

2 bombs found in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Chuadanga police yesterday recovered two powerful live bombs from the town.

They said local people found the bombs on a roadside at Academy More in the town at about 9.30pm and informed police.

Sadar thana police rushed to the spot and recovered those.

Police suspect that criminals allegedly belonging to outlawed parties might have kept the bombs to create panic.

In another incident early yesterday, Sadar thana police arrested a the ring leader of a gang of inter-district dacoits from Salmiry village and recovered firearms from his possession.

Police said that acting on a tip-off, they raided the house of Safiqul Islam alias Safi and arrested him. Police also recovered one foreign made rifle, one shutter gun and several bullets from his house.

Safi, an accused in several cases including some for murder is on the run for long. He had returned home on the previous night.

Police was quizzing him when the report was filed yesterday evening.

Photo exhibition at Khagrachhari

A CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A three-day solo photo exhibition of the Aker Kagoj district correspondent Nazim Uddin began at Khagrachhari Shilpakala Academy yesterday.

The exhibition titled 'Chittagong Hill Tracts and its People' will depict the life, culture, tradition and heritage of the hill people. Nazim's 30 pictures will be displayed there.

The exhibition will remain open for public from 3pm to 9pm every day.

Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board chairman Wadud Bhuiyan MP inaugurated the exhibition.



Two farmers at Khalshai village in Gobindagnaj cutting damaged aman plants for use as fodder (left) and a flood-devastated banana garden.



PHOTO: STAR

Gaibandha farmers see hard days ahead

Cash crops aman and banana completely damaged in six out of seven upazilas

REZAUL HOQ, Gaibandha

Marginal farmer Abdur Rashid of Khalshai village in Gobindagnaj was clearing the dry and damaged Aman plants from his lands for use as fodder.

Pale and worried Rashid does not know how he will maintain his family for at least six months.

If IRRI is sown in the coming season, it will take at least six months from now to harvest it. "Right now, I have nothing to

eat", he told this correspondent during a visit to the village after the Eid.

Rashid had cultivated Aman on his two and a half bigha land. He said he could not take home even five kilograms of paddy as the latest onslaught of flood completely damaged the crop.

Similar is the situation with about 44,000 peasant families including 33,776 marginal farmers in six out of upazilas in Gaibandha district.

The Agriculture Extension

Department (AED) estimates the crop loss at 41,650 tonnes worth over Tk 60 crore.

The flood in the first half of last month completely damaged paddy, banana and other crops on 1,22,130 hectare of land in the six upazilas.

The worst affected upazilas are Gobindagnaj and Palashbari.

"I had a plan to rebuild my dwelling house by selling the banana, but god was unwilling", he lamented.

Jaasimuddin of the same village planted banana on one and a half bighas of land. But all the plants have been damaged.

AED Deputy Director Abdul Matin in Gaibandha said an emergency argi-rehabilitation programme including free distribution of IRRI Boro seeds and interest-free loan should be launched right now to save the marginal farmers.

cash drop as a farmer can earn over Tk three lakh from one hectare of land by spending around Tk one lakh.

"I have been cultivating banana for five years on three bighas of land and earned good profits. But this year all of my banana plants damaged have been damaged by floodwater", said Jahedul of Marirhat village in Palashbari upazila.

"I had a plan to rebuild my dwelling house by selling the banana, but god was unwilling", he lamented.

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JMB cadre chargesheeted in Kishoreganj

A CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Police of Kishoreganj Sadar thana has submitted charge sheet against alleged JMB cadre Obaidullah Shumon in the August 17 serial bomb blasts in the town.

Sub Inspector Jahangir Alam, who is also investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted the charge sheet before a court on November 2.

IO of the case in the charge sheet included the names of JMB chief Bangla Bhai and his mentor Shaikh Abdur Rahman as planners of the bomb attacks.

But it recommended acquittal of thirteen other accused. They are Harun-or-Rashid, Aiatullah,

Mohiuddin, Ariful Islam, Rajib, Lal Mia, Waliullah, Jahed, Annas, Shakib, Reaz, Shahidullah, Masud and Ajahar. They should be acquitted as their identity could not be ascertained from statements given by Obaidullah during interrogation, police said.

Obaidullah was arrested at Gurui under Niklee thana on September 14 along with explosives and a case was filed against him with Niklee thana.

Police said, during interrogation, Obaidullah confessed to his involvement in the bomb blasts at Botrish bus stand in Kishoreganj town on August 17.

A case was filed against

Obaidullah with Kishoreganj Sadar thana after his confession.



Obaidullah Shumon

25 MT rice for destitutes 'stolen'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Dhuna upazila administration officials in collaboration with some BNP leaders allegedly misappropriated about 25 metric tons (MT) of rice officially allotted to the poor ahead of the Eid-ul-Fitr.

They shared themselves Tk 3 lakh got from the sale proceeds of the rice sold to a wholesale trader, Amzad, on Thursday, alleged local journalists.

Sources said, the government allocated 25 metric tons of rice to distribute among the poor and destitutes about three weeks ago.

However, Dhuna Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Kamal Uddin Biswas denied the allegations saying the allotted rice is yet to be released from the silo. Wholesaler Amzad also denied the allegation.

Biman stops Barisal flight

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Bangladesh Biman has stopped its Dhaka-Barisal-Dhaka flights.

Flights in the route is stopped since November 3, which will continue till March 25, Biman sources said yesterday.

The officials seeking anonymity said the decision was taken to curtail its loss in domestic routes. But many people including political leaders in Barisal rejected the version, saying why Biman should incur loss while a private airline is operating profitably in the route?

They said the private airline GMG is drawing larger number of passengers though its fare is Tk 24,000 against Biman's Tk 16,000.

The GMG is maintaining regular flights in its Barisal-Dhaka route.

Sources in GMG said they are getting the "desired number of passengers".

Biman had started its Dhaka-Barisal flight on December 3, 1995 but soon stopped it.

It resumed flights in April 2003 and also started selling tickets for international routes from Barisal from June this year.

This had increased sale of Biman tickets.

Some members of the elite in Barisal city talking to this correspondent demanded immediate resumption of Biman flights in the route. The persons this correspondent talked to include Barisal BNP Secretary Nazrul Islam Rajan and convener of city Awami League Shaikat Hossain Hiron.

Rift in Satkhira BNP widens

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Rift in Satkhira BNP surfaced again when two rival factions held separate programmes marking the National Revolutionary and Solidarity Day on Monday.

A meeting organised by the faction of Satkhira district BNP president Habibul Islam Habib MP, was held at the BNP office in the town.

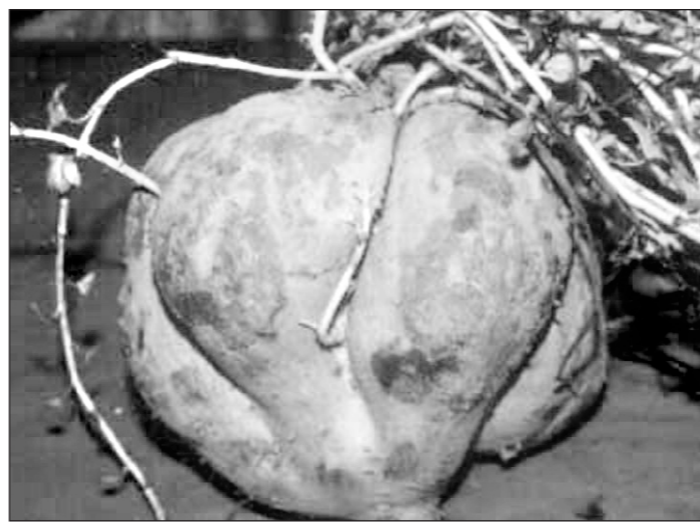
Sadar upazila BNP president and Union Parishad chairman Shahidul Islam presided over the meeting while it was addressed by Samsuzzoha Bablu, Mohammad Ali, Sirajul Islam, Kazi Sabur, Abu Zahid Dablu, Masum Billah Shahin, Abdus Samad, Farida

Akhter Beauty, Mamun Rana Jahangir, Ahsan Habib Tutul, Asadur Rahman, Hafizur Rahman, Mukuland Shahin.

The other faction led by district BNP general secretary Rahmatullah Palash organised another meeting at Banani Market in the town.

The meeting was presided over by town BNP president Emamul Islam Sharif.

It was addressed by Rahmatullah Palash, Kamrul Islam Faruque, Sheikh Nizam Uddin, Chairman Abdul Alim, Abdur Rouf, Nasim Farooq Khan Mithu, Abul Hasan Hadi, Khan Mirza Masud Jewel, Touhidul Islam, Abdal Khaleq and Rafiqul Islam. In the meetings, both the factions accused each other for the split.



10 kg sweet potato!

SHEIKH SHAHIDUL ISLAM, B'baria

Believe it or not, a sweet potato weighs 8 to 10 kilograms.

Local industrialist Kamal Ahmed brought this amazing vegetable from Australia last year and cultivated in his land in Ashuganj.

As this became known, farmers are now scrambling to collect the stem of the vegetable for cultivation this winter. They said this will open a new dimension in potato cultivation in the country.

It grows well in the soil here. Kamal said he cultivated this potato variety on three bighas of land at his Shuhagpur village in Ashuganj and got a yield of about 250 maunds. The yield was less as he sparsely sowed the stems. The yield will be at least double if grown in a planned way, he said.

At first farmers ignored when I planted the stems. But as harvesting time approached, they could not believe it. Scores of people came from

far away places to see the filed.

Some of the bigger size potatoes were around 11 kilograms.

It does not need any special care. It can be grown in the way farmers cultivate our local varieties of sweet potato, he said. The alluvial soil of Ashuganj has proved suitable for this crop, he said. A farmer can easily get an yield at least 15 times they get from local varieties, Kamal said.

Farmer Md Parves Khan said he took some stems from Kamal last year and planted those in his lands. He also got a good production.

While visiting Kasmal's house recently, this correspondent saw the giant potatoes harvested last year and stored in a room started growing stems. The stems were being processed for plantation this year.

Kamal has also some other high yielding varieties of mango, jambura (citrus) and banana, which he plans to grow in large scale.

12X3

11X3