

Dairy in dire state

163 farms badly affected in Savar, acute fodder crisis

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Manikganj

The deluge has left nearly 800 small dairy farm owners in Saver upazila in peril.

They are bewildered with sick milch cows and lack of fodder.

Most of the farmers who took shelter on roads, embankments and high lands along with their cows are not going back home.

Floodwater has receded from many areas but has destroyed cow sheds. There is no fodder in villages, they said.

Many cows have become sick in confinement now, they told this correspondent during a visit to Firingikanda Bazar road where many farmers have taken shelter along with their cows.

Savar upazila Livestock Officer M Abdur Razzak said there are over 11220 cows in 361 registered farms and over 400 unregistered farms in the upazila, which produced nearly 1.12 lakh litres of milk daily.

Each farm has at least five milch cows.

"I left my wife and children behind and shifted to Firingikanda Bazar road

with my six cows as water submerged my small farmhouse. I do not know how my family is doing now", said Taiab standing by his cows under the sky on the road.

"My cows used to produce 120 litres of milk every day but the production has dropped significantly due to scarcity of fodder in the last three weeks", he said. His hay stock was rotten in the deluge.

Several hundred others with their herds took refuge on roads. Many of them said milk production has fallen drastically.

However, some rich farmers in Savar municipal area have erected large platforms for their cows. But they are also worried due to lack of fodder.

Shukur Ali of Firingikanda said grass, the most essential fodder for milch cows, has been destroyed totally. Moreover, prices of oil cake (Khoil) and wheat bran (bhushi) have skyrocketed since beginning of floods.

The livestock official said green fodder like Napier grass on 1652 acres of grazing land has been totally destroyed in an area and it will take months for new grass to grow.

Amir Hossain an affected dairy

farmer said, "I lost grass on three bighas of lands. I have to buy Tk 1000 fodder of a day but earn Tk 900 to 1000 by selling 90 to 100 litres of milk.

"Three of my cows are now attacked with skin diseases. No veterinarian came here to see our cows", he alleged.

He said he needs grass seedlings and interest free loan to survive.

Many others including Dudu Mia, Hazrat Ali, Abdur Rahman, Lehaj Uddin, Alauddin, Abdul Aziz, Josim Uddin who came from different villages in the area said similar things.

Lehaj Uddin could not check tears while saying that one of his cows which he had bought with Tk one lakh died of disease. "I do not know how the rest of my cows will survive", he said.

The Upazila Livestock Officer said 53 high yielding cows died and 163 farms were badly affected by the floods. He estimated the loss to the sector at Tk 8.17 crore.

He said the worst days for the sector are ahead because the fodder crisis will

SI escorted phensidyl truck, driver says

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

Sub-Inspector (SI) Mosaddek Hoassain of Daulatpur police station had seized a phensidyl-carrying truck and detained its driver on Thursday.

The truck and the driver were detained at Daulatpur thana for two days.

After negotiation, the truck and its driver were released on Saturday and SI Mosaddek agreed to escort the truck up to a 'safe place'.

Accordingly, SI Mosaddek followed the truck in a microbus, driven by himself. But they were unlucky.

The truck was stopped by BDR at Dangmarka checkpoint on Saturday night.

All these were disclosed to BDR by the truck driver, Yusuf, according to BDR sources.

As the truck was stopped and the BDR personnel were interrogating the driver, the SI also came near. He had told the BDR personnel that he was on 'patrol duty' and then sped away, the BDR sources said.

The seized truck has been handed over to Kusthia customs. SI Mosaddek is at Daulatpur thana. A case was filed with Daulatpur police.

When asked by newsmen yesterday, the SI however denied his involvement in the matter.

Daulatpur thana Officer-in-Charge Majibur Rahman said, "It is a concocted story prepared to malign police".

When contacted, Kusthia Police Superintendent Saiful Islam said he will look into the matter.

6 cops retired in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A police Sub-Inspector and five constables were given 'forced retirement' yesterday as part of 'cleansing drive' in police.

The action followed an order from the Police Headquarters, received by Satkhira police earlier on the day, a high police official said.

The retired persons are Shyamnagar thana Sub-Inspector Mujibur Rahman and Constables Nurul Islam (Cop No. 595), Nurul Huque (Cop No. 559), Akbar Hossain (Cop No. 210), Abdul Quddus (Cop No. 265) and Wadood (Cop No. 556).

The action, amid 'mass transfer' of policemen in Khulna range, has created a panic among the law enforcers, the sources said. This is also hampering normal police activity in the district as many policemen transferred from Satkhira are preparing to join elsewhere, they said.

Extortion by Forest Guard in Sundarbans alleged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Allegations of extortion and abduction for ransom by a section of forest guards have been made by some fishermen in the coastal areas.

At least two such incidents took place in the last few days.

Two fishermen-Litton and Bashir Majhi- who returned to Alipur port in Kuakata said their fishing trawlers--FB Fatema, FB Mafiz and FB Selim Hawker-- were drifted to Katka area in the Sundarbans coast in rough weather on Friday.

Some pirates accompanied by forest guards came, beat them there and realised toll.

In another incident on August 4, forest guards seized fishing trawlers FB Sweete and FB Machhranga in Charpai range in the Sundarbans and detained 16 fishermen. They demanded Tk 50,000 ransom from the trawler owners over mobile phone.

The fishermen were freed after payment of ransom, but coast guards and pirates took away the fishes they had netted, they alleged.

The incidents created a panic among fishermen in the coast.



PHOTO: STAR

Indigenous people presenting a traditional dance at Mundumala High School field in Tanore in Rajshahi on Sunday, marking observance of World Indigenous People's Day.

Fanfare marks Indigenous People's Day in dists

Five-point demand reiterated

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Indigenous people in Rajshahi, Chittagong Hill Tracts and Netrakona observed the World Indigenous People's Day through festivities and other programmes with a call for protecting their rights and culture.

Their colourful programmes also drew Bangladeshis in large numbers. Our Staff Correspondent reports from Rajshahi: The World Indigenous People's Day was observed here with great fervour and festivities in Rajshahi town and in Tanore upazila.

Different aborigines' forums chalked out a two-day programme on the occasion. They also pressed their five-point demand including protecting their constitutional rights. Colourfully dressed aborigine girls and children with tree leaves and flowers in hands and men carrying drums, bows and arrows performed their typical dances and rendered songs on the city streets on Sunday.

Crowds in large numbers lined up on roadsides enjoyed the traditional cultural programmes. The day's programme began in the morning with a big rally of nearly 5,000 aborigine people from northern districts. Eminent litterateur Hasan Azizul Haque inaugurated the rally.

This was followed by a discussion meeting held at the District Council auditorium with National Aborigines Council President Anil Marandi in the chair.

The Council's advisor and Workers Party leader Fazle Hossain Badsha, its General Secretary Rabindranath Saren, WP leaders Rafiqul Islam and Ganesh Majhi and CPB Rajshahi unit President Enamul Haque addressed the rally.

They reiterated the five-point demand of the aborigine people. These include recovery of aborigines' lands occupied by land grabbers, an end to 'repression', seats for aborigines in the Jatiya Sangsad and formation of a separate ministry for them.

Fazle Hossain Badsha called upon aborigines to unite and continue their struggle to realise their demands.

In Tanore, the Adibashi Unnayan Sangstha held a big gathering and a cultural function at Pachondor yesterday.

Prominent industrialist and Awami League leader Omar Faruk Chowdhury, Rajshahi Muktiuddha Pathagar President Shafiqur Rahman, Bangladesh Hindu Buddha Khristan Adibashi Oikya Parishad Regional President Dr Sujit Sarkar addressed the gathering. Our Correspondent reports from Ranganati: The day was observed

through festivities in Rangamati hill town yesterday.

The day-long programme began in the morning with a colourful function held on the premises of the Shilpakola Akademy. Indigenous people representing as many as 11 ethnic groups in the entire CHT region attended the programme.

Rodong Shilpi Gosthi performed a open air Gono Sangeet (people's song) at the Bot Tola in front of the academy.

This was followed by a colorful procession.

Wearing traditional dresses, representatives of Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Tanchangya, Khyang, Pangkhu, Bawm, Mro, Lusai, Khumi and Chak tribes took part in the procession. They carried placards and banners highlighting demand of the aborigine people in the country.

A discussion meeting on 'Our land, Our life' was held at the Pouroshova auditorium at noon. It was presided over by Usaton Talukder, Convenor of the Indigenous Day Observance Committee.

Prof Hamida Banu of Chittagong University attended the meeting as chief guest while Prof Moniru-zzaman of the same university was the main speaker.

The speakers called upon the government to protect the lands of aborigi-

nes from Bangalee land grabbers in different parts of the country and to protect their rights.

Our Correspondent reports from Netrakona:

The Indigenous People's Day was observed at Jolshatra in Modhupur upazila in Tangil district through a day-long programme yesterday.

In the morning several hundred colourfully dressed indigenous people from different areas of Modhupur brought out a procession. They carried banners and placards reading slogans like 'Our land, Our life' and chanted slogans against the government's planned Eco Park in Modhupur.

The rally was followed by a discussion meeting, held at Jolchatra High School playground.

The meeting was presided over by Ajoy Mree, Conveyor of the Committee for Indigenous People's land Rights and Environment Preservation', who was freed from jail recently.

It was addressed by, among others, Uzine Nokrak, Chairman of Modhupur Upazila Tribal Welfare Association, indigenous leaders Tomash Sumsung and Rakhi Mrong.

It was followed by a cultural function at the same venue in the evening.



PHOTO: STAR

Taiab Ali nursing his sick milch cow on Fringikanda Bazar road in Manikganj.

CHT law and order slide concerns politicians

5 including soldier killed, 11 abducted between July 29 and Aug 5

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The law and order slide in the hills in recent days has created a concern among political leaders of the ruling and the opposition parties.

Deputy Minister for Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Affairs Moniswapon Dewan at a meeting with officials here on Saturday expressed his anguish and called upon the administration including the police department to go all out to improve the situation.

He asked the law enforcers to nab criminals irrespective of their party affiliations and assured government backing in their impartial actions.

Minister for Fisheries and Livestock, Abdullah-al- Noman also attended the meeting, held at the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner's office.

Moniswapon said crimes are being done by vested quarters in a planned way to defame the government. Only impartial and stern action can check those, he told the officials.

"You must act now to improve law and order. The situation in the CHT is completely different from the rest of the country", he said.

Local leaders of different political parties including Selim Chowdhury of Awami League and Dilip Dey of CPB, Upazila Nirbahee Officers of all 10 upazila and Officers-in-Charge of all police stations in the district attended the meeting.

At the meeting, Rangamati district Awami League President and former lawmaker Diponkor Talukder said the law and order will not improve unless all unauthorised arms are recovered.

"Thousands of indigenous youths and even some Bangalees possess illegal arms", he said.

Crimes including murder and abduction have increased making

people's life and property insecure, he said.

Between July 29 and August 5, five people including an army man were killed and 11 others abducted in separate incidents in the CHT. Another 25 people were injured in clashes during the period.

Of those abducted, one bought his freedom by paying Tk. 50,000 and seven others were freed on condition of ransom payment, sources said.

In the latest incident on Thursday at Kharikata village in Logadu upazila, unidentified assailants gunned down former Union Parishad (UP) member Shucra Chakma, 42, at his residence, allegedly in a sequel to rivalry between two indigenous factions.

On the same day, 10 people, reportedly supporters of United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF), were abducted by rivals on gunpoint from a market in Kawkhali upazila for Tk 10 lakh ransom, sources there said.



PHOTO: STAR

Rtn AKM Shamsuddin speaking after opening the SM Giasuddin Shikhhanga R rotary Centre

Jessore Rotary Club opens literacy centre

A CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

The Rotary Club of Jessore East has taken up a laudable initiative to promote literacy among underprivileged children.

It opened a centre styled 'SM Giasuddin Shikhhangan Rotary Centre' at the local TB Clinic Road on Friday.

It was inaugurated by Rotary District Governor AKM Shamsuddin at a simple function presided over by Rtn Kazi Shoeb Ahmed.

Rotary District Assistant Governor Aljah Selim and Rtn Md Shahinur Rahman were present as special guests.

Prof Shamsher Ali, Munsur Rahmed, Rtn Debobroto Ghosh and Rtn Mozaffar Hossain Dipu spoke on the occasion.



PHOTO: STAR

Students of Fine Arts Institute distributed relief in flood affected area in Manikganj on Sunday.

SNAPS

Couple held for killing domestic help

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

Jhenidah police on Sunday arrested a couple on charge of killing of a 9-year-old domestic help. Tanzuma Khatun, wife of Abdul Latif confessed to police, she strangled ill-fated Padma for disobeying her on Friday. However, the couple termed the killing as suicide by hanging Padma's body with the ceiling of a room. But police confirmed it to be a murder case after getting the autopsy report. Father of the victim, Abdul Gafur filed a murder case with Kaliganj police station. The arrested couple were sent to jail. Tanzuma hit the girl with a stick and strangled her. SI Rawsanara of Jhenidah police station, also the Investigation Officer of the case told this correspondent over telephone.

Dacoit killed over booty share

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

An armed robber was killed and another critically injured in a clash over sharing of booty among gangmates in here on Saturday night. The dead robber is Abu Hossain. Critically wounded Moju was undergoing treatment at Jaldhaka Upazila Health Complex under police custody. Police recovered the body from a pond and sent it to Nilphamari Sadar Hospital for autopsy. Victim's widow Fulmoti filed a murder case with Jaldhaka police accusing nine persons including a Union Parishad (UP) member, Rashidul Haq and gang leader Mosharrar Hossain.