has shot the price to Tk 25 per litre now. In the district town or upazila headquarters, the price is even higher.



PHOTO: STAR

A view of a grazing field at village Char Govindapur under Sadar upazila in Mymensingh district. Grazing fields are rapidly disappearing in the district as elsewhere in the country in the face of a fast population growth.

NEWS SNAPS

Armed robbery: One killed, 10 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

One person was gunned down, 10 others were injured and valuables worth over Taka One lakh looted by a gang of armed robbers who attacked village Ariol under Sadar upazila in Brahmanbaria district early morning on Sunday.

According to eye witnesses, an organised gang of armed robbers broke open the door and entered into the house of Jugesh at village Ariol. They looted valuables worth over Taka One lakh. When the owner of the house cried for help the robbers fired gun shots towards the members of the house. As a result on Shujuth Sarker, 12, died on the spot and 10 others were injured. Of them, condition of five persons were critical. They were admitted to the Sadar hospital while the rest were released after first aid treatment.

The autopsy of the body was done at the Sadar hospital. No case was filed till filing of the news on Sunday evening. Police visited the spot, Brahmanbaria thana sources said.

Action programme withdrawn

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

The Sirajganj district unit command of Muktiyoddha Sangsad (Council of freedom fighters) has withdrawn their action programme against the administration following discussion with the local ruling party leaders.

The ongoing Victory Fair in Sirajganj town has been stopped from Sunday. According to an instruction of the higher authorities the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Sirajganj issued an order to the local district unit command of Muktiyoddha Sangsad to stop the fair due to allegations of gambling houses and other anti-social activities which were going on there. SP, Sirajganj has been asked to improve the law and order situation. A huge contingent of police has been deployed in and around the fair compound from Saturday. The fair sponsored by the local unit of Muktiyoddha Sangsad started from 27 January. The local unit of Muktiyoddha Sangsad became annoyed due to stoppage of the fair. At a press conference on Saturday evening the Sangsad announced an action program including procession, laying seize to DC and SP offices and hartal (strike) from Monday. Receiving the information the district Awami League leaders went to the Muktiyoddha Sangsad. Among them, Abu Yusuf Surja, K M Hossain Ali (Hasan), Al Haj Ishaque Ali are worth mentioning. After discussion the AL leaders assured the leaders and members of the Muktiyoddha Sangsad to discuss the matter with Home Minister Mohammad Nasim.

Abducted man released

UNB, Joypurhat

A man abducted from Joypurhat district court premises Sunday was released the following day. Witnesses said five miscreants abducted Raja Mia, 32, son of late Abdul Majid of Salimpur village in Kalai upazila from the court premises when he along with his two associate came to appear before the court in connection with three cases. The kidnapers whisked away in a microbus.

Later, local people caught driver Osman Ali, 28, along with the microbus and handed him over to police. He was sent to jail hayat. However, the abductors set Majid free on Monday. But it was not clear why they abducted Majid. A case was filed.

Boy burnt to death

UNB, Comilla

A little boy was burnt to death while his mother and brother suffered injuries in a fire at Charipara village of Brahmanpara upazila in Comilla district Friday night. The fire which occurred at the house of Giasuddin caused tragic death to his son Nasir Uddin, 8. Besides, his wife Zobaidda, 40, and son Alimuddin, 20, received burn injuries.

Valuables worth about Tk four lakh were gutted in the fire. Meanwhile, all belongings of three widows were burnt to ashes as their houses caught fire at Rajapur village of the same upazila on the same night, villagers said.



Rangs Electronics Ltd has opened its exclusive dealer showroom under its expansion and better customer service programme at Station Road, Puranathana in Kishoreganj on Saturday. The showroom was inaugurated by Md Abiduzzaman Fakir, eminent educationist and social worker. Zane Alam, Executive (Marketing), Syed Manir Hossain, other officers of Rangs Electronics Ltd and local elite were present on the occasion.

Wanted criminal arrested

UNB, Manikganj

Sadar thana police arrested an wanted criminal from Saheed Rafique Road in Manikganj town on Monday. The arrested, Nowroj Heera, was recently convicted by a court in a fraudulence case and awarded nine years' rigorous imprisonment.

Police said Heera and his accomplices Asadul Islam, Ahmed Ali and Anwar Hossain were also engaged in cheating people in the name of journalism.

Female drug trafficker arrested

UNB, Comilla

A female drug trafficker was arrested along with phensidyl syrup from Sashangachha area in Comilla town on February 12. On information, police rushed to the spot and arrested Farida, hailed from village Raghabpur in Devidwar, along with phensidyl bottles. Earlier on February 11, police raided the house of Motahar Mia at village Tarapur in Sadar upazila and recovered 229 bottles of phensidyl and 22 bottles of liquor. Motahar, however, fled the home sensing police presence. Separate cases were lodged with the Kotwali police.

Loan for youths

UNB, Borguna

Youth Development Department has disbursed Tk 27.75 lakh loan among the 270 trained youths to take up self-employment schemes during the current fiscal year.

Official sources said the loan was disbursed for poultry farming, cow flattening, pisciculture, small trading and tree plantation. Besides the department also imparted training to 720 unemployed youths on various occupations to make them self-reliant.

Training programme for newsmen

UNB, Barguna

A six-day training programme for local newsmen began in Barguna Wednesday.

A total of 20 journalists, including women, took part in the training programme organised by Mass Line Media Centre, a non-government organisation.

Construction of fly-over completed

UNB, Sylhet

Construction of a flyover on Railway station bypass road in South Surma in Sylhet has been completed at a cost of Tk 10 crore. With the completion of the flyover, traffic congestion in the district will be eased to a great extent.

Roads and Highways Department acquired land in 1996 to construct 21.3 metre long and 20 metre wide four-lane flyover. Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury inaugurated the construction work of the bypass road in November 1997.

Man sentenced to 12 yrs RI

UNB, Comilla

A court in Comilla has sentenced a man to 12 years Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) in an arms case. According to prosecution, SI of Barura thana, Delwar Hossain on suspicion searched Abul Hashem, 20, son of Raham Ali at village Jalgaon of Barura upazila on December 30, 1997 and recovered a pipe gun from his possession.

Later a case was filed and police after investigation submitted chargesheet against him. After examining the records and witnesses, Additional Sessions Judge M Jashimuddin, who is also Judge of the Special Court No 6, handed down the verdict on February 12.