

# IRRI-BORO IN BOGRA, NAOGAON AND JOYPURHAT 59,000 irrigation pumps to remain out of power net

HASIBUR RAHMAN BILO, Bogra

Around 59,000 irrigation pumps are likely remain out of power supply during the current IRRI-Boro season in Bogra, Naogaon and Joypurhat districts for want of power.

This may affect crops on about 1,50,000 hectares, according to officials of Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) and Palli Bidya Samity (PBS).

PBS officials said they have decided to supply power to only 3,284 irrigation pumps including 1,750 deep and 1,534 shallow tube wells out of a total of 62,256 deep, shallow and low lift pump (LLP) in the three districts.

BPDB and PBS officials told this correspondent that they need about

176 megawatt (mw) power for the three districts to keep irrigation machines running smoothly but now they are being supplied with only an average of 49 mw a day.

DAZ Shamsuddin, General Manager of Joypurhat PBS said on Thursday that they will connect electricity to only 80 irrigation equipment including 30 deep and 50 shallow tube wells out of a total of 2,957 in the district.

PBS officials in Bogra said they need about 140 mw power for 59,300 irrigation machines in Bogra and Naogaon districts. But authorities supply 44 mw per day on an average.

A senior PBS official said power has been provided to only 1400 deep and 184 shallow tube wells

out a total of 51,200 irrigation machines in Naogaon district in the current IRRI-Boro season.

On the other hand PBS have given power connection to only 1,620 irrigation machines including 320 deep and 1,300 shallow out of a total of 8,100 in Bogra district.

The officials said the only alternative for farmers is to convert their machines to diesel-run ones, which is costly.

Farmer Sheik Nuruzzman Nilu of Karimpur village in Kalai upazila in Joypurhat said about 100 hectares of IRRI-Boro land may remain fallow in his village. If he does not get power connection, he will have to convert his machine into a diesel run equipment, which will cost him additional money.



PHOTO: STAR

Failing to operate irrigation pump, two farmers manually irrigating their Boro field (left) in Bogra and a parched crop land.

## 300 bird species on verge of extinction in country

### Seminar at Rajshahi bird fair told

#### OUR CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists and bird watchers at a bird fair on Rajshahi University campus yesterday said, more than 400 species of bird have become extinct from the world because of deforestation and increase in global temperature.

Besides, more than 300 species of bird in Bangladesh are on the verge of extinction, which is affecting environmental balance, they said.

They spoke at a seminar entitled 'Bangladesh Bird and its Environment', held marking the two-day bird fair that began yesterday.

Rajshahi University Institute of Environmental Science and Bangladesh Bird Club jointly organised the fair on the premises of the Third Science Building.

The discussants said many species of bird are disappearing due to lack of protection, indiscrimi-

nate hunting dearth of their fodder.

RU Vice-Chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain inaugurated the fair. Bangladesh Bird Club president Inam Al Haque, RU Pro-vice chancellor Prof Mammunul Keramat, DU teacher Prof Obaidul Haque, bird watcher from England James Pender, director of RU Institute of Environmental Science Prof Dr. Sarwar Jahan, Prof Abdul Mannan, environmentalists and students took part in the discussion meeting.

Prof Redwanur Rahman read out a key-note paper at the seminar.

On the first day of the fair, photos of birds, collection of Inam Al Haque and Sumona were displayed.

On the concluding day today, the organisers will hold a programme to watch birds through telescope at the T-groove beside Padma river try to make a bird census at Pachamaria Beel in Rajshahi.



PHOTO: STAR

Sylhet City Corporation demolishing part of a building encroaching upon a road in East Zindabazar during a drive launched yesterday to remove illegal structures.

## Gaibandha gets 3.5 mw against 17 needed

#### OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Gaibandha gets only 3.5 mw power against a requirement of 17 mw in the district.

"We are not getting adequate power from the National Grid and as such we can not distribute power among all the feeder lines", the PDB Executive Engineer told this correspondent yesterday.

Acute power outage has hit both urban and rural areas of Gaibandha district that adversely affects IRRI-Boro cultivation, trade and students.

The power supply position deteriorated in last seven days. In the district town, load shedding has increased to 10-12 hours a day, residents said. The situation is precarious in remote rural areas.

In Shaghata upazila, Palli Bidya Samity officials said they have to ration power supply because of the crisis.

Farmers there said their Iri-Boro crops are being affected due to lack of proper irrigation in the peak season.

## Muharram procession by Garpara Imambara Tuesday

#### OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

As part of a tradition for over 100 years, the Garpara Imambara in Manikganj is observing the Muharram this year also in a solemn atmosphere.

Muharram commemorates the supreme sacrifice of Hazrat Imam Hasan and Hazrat Imam Hussain for truth and justice.

The programmes being held from morning to late night include Milad Mahfil, offering Fateha and discussion meetings.

The 10th of Muharram (Ashura) on Tuesday will see culmination of nine days' programmes. At 3 pm, a huge procession will be brought out from the Imambara. The processionists will carry banners and flags in remembrance of Karbala and converge at Manikganj town where a big rally will be held.

## '100pc school enrolment by 2010 in 3 Satkhira upazilas'

### Effort by a local NGO

#### OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A local NGO has undertaken a laudable programme to improve the quality of primary education and ensure cent per cent enrolment of children in rural schools of three upazilas by 2010.

Satkhira Unnayan Sangstha (SUS) has been implementing

the five-year programme in Kalaroa, Assassuni and Sadar upazilas since 2004.

Stromme Foundation of Norway, an international NGO, is funding the project. It has been aimed at bringing a qualitative change in primary education, ensuring 100 percent enrolment of school children, reduction of school dropouts and making community people aware about improvement of primary education in rural areas.

Earlier, SUS conducted a survey in three upazilas to identify the hindrances in bringing a qualitative change in primary education.

The survey found that poverty, lack of awareness among guardians and inadequate training of primary school teachers are behind the gloomy picture of primary education.

The survey revealed, 55.84 percent of primary students are irregular with a dropout rate of 20.7 percent.

Of them, 6.2 per cent children are out of school while 32 percent children have completed

primary education but lack knowledge of arithmetic.

SUS held group meetings with guardians, school managing committees and members of civil society to create awareness about the need for quality primary education. It trained primary school teachers so that they can impart quality education to children.

The NGO also organised seminars and workshops with the participation of guardians, members of school managing committees, members of civil society and government officials so that they can formulate an integrated policy to promote primary education.

The NGO has appointed 62 'community teachers' in 40 government primary schools where there had been lack of teachers.

It has also set up 25 pre-primary schools at rural areas in the three upazilas where learning can be a fun for children above five years of age.

SUS also took up a support programme for adolescent girls (age 11-19 years) including abandoned and school dropout girls. The NGO enrolled 750 adolescent girls in its newly opened 30 centres.

Alongside the education programme, SUS also runs a rural micro-finance programme in an integrated manner to achieve the goal.

12x3

14x3



PHOTO: STAR  
Agriculture Advisor Dr Chowdhury Sajjadul Karim holding a meeting with officials on fertiliser distribution during a surprise visit to Godagari in Rajshahi yesterday.