

# New tea variety to double yield

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Bangladesh Tea Research Institute (BTRI) at Srimongal has evolved a new variety of tea which will increase the yield by more than double.

The variety innovated through cloning method has been named BT-16.

Director-in-charge of the BTRI, Md Shahiduzzaman, told The Daily Star at his Srimongal office that the BT-16 variety is 'strong and thick' in liquor with good taste and flavour.

Consumers will find a new taste

and strong flavour in it, he said.

The existing varieties produce 1270 kg per hectre. BT-16 variety will yield about 3000 kg per hectre, he said.

As all the tea gardens in our country seek an increase in production within the given infrastructure and technical facilities, so they will be interested to cultivate the BT-16 variety, Md Shahiduzzaman said.

The BTRI authorities is now working to introduce BT-16 variety at field. BTRI scientists are now giving necessary training to interested tea garden staff.

In the meantime, Finly, which owns several tea gardens in Srimongal, has accepted BT-16 variety for plantation, BTRI sources said.

However, BT-16 is now in plantation stage and it will take time to make it available to consumers.

The BTRI source said, about four crore kilograms of tea were produced in our country annually during the eighties, about three-fourth of which was exported. But domestic consumption of tea has increased sharply. Now the country is producing about six crore kilograms annually but only one crore

20 lakh kilograms can be exported now after meeting the domestic demand.

If this situation continue, Bangladesh will be compelled to import tea to meet the growing home demand if high yielding varieties are not evolved, they said.

Though tea industry in Bangladesh is more than 100 years old, productivity has not increased to match the increase in population.

Experts hope that with introduction of BT-16, country's tea gardens will be able to increase their productivity and export.

## Cancel accord with Niko: CPB

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Manikganj unit of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) on Thursday held a protest meeting demanding cancellation of government's agreement with the Canadian company Niko which is responsible for blow-out in Tengratila gas field.

A procession was also brought out in the town.

The processionists demanded compensation from Niko for the victims.

Among others, the meeting was addressed by CPB leaders Azharul Islam, Abdul Mannan, Mojibur Rahman, Nasir Uddin and Gazi Wazed Lavlu.

They also called upon the people to observe today's hartal called by the jute and textile mills' action council demanding reopening of closed mills and payment of all workers' arrears.

## Protest against change in policy for women

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A human chain was formed in gaibandha town on Thursday demanding cancellation of the recent amendment to the National Women Development Policy.

It was organised by Durbar Network, an NGO. The protesters also held a rally at the railway Crossing. It was addressed by, among others, Majeda Khatun Kalpona, secretary, Development Network, Rangpur region and Sajeda Akhter Saji.

The speakers said the government, instead of fulfilling aspirations of the womenfolk, has dashed their hopes by the amendment, which will deny the right to direct election of women to parliament, they said.

They demanded restoration of women development policy as framed in 1997.

They also called upon all human rights organisations to press the government to scrap the amendment.

## DOOR-TO-DOOR CAMPAIGN IN SUNAMGANJ-3

# 98 out of 127 polling centres 'vulnerable'

## Over 100 expatriates come home for voting

IQBASL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

With only four days left for the Sunamganj-3 by-polls, campaign has reached a high pitch with weary candidates moving door to door and holding rallies to woo voters in remote villages in Jagannathpur and South Sunamganj upazilas. The ruling alliance already held several big rallies, addressed by some of its central leaders and a number of lawmakers from the region for its candidate Shahinur Pasha Chowdhury.

BNP Secretary General Mannan Bhuiyan along with a number of lawmakers addressed two rallies for Pasha. Jatiotabadi Juba Dal chief and Commerce Advisor Barkatulla Bulu also addressed a number of rallies on Thursday.

A team from central Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ) led by Moulana Fazlul Haque Aminee MP will be in Jagannathpur and Sunamganj tomorrow to join the campaign for Pasha.

Jatiya Party (JP) chief HM Ershad started a three-day campaign yesterday, holding a rally at Raniganj Bazar in Jagannathpur for party candidate Lt. Col (retd) Ali Ahmed.

Central leaders of Jatiya Party (Manju) will also hold rallies today for their candidate Iftekhar Ahmed

Limon.

Mahi B Chowdhury of Bikolpa Dhara, Bangladesh will also join rallies for his party man Sayedur Rahman Chowdhury.

Central leaders of Awami League are not in the campaign as the party has boycotted the by-polls. But two party men are in the race with full backing from the party leaders in both the upazilas.

The daughter of former Speaker and AL stalwart Humayun Rashid Chowdhury -- Nasrin Rashid Karim-- addressed two rallies at Pagla Bazar in Sunamganj and at Jagannathpur in favour of Nazrul Islam on Tuesday. She is also campaigning in villages in Sunamganj and Jagannathpur.

The most interesting thing is that about a hundred expatriates, most of them from London, came home in the last two weeks to join the campaign for their candidates. They are spending money lavishly for their men, locals said.

Jagannathpur is one of the upazilas in Sylhet having the highest number of expatriates in the UK.

A group of 35 expatriates reached home on Tuesday to join the campaign for Nazrul, who is also an expatriate having business in the UK.

Sunamganj Deputy Commissioner Jafar Siddique who

is also the Returning Officer, told The Daily Star that 98 out of 127 polling centres in the constituency are 'vulnerable'.

Forty-six of the centres are in eight unions in South Sunamganj and 81 in eight unions and one pourashava in Jagannathpur upazila. The number of voters is 2,18,450.

Meanwhile a high level meeting held in capital on Sunday decided to hold the election in free, fair and peaceful atmosphere at any cost, sources in the administration here said.

Army and BDR will be deployed in the constituency a day before the by-polls.

Political circles say the fight will be among alliance nominee Shahinur Pasha Chowdhury, former additional secretary Mannan backed by a faction of AL and Md. Nazrul Islam, former Sylhet district Juba League chief, also having support from a faction of AL.

The JP nominee, Lt. Col. Ali Ahmed, also may be a factor for them.

Some sources however claimed that voters may also be guided by regional feeling as Mannan is the lone candidate from eight unions in Sunamganj while the rest eight are from eight unions in Jagannathpur.



PHOTO: STAR

Rainwater remains stagnant on the Hawa Para road in Sylhet city as construction materials have clogged all the outlets. The photo was taken on Friday.

## Tk 60 lakh smuggled shrimp spawns, fries seized in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

BDR recovered shrimp spawns worth Tk 42 lakh in contained in 67 boxes and five crore smuggled shrimp fries worth Tk 16 lakh from different border areas in the district in the last two days.

Sources in 42 Rifles Battalion said, acting on a tip-off, a BDR patrol team recovered 37 boxes containing smuggled Indian spawns worth Tk 24 lakh and 57 boxes containing five crore shrimp fries worth Tk 16 lakh from Bhatshala border in Debhata upazila last night.

In two other drives, they recovered Tk. 18 lakh shrimp spawns contained in 30 boxes from a house in Parulia village in Debhata upazila and from a private car on the Satkhira-Khulna road in front of the battalion headquarters on July 13.

On contact, Lt. Col. Mominur Rahman, Commanding Officer of 42 Rifles Battalion, confirmed the hauls.

## Body of journalist Shaikh Haroon's 'killer' found

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A prime suspect of Dainik Purbanchal Journalist Shaikh Haroon-ur-Rashid Murder Case was found dead in Daulatpur on Thursday morning.

The body of New Biplobi Communist Party (NBCP) cadre Amjad Hossain alias Kala Amjad, 42, was recovered by Daulatpur Police Station sub-inspector (SI) Rajendra Nath from Arhonghata by-pass road. The body was sent to Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) morgue for autopsy. Police said bullets pierced the criminal's head. He was abducted from the court premises on Wednesday noon.

Police said Kala Amjad was shot dead by his rivals. But his family members said he was picked up by a group of plainclothes men at gunpoint.

Amjad was one of the killers who fired gunshots at journalist Shaikh Haroon-ur-Rashid at Mujunni on March 2 in 2002, police said.

The slain outlaw was wanted in eight criminal cases including three murder cases lodged with different police stations, according to the city special branch of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP).

# Tk 500cr CHT uplift project takes off this month

MONIRUL ISLAM MONU, Bandarban

Work on implementation of a Tk 500 crore Chittagong Hill Tracts Rural Development Project (CHTRDP), financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), begins this month.

Guidelines for the project were approved at a meeting of the CHTRDP Regional Co-ordination Committee, held in Rangamati on July 13.

Chairman of CHT (Chittagong Hill Tracts) Regional Council and President of the CHTRDP Regional Co-ordination Committee (RCC) Joytirindra Bodhiprio Larma alias Santu Larma presided over the meeting.

High officials of ADB and CHTRDP, Chakma Raja Debashis Roy, Bandarban Hill District Council member Lushai Mong, Rangamati Hill District Council member Japan Chakma and Khagrachari Hill District Council Executive Engineer Ashsh Kumar Biswas, among others, were present at the meeting.

The CHTRDP will be implemented in phases in five years, meeting sources said. In the first phase to be implemented in the current financial year, 25 villages in 25 upazilas in the three hill districts will be brought under some 'pilot projects' involving a total of Tk nine crore. After evaluation, more 100 villages will be included in the next financial year, they said.

"The guidelines have been approved and the project work will begin now" Lushai Mong told this correspondent yesterday.

He said the meeting discussed the problems in detail and unanimously approved the guidelines.

Each village will get an allotment of Tk 36 lakh for projects in the first year. Education, healthcare and sanitation will be given priority. The union committee will frame the projects and decided whether these will be in areas inhabited by Bangalees or indigenous people.

With this money, a local committee will be able to take up so many projects as one project will not involve more than Tk two lakh, the sources said.

To create employment, 10 per cent of the project cost will be spent as wages for local people engaged in the projects.

NGOs will be engaged mainly for orientation and creating awareness among local people in implementation of the projects.

Implementation of the project will be monitored at the national level by a National Project Steering Committee (NPSC) headed by the Deputy Minister for CHT Affairs. The RCC is responsible for preparing project guidelines.

A Community Development Committee (CDC) will supervise the work at the grassroots level with the cooperation of a Beneficiaries Committee (BC).

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) sanctioned the Tk 500 crore funds for development of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The project was approved at the behest of the UNDP.

But it was delayed as the guidelines could not be finalised because representatives of Bangalee and indigenous people could not agree on their stakes.

## BSF returns bodies of 2 Bangladeshis

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Bodies of two Bangladeshi youths who were killed last week by Indian BSF were handed over to BDR on Thursday.

BDR Naib Subedar Shafi received the bodies of Abdul Jabber, 25, son of Nausher Ali of Goira village under Benapole Port police station and Abdul Kader, 26, son of Monumia of Narayanpur Porabari village under Sarsha police station from BSF Adjutant P K Das of Haridaspur camp, according to BDR sources.

The bodies were handed over to the victims' near and dear ones.

They were killed by BSF at about 5.20 am last Friday near Raghunathpur border outpost (BoP) close to Pillar No 20.

## Tk 50 cr Amtali-Kalapara road approved

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The Tk 50 crore Amtali-Kalapara road construction project has been approved by the Economic Relations Division (ERD) on June 26.

The 25-kilometre road is a portion of the Patuakhali-Kuakata road.

According to an official, the Danida assisted project was approved after 10 months at a meeting presided over by Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman.

After approval, it was sent to the Cabinet Committee.

The project is supposed to be completed within one-and-a-half-years. On its completion, work on the Kalapora-Kuakata road will begin.

The Patuakhali-Kuakata road development project involving Tk 126 crore was taken up considering the prospect of tourism in Kuakata and fish farming in the nearby area.

Earlier, the 30-kilometre Patuakhali-Amtali road was constructed at a cost of Tk 44 crore provided by Danida.

## Heart Camp held in Tangail

A CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A day-long 'heart camp' organised by Lab Aid Cardiac Hospital, was held at Rajdhani Clinic in the town on Thursday.

At least 200 patients were examined and given medicine and advice by heart specialists Prof. Dr. M Motiur Rahman, Dr. Colonel Kazi Shofeuddin Ahmed, Dr. Mohammad Amir Hossen, Dr. Rafiqul Islam, Dr. Tanjim and Dr. Farzana at the camp. The patients came from different areas of the district.

## New executives of Moulvibazar Press Club

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

MA Salam, correspondent of Daily Sangbad and Channel-i and Manob Jamin Staff Reporter Sorwar Ahmed have been elected unopposed president and general secretary of Moulvibazar Press Club.

Other members of the executive committee have also been declared elected unopposed as the other panel has been withdrawn. The election was scheduled for July 21.

The other elected members of the new executive committee are Abul Kalam (Khobor), Rajat Kanti Goswami (The Daily Star), Abdul Hamid Mahub (of Banglabazar Patrika), MAMuhit (Jugantor), Fazlul Karim (Janata), Shah Widur Rahman (Amar Desh), Hasnat Kamal (New Age), Saleh Elahi Kuti (Monubarta), Bakshi Iqbal Ahmed (Editor of Dainik Banglar Din), Aminur Rashid Babor (Ittefaque), Ashok Kumar Das (Bangladesh Observer), Badrul Alam Babul (Holiday) and Anwarul Islam Javed (Bhorer Kagoj).



PHOTO: STAR

Members of The Daily Star Readers Club at Rajshahi University parading the campus after its formation on Thursday.