

Wild pig invasion in CHT jhum crops

Farmers fear food crisis

SHANTIMOY CHAKMA, back from Thanchi and Ruma in Bandarban

Attack of wild pigs on jhum crops in remote hilly areas in Thanchi and Ruma upazilas in Bandarban has added to the hardship of marginal and landless indigenous jhum farmers who are yet to recover from last year's 'indur banya' (massive rat invasion).

Jhum farmers in different areas of Rangamati and Khagrachhari are also facing similar situation.

Although good yield of jhum paddy was expected in Chittagong Hill Tracts this year, massive attack by wild pigs on jhum farms may dash their hope, farmers said.

Usually at night, wild boars in groups of 100-200 come to the jhum fields and eat paddy and destroy different crops and fruits like maize, sesame, cotton, sweet pumpkins, pumpkin, cucumber, banana and papaya.

Some 12,360 hectares of hilly lands including 7,680 hectares in

Bandarban, 4530 hectares in Rangamati and 2150 hectares in Khagrachhari district were brought under jhum cultivation this year, Agriculture Extension Department (AED) sources said.

AED sources said about 15,000 metric tons of paddy worth about Tk 30 crore could be produced in CHT region this season as good yield is expected in CHT hills due to favourable climate and adequate rainfall this year.

Marginal and landless ethnic people of Chakma, Marma, Tangchanya, Tripura, Bawm, Pankhua, Mro, Khyang, Chak, Lusa and Khumi communities cultivate different varieties of jhum paddy on the hill slopes, of course at the cost of environmental degradation.

During a recent visit to remote areas of Pantola, Remakri, Galengya, Payindu and Pransa of Thanchi, Ruma and Alikadam upazilas, a group of local journalists saw massive destruction by wild pigs on vast areas of jhum

farms. Sometimes pigs also attack jhum farmers, injuring them critically.

Recently 16-year-old Baching Mong was injured as a big boar attacked him on their jhum farm.

Army men from adjacent camp rescued the boy and sent him to Bandarban Sadar Hospital in a critical condition.

Elderly Shoi Mro Sai Marma of Pantola Para of Ruma upazila said invasion by boar increased in the areas during the last couple of years but the situation has worsened this year.

Shoilah Mong, Hlah Mong and Aung Sa Pru said 80 percent of their jhum crops have been destroyed by the boars.

"I used to hunt boar with my licensed gun to protect my jhum farms about eight years ago. But I can't do so now as all the gun owners had to deposit their guns to the government authorities," said Shoi Mro Sai, an elderly indigenous hunter

of Remakri.

"I am worried about survival of our poor jhum farmers who are facing disasters one after another. Even before recovering from last year's rat-invasion, they are now attacked by wild pigs," Thanjama Lusa, chairman of Bandarban Hill District Council, said.

The food aid programme by WFP should continue to ensure food security in the hills, said Shoi Ou Sai, Chairman of Galengya Union Parishad.

As part of post rat-invasion programme, the government allocated cash and food grains to the affected indigenous people, particularly the jhum farmers, to tackle severe food crisis in CHT region.

UN organisations WFP (World Food Programme) and UNDP undertook different programmes including distribution of rice, edible oil and rat-killing machines to help the households overcome the ongoing food crisis.

Prothom Alo staff killed over land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

An employee of Bangla daily Prothom Alo was killed and two of his cousins were seriously injured by members of a neighbouring family over land dispute at Kafatia village under Manikganj Sadar upazila on Friday.

The deceased is Ainal Haque, 30, son of Kashem Ali of Kafatia village, and an employee of circulation department of the Prothom Alo.

Ainal's cousins Joyal and Rafik were admitted to Manikganj Sadar Hospital with serious injuries on several places of the body.

Police arrested the alleged killer Nurul Islam, 30, son of Hazrat Ali, Manikganj Sadar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Meer Rezaul Hossain said.

Nurul Islam and his family members attacked the killed and injured people with cleavers, iron rods and sticks when they were passing by the house of attackers at around 12:20pm, Manikganj Sadar Circle Assistant Superintendent of Police Moniruzzaman said.

Stabbed on the head and nose, Ainal Haque died while Joyal and Rafik received serious injuries.



Children collecting conches at Kuakata sea beach.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Conch smuggled from Kuakata

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Conch collected from beaches in Patuakhali and Barguna and other southern areas is being smuggled out of the country.

Collection of the nature's gift is a source of livelihood for many including school children in coastal areas of Kuakata, Sonar Char, Ruper Char, Fatrar Char, Char Gongmor in Patuakhali and Asar Char, Pathorghata areas in Barguna districts. But a sizeable portion of the decorative items is smuggled out as they have good markets abroad including some Middle East countries, sources said.

A good portion of collected and conch is smuggled to India, Myanmar and Bangkok through the Bay by skipping law enforcing agencies, the sources claimed.

Such indiscriminate collection of conch may threaten the ecology in future, the sources said.

Conch is used for making fashionable items including ornaments for women like garland, heir

clip, ear-ring, key ring and toys. These products are popular at home and abroad.

These are also being uses in large scale to produce fish and poultry feed, some traders said while talking to this correspondent.

As the items are found in plenty in Patuakhali and Barguna coasts, traders come even from Khulna, who buy those mainly for smuggling through the border, some local traders claimed.

The peak season for collection of the items is from June to October marine resources experts and fishermen said.

Conch is found in large quantities in Kuakata where the beach is wider than in other areas of the country, they said.

Collection of conch is banned under the Forest Act, which is unknown to the collectors and traders.

Housewife Amena Begum of Majhibari area in Kuakata said she sells a sack of conch at Tk 70

to 80 to traders from Khulna.

"I can collect two to three sacks of conch a day," she said.

This is also a source of earning for school children to add to their family budget.

Mohibul, a student of class five, Fatima of class three, Abia of class two said they collect the items during low tide.

"I can collect about one sack of conch a day," Mohibul said.

Pijush Kanti Hori, former chairman of Geology Department of Patuakhali Government College, said cockles make the beach hard.

The sand layer will be soft and risky if the random collection continues, he added.

Some locals said conch and cockles are smuggled through trawlers mainly at night.

On September 14, forest guards in a drive seized over 100 sacks of conch from a mechanised trawler.

A general diary was recorded with Mohipur police camp, police sources said.

13 hurt as Bangalees clash with law enforcers

Samo Odhikar blames PCJSS for Friday's alleged arson

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

At least 13 people including law enforcers were injured in a clash between police-BDR and Bengalee settlers at Mrishya Bazar in Baghaichhari upazila yesterday.

The clash ensued as both police and BDR obstructed a procession brought out by Bengalee settlers under banner of Samo Odhikar Andolan (SOA). They brought out the procession protesting arson and attack on Bengalee settlers at Charmile, about five kilometre off Mrishya Bazar Friday night, police said.

Processionists and law enforcers chased and counter chased each other injuring five BDR members, four policemen, Samo Odhikar Baghaichhari unit president Selim Bahari and three of its members. All of them were admitted to Baghaichhari Upazila Health Complex, police said.

Earlier, 14 houses were burnt to ashes by a gang of unidentified criminals at Charmile. Bengalee settlers blamed Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) for the incident. But PCJSS denied the allegations.

Two SOA activists were arrested.

4 'Islamist militants' arrested

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Police yesterday arrested four people on charge of involvement with militancy from Pabna and Gaibandha.

Police arrested three suspected activists of 'Allar Dal', a banned outfit of Islamist militants, from Chartarapur village in Pabna Sadar upazila early yesterday, reports our Pabna correspondent.

The arrestees -- Md Earul, 25, of village Awtapar in Ishwardi upazila, Rafiqul Islam Rafique, 24, and Swapan, 18, were roaming in village Chartarapur when locals caught them on suspicion and handed them to police, police said.

"As per information from locals, we guess that the arrestees might be members of Allar Dal. We are investigating the matter," Md Iqbal Shafi, officer-in-charge of

Pabna Police Station told this correspondent yesterday over phone. The arrestees will be produced to court, he said.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent adds: Police yesterday arrested an activist of banned Islamist militant outfit Allar Dal from village Thutiapur under Palashbari upazila.

The arrestee, Bipul 24, of village Mohipur in Sadallapur upazila, is an activist of Allar Dal led by Matin Mehdi and was involved in recruiting members at Mohipur for a long time, said locals who caught him and handed over to police.

During interrogation, Bipul confessed to his involvement with Allar Dal and gave important information about his associates and their activities, police said.

Most Barisal AL, BNP bigwigs away from areas during Eid

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Most of the front ranking leaders and former lawmakers in 23 constituencies in Barisal region were absent from their areas during the Eid vacation while six of them passed the holiday day in prison.

Conviction by court, police haunt in cases and conflict over reform in the parties mainly kept them away from their respective areas.

A few leaders who observed the Eid in their native areas avoided get-together programmes. They observed the Eid silently with family members and close associates. One of the reformist BNP leader --Zahiruddin Swapan--, a former lawmaker, was assaulted in a factional clash in his constituency during the Eid vacation.

On other hand, new faces who are aspirants in the planned upazila and parliamentary elections were active in their respective areas. Many of them used the occasion by giving Eid greetings to people through colourful posters and banners.

Reformist BNP leaders former minister Maj (Rtd) Hafizuddin Ahmed and former planning minister Shah Md Abul Hussein, former BNP whip Syed Shahidul Huq Jamal, Elen Bhutto and Rustam Ali Farazi were not in their areas during the Eid.

AL bigwigs Amir Hussein Amu, Tofael Ahmed Md Mahubur Rahman Talukdar were also not seen in their constituencies, sources said.

Former minister and BNP leader Mosharrar Hussein Shahjahan, party's central information and research secretary Zahiruddin Swapan, former lawmaker and Jubo Dal leader Abul Hussein Khan, former BNP lawmakers Mosharrar Hussein Mongu and Shahidul Alam Talukdar, Jatio Party (Ershad) secretary general Ruhul Amin Howladar, Jatiya Party (Nazim) leader barrister Andalib Rahman Partha and former AL lawmaker Delwar Hussein were among those who observed the Eid in their constituencies.

Former BNP minister Air Vice Marshal (retd) Alaf Hussein Chowdhury, former mayor of Barisal City Corporation and former law maker Majibor Rahman Sarwar, former BNP lawmakers Hafiz Ibrahim, Nazimuddin Alam and Matiur Rahman Talukdar, and Awami Swachshabok League secretary Pankaj Devnath, observed Eid in custody.

Former minister, lawmaker and chairman of his faction of Jatio Party Anwar Hussein Monju is out of the country. He was convicted by court.

Former chief whip and Barisal district AL secretary Abul Hasanat Abdullah, former minister Shahjahan Omar, central Jubo League leader Jahangir Kabir Nanak, and former BNP lawmaker Nurul Islam Moni is not seen in their areas since declaration of emergency.

GAS SUPPLY TO KHULNA Pipeline laying to begin soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A Tk 1,276 crore Asian Development Bank (ADB) funded project of gas pipeline installation work from Tangail to Khulna via Bheramara in Kushtia is likely to begin soon, a highly placed source of Sundarban Gas Company Limited (SGCL) here said.

Work on installation of 165 metre gas pipeline line from Tangail to Bheramara will cost Tk 664 crore while work on 1,221 kilometre gas pipeline line from Bheramara to Khulna will cost Tk 612 crore. ADB already allocated the fund, SGCL project director (PD) M Kamaluddin Ahmed said.

Power stations and industrial units will get gas on top priority basis, he said. Following gas supply, production cost in mills and factories will considerably come down, he said.

It will also revitalise the second biggest Mongla seaport of the country and export processing zone there, he further said.

খুলনা প্রকৌশল ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি
শিক্ষাবর্ষ: ২০০৮-২০০৯
খুলনা প্রকৌশল ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে ২০০৮-২০০৯ শিক্ষাবর্ষে ১ম বর্ষ বি. এস. সি. ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং কোর্সে সিভিল ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং (CE), ইলেক্ট্রিক্যাল এন্ড ইলেক্ট্রনিক ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং (EEE), মেকানিক্যাল ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং (ME), কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং (CSE), ইন্টেলিজেন্ট এন্ড কমিউনিকেশন ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং (ECE), ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং এন্ড ম্যানেজমেন্ট (IEM) বিভাগে ভর্তি হতে ইচ্ছুক প্রার্থীদের নিকট হতে ভর্তি পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের জন্য নির্ধারিত ফরম আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।