

# 2 lakh farmer families outside post-flood rehabilitation programme in 3 N districts

HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU, Bogra

The Agriculture Extension Department (AED) is yet to take any initiative to rehabilitate more than 2 lakh flood-affected farmer families in Bogra, Gaibanda and Kurigram districts.

AED sources said 2,35,418 farmer families in the three districts have been affected due to recent flood but the government has planned to rehabilitate only 34,101 farmers under a post-flood rehabilitation programme.

Md Mohsin Ali, deputy director (DD) of Kurigram AED said at least 1,13,838 farmer families in the district have been affected during recent flood and most of them are

facing hardship to maintain families. Farmers have cultivated some 22,000 hectares of land in their own initiative while crops on 2,8769 hectares of land were damaged by the floods.

"The government has provided seedlings for 6.88 hectares free of cost under post flood rehabilitation programme for the flood-affected farmers in the district," Md Mohsin Ali said. Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADCO) provided 700 kg seeds to cultivate 101 hectares of land in the district on payment, AED sources said.

Loss of Aman and other crops due to flood and water logging in Kurigram district this year had

been calculated at about 180 crore, AED sources said.

A proposal has been made to allocate Tk 600 for each farmer in Kurigram, which is much below the need. "It is estimated that at least 7 crore taka is needed for the post flood rehabilitation programme in Kurigram district but we are yet to have any assurance from the authority," the AED official said.

NMM Mizanur Rahman Amin, DD of Gaibanda AED said at least 75,580 farmer families in the district have been affected in recent flood and water logging that damaged seasonal crops including Aman paddy on 13,344.52 hectare of land, causing

loss of Tk 74 crore.

The department has locally planned to rehabilitate 20,000 farmer families which is only 25 percent of total flood-affected farmer families.

More than 46,000 farmer families have been affected in four upazilas including Sharikandi upazila due to recent flood and waterlogging in Bogra district, AED sources said.

Md Rustam Ali, deputy director of Bogra AED, said the department has sent a proposal to the authorities to sanction Tk 3,36,67,182 for rehabilitation of 14,000 farmer families out of a total 46,000 flood affected families.

## Jute workers bid to snap road-rail links foiled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police foiled a bid of workers of seven state-owned jute mills of Khulna-Jessore industrial belt yesterday to snap road and rail communications to and from Khulna.

However, no untoward incident occurred as workers remained calm in face of police provocation, Jute Mills Workers' Development Committee convenor Gazi Masum said. They still believe that their arrears wages would be paid before Eid vacation, he said.

"We have decided to follow a go-slow policy keeping in view minimum need of workers ahead of Eid and avoid confrontation both with management and security forces, he said.

Meanwhile, workers have agreed to receive part payment of arrears wages in cash from yesterday considering assurance of payment of all other dues within next month by the managements of mills.



Hundreds of farmers block road and demonstrate on the adjoining Majipara College field in Narail Sadar upazila yesterday demanding adequate supply of fertilizer.

## Kulaura BNP 'removes' party chief's adviser Mofazzal, ex-MP Shahin

Sends resolution to BNP secy gen

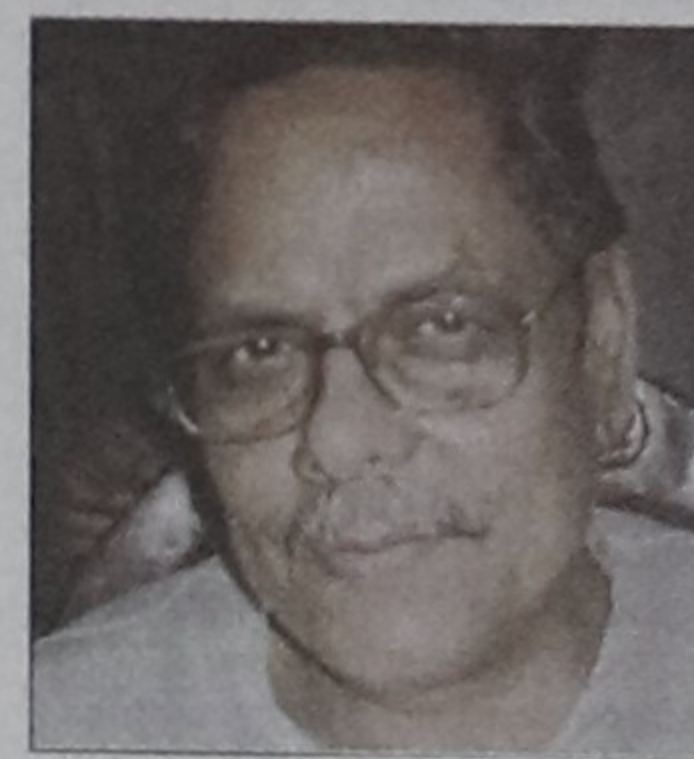
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Kulaura upazila BNP has adopted a resolution to 'remove' AH Mofazzal Karim, BNP chairperson's adviser and a 'reformist' leader of the party, and MM Shahin, former lawmaker from the party.

A meeting presided over by upazila BNP President Kamal Ahmed Junaed on Thursday evening adopted the resolution for the two leaders' recent 'anti-party' activities.

Upazila BNP has sent a recommendation to central BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain, urging action against the two BNP leaders.

Speakers at the meeting blamed AH Mofazzal Karim for his 'negative comments against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in talk show programmes on different TV channels.



AH Mofazzal Karim



MM Shahin

They also blamed former lawmaker MM Shahin for attending a meeting of PDP in Dhaka and making derogatory comments on Tarique Rahman.

Redwan Khan, general secretary of Kulaura upazila BNP, has confirmed the resolution about AH Mofazzal Karim and MM Shahin.

Admitting information about the resolution, former lawmaker

MM Shahin told reporters, "Adoption of such resolution by upazila BNP is not a proper act. It is a conspiracy against me. I was in BNP, I am in BNP and I shall in BNP."

Mufazzal Karim, however, told reporters that he knows nothing about the meeting.

"I am working for the betterment of the party chairperson," he said.



People taking the risky walk to cross Bagmara bridge on Khagrachhari-Dhaka road as the deck remains without plates for days.

## 'A few clauses of Right to Information Act need change'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Speakers at a discussion in Barisal yesterday said a few flawed clauses are to be changed if Right to Information (RTI) Act is to ensure people's right to know and good governance.

Welcoming the council of advisers' approval to the much-awaited ordinance, they said there are several loopholes in the proposed ordinance, which need to be closed in order to ensure maximum disclosure of information.

Conscious Citizens Committee (CCC) of Barisal and Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) jointly organised the programme titled 'Know Information, Get

Right' (Tattho Janbo, Odhikar Anbo) at Barisal BDS auditorium.

Economic development, establishment of rule of law, fighting corruption, institutionalising democracy and establishing good governance in the country cannot be achieved unless transparency and accountability is ensured in all spheres by ensuring free flow of information, speakers said.

There are many loopholes in the proposed ordinance, they said, adding that the ordinance covers up to upazila level, not up to union parishad level.

"Although the laws do not bar disclosure of information, most of the officials are using the Official Secrets Act as an excuse for not pro-

viding anyone, journalists in particular, with information," they said.

Barisal City Corporation Mayor Shawkat Hossain Hiron, citizens and human rights activists Saifur Rahman Miron, Dr Mizanur Rahman, Dr Habibur Rahman, and Prof Syed Aminul Haq, freedom fighter Enayet Hossain Chowdhury, district Jatiya Party President Mohsinul Islam, NGO activist Anwar Zahid, trade union leader AK Azad, cultural activist Nazrul Islam Chunnun, women leader and educationist Rabeya Khatun, writer Asma Chowdhury, TIB member Kazi Selina participated in the discussion.

Barisal CCC convenor Manabendra Batabayal presided over the programme.

## Forces deployed at markets, risky points in Khulna

Drive intensified against criminals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The commissioner of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP) has issued an order to deploy forces at all 62 shopping centres and other vulnerable points in order to intensify their drive against criminals.

The order was sent to all police stations following arrest of an Islamist militant at Bagmara in Khulna Sadar thana on Wednesday and information of free-style movement of criminals in disguise ahead of Eid.

Security measures have been stepped up in the entire city by deploying adequate police personnel at the shopping centres and all vulnerable points, according to city special Branch of KMP. Special mobile teams consisting of plainclothes police have been ordered to move in and around shopping centres to take action against muggers and eve-teasers.

Besides, special drives are also going on to arrest drug peddlers as sale of drugs such as heroin and hemp are on rise alarmingly in every nook and cranny of the city.

Forces are on high alert both in uniform and plainclothes to check crimes, said Assistant Police Commissioner Abu Sayem who is also in charge of city special Branch of KMP. They are also keeping sharp watch on all residential hotels and private hostels here to track down Islamist militants and outlaws, he said.

Meanwhile, Tanvir Ahmed, a cadre of Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) arrested on Wednesday, was taken on remand for three days from Thursday.

The JMB cadre is yet to give any information about his activities despite intense interrogation, said Inspector Nikhil Chandra Mandal of the Detective Branch of police who is investigating the case.

## RCC concillors demand removal of DB AC for assaulting colleague

RU Correspondent

Forty councillors of Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) yesterday formed a human chain in front of RCC building demanding immediate resignation of Detective Branch (DB) of police Assistant Commissioner (AC) Mahafuzur Rahman, accused of assaulting Shahadat Ali Shahu, a councillor of ward No 17, on Thursday night.

The councillors also warned of launching a tough movement with general people if the DB official is not removed from Rajshahi immediately. Before human chain, some agitating councillors of RCC beat up city Special Branch police Inspector Khater Ali as he tried to 'foil' the councillors' scheduled human chain programme.

Earlier, at a press conference at RCC auditorium yesterday, the RCC councillors said on Thursday night, Shahadat Ali Shahu, councillor of ward No 17, Sofia Islam, councillor

of a reserved seat for women, and 10 other citizens went to Rajshahi DB police office to enquire about Nasir, picked up by DB police without informing his family.

"We asked DB Assistant Commissioner Mahafuzur Rahman about the reason of the arrest," councillor Shahadat Ali Shahu said.

"The DB official hurled abuses and physically assaulted me in front of the councillor and citizens. He also threatened to implicate me in false cases if I inform journalists and authorities concerned of the matter," he said.

Demanding a judicial investigation into the incident of assaulting of public representative, the RCC councillors urged the caretaker government chief, home advisor and concerned authorities for action in this regard.

When contacted, DB AC Mahafuzur Rahman said the allegation of assaulting the councillor is false and baseless.

## SATKHIRA RED CRESCENT

### 'Unconstitutional' meet cancelled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Amidst protest from the life members of Satkhira Red Crescent Society, the officials of the organisation finally postponed the general meeting convened by its ad hoc committee scheduled on September 25.

Ekrumul Islam Maruf, secretary Satkhira Red Crescent Society in a statement to the press on Wednesday night postponed the meeting.

Satkhira Red Crescent Society unit committee was formed during the tenure of the BNP-Jamaat led four-party alliance government and all the office-bearers are local leaders of BNP and Jamaat and its front organisations, said several life members of the society.

As part of their conspiracy, they convened the meeting at Kharibilla about five kilometres off the district town without inviting the general and life members to form the unit committee with their party men, they said.

Earlier, life members of Satkhira Red Crescent Society

formed an 'Action Committee' to resist their move and held several meetings and submitted memorandum protesting the local Red Crescent Society general meeting that was called 'violating the constitution'.

Satkhira district administration also asked the officials not to hold the meeting as it was 'not convened properly', sources said.

When contacted, Satkhira Red Crescent Society Secretary Ekrumul Islam Maruf said they convened the meeting properly but later they stopped it as objection was raised.

Action Committee convenor advocate Abdur Rahim and member secretary Prof Abu Ahmed in a statement yesterday congratulated the people including the life members for being vocal against the 'misdeeds' of some vested quarters belonging to BNP-Jamaat who are hatching conspiracy to form a pocket committee.

They also thanked the local administration for taking measures to save Red Crescent Society from politicisation.

## Tk 3.75 lakh cash, valuables looted in Rajshahi

RU Correspondent

A gang of criminals looted money in cash, gold ornament, cell phone sets and other valuables worth about Tk 3.75 lakh from a house at Hetemkha in Rajshahi city yesterday.

Criminals equipped with sharp weapons entered the house of Abul Kashem at 12:00 pm in guise of strangers.

## 3 held for extortion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested three transport workers including a transport leader when they were realising illegal toll from passenger buses at Mirzapur bus stand yesterday.

The arrestees are Mirzapur Upazila Transport Workers' Association general secretary Shafi Miah, 45, and transport workers Jahangir Miah, 35, Khademul Miah, 35.



Fishermen piling up hilsa at Fisheryghat in Chittagong as large catches of the delicious fish are available in the Bay.

## BAD WEATHER

### Plying of small water vessels stopped on 76 Barisal routes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Operation of ML type water transports which are less than 65 feet in length were stopped along 76 routes in Barisal region due to bad weather condition since Tuesday last.

The routes included 28 inner routes of Barisal, 13 routes of Barguna and 14 routes of Bhola and five coastal routes of Barisal, Bhola, Lakshimpur and Chittagong.

Barisal Port authorities ordered stoppage of plying of ML type launches until further order, said Bangladesh Inland Transport Authority (BIWTA) deputy director Rafiqul Islam. The order was issued following creation of low over Bay near the coast and hoisting of cautionary signal number 2, he said.

Fishing boats and trawlers were advised to take safe shelter as sea becomes rough and turbulent gradually, he added.

Meanwhile, due to influence of new moon, water level increased in rivers and canals flooding lower part of the city.

Local weather office recorded 26.04 millimetre rainfall in the city in nine hours from 6:00 am to 3:00 pm yesterday. Light to moderate rain accompanied by gusty wind was recorded in the city till filing of the report.



A sculptor giving the final touch to an effigy of goddess Durga at Kalibari puja mandap at Narail as Durga Puja, the biggest festival of the Bangali Hindus, is only a few days ahead.