



A colourful boat race was held in the river Surma in Sylhet yesterday. Bangladesh Rowing Federation and Sylhet Divisional Sports Association organised the event which was sponsored by Pubali Bank Limited.

PHOTO: MAMUN HASAN

'Rats damage around 15 lakh tonnes food crops a year'

BSS, Rajshahi

Speakers at a function here yesterday said rats damage food crops of 12-15 lakh metric tons every year hampering the government's food security effort.

Terming rat the number one pest to the food grains as well as the vegetables, they underscored the need for involving more people, including schoolboys and girls, in rat killing drive.

They made this observation while addressing the inaugural session of a regional

rat killing drive and prize distribution ceremony among the laudable contributors organised by the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) at Paba upazila auditorium.

Lawmaker Meraj Uddin Mollah spoke at the programme as the chief guest, while Paba Upazila Chairman Mokbul Hossain spoke as the special guest.

Chaired by DAE Additional Director Rabindra Kumar Majumder, the session was also addressed by Regional Deputy Director Akhterul

Afghan, Deputy Director, Rajshahi Braja Hari Das, Deputy Director, Bogra Rustam Ali Mondal, Paba Upazila Agriculture Officer Ansar Ali and prize recipient farmer Sonatan Hembrom.

The speakers said the present government has been working relentlessly for the development of farmers and agriculture as well, urging all concerned to supplement the government effort collectively.

A pair of rats can give birth to about 3,000 offspring yearly and the rat is the individual

and national problem. So, the rat-killing drive is not harmful to the ecological balance, they added.

They urged the field-level officials and staffs concerned to motivate all the members of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) schools and others concerned to take part in the drive so that it could be succeeded.

On the occasion, eight farmers, three DAE officials and an education institute were given prizes as recognition of their contribution to the rat-killing drive.

Colourful boat race in Surma

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Thousands of people converged on both the banks of the river Surma and on the Keane bridge in Sylhet city yesterday to enjoy a colourful boat race, a traditional sport in riverine Bangladesh.

The regatta was jointly organised by Bangladesh Rowing Federation and Sylhet Divisional Sports Association. Pubali Bank Limited sponsored the annual event that began in 2008.

A total of eight teams took part in the boat race competition.

Gulam Sarwar's group of Gowainghat upazila became first, while Nurul Islam's team from Companiganj upazila and Arash Ali member's team of Sadar upazila became second and third respectively.

Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran formally inaugurated the event at 3:00pm in Chandnight area on the Surma.

Sadar Upazila Chairman Ashfaqur Ahmed, Rowing Federation Vice-President Bahauddin Ahmed, District Awami League unit President ANM Shafiqul Haque and Pubali Bank Regional Manager Farid Uddin Ahmed were present as the special guests.

The programme was chaired by Acting Divisional Commissioner Md Fazlur Rahman, also president of the divisional sports association.

The SCC mayor handed over prizes to the winners in the evening.

Illegal nets seized

UNB, Naogaon

Fisheries Department on Friday seized 74 pieces of current and bigsize 'bera' nets from Gandibeeel Mansur Jalmahal in sadar upazila.

Being tipped off that some dishonest fishermen were catching fish with the illegal nets, a team of local Fisheries Department conducted a drive in the waterbody.

Extend long-term support to tackle climate change

Razzaque urges donors

UNB, Dhaka

Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdur Razzaque yesterday urged the donor agencies to provide long-term supports to Bangladesh to tackle climate change impacts and ensure its sustainable development.

"The government seeks long-term financial support, not a little amount of donation, to tackle the climate change impacts," he said recalling Cyclone Sidi's devastating experience.

The minister was addressing a seminar at the LGED auditorium in the city as the

chief guest. Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) and Brac Development Institute (BDI) jointly organised the seminar titled 'Extreme poverty and graduation dynamics'.

Razzaque, also an agronomist, said the government has taken a long-term strategy to tackle the growing problems of climate change in the country.

He urged the donor agencies to extend their support for the country's economic activities, including employment generation.

Later, talking to reporters, Razzaque said the price of rice

might show an upward trend as it depends on the market situation. "But, the government will intervene if the whole sellers want to destabilise the market. 'Anyway, the government has adequate stock of rice."

Replying to a question, the food minister told the reporters that the government will distribute 26 lakh tons of food grains under its various programmes to ensure food security in the country.

"An amount of Tk 1,500 crore will be spent on buying the food-grains under different social safety net programmes," he added.

UPDF leader shot dead in Khagrachhari

UNB, Khagrachhari

A leader of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) was shot dead allegedly by his rivals at Battalipara village in Laxmichhari upazila in Khagrachhari on Friday night.

The deceased was identified as Roi Thoi Marma, 45, central leader of UPDF.

Local sources said rivals swooped on house of Roi Thoi Marma at about 8:30pm and

fired on him, leaving him dead on the spot.

Police went to the spot yesterday, recovered the body and sent it to Sadar hospital morgue for autopsy.

The reason behind the killing could not be known immediately.

UPDF activists yesterday brought out a procession in the upazila headquarters demanding arrest and punishment of the killers.

Ctg Muslim School Eid reunion Oct 9

METRO DESK

Chittagong Government Muslim High School will celebrate its centenary programme on December 25 and 26 at the school premise in Chittagong, says a press release.

Dhaka chapter of former students association of the school organise an Eid reunion followed by dinner and musical soiree on October 9 with a view to facilitate registration process and sponsorship for the programme.

Member secretary of the association Mobin-Ul-Hoque (cellphone: 0171762495) has requested all concerned to attend the programme.

Crushing in sugar mills starts in Nov

BSS, Dhaka

Crushing of sugarcane in 15 state-run sugar mills in the country will begin next month, Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation (BSFIC) sources said.

BSFIC has fixed a target to produce 1,01,525 metric tons of sugar by crushing 13.30 lakh metric tons of sugarcane this fiscal. The rate of sugar production is expected to be 7.63 percent.

The crushing target was 22.72 lakh metric tons while target of sugar production was 1,73,100 metric tons during the last fiscal.

BSFIC has proposed that the sugar mills will buy per maund (37 kg) sugarcane at Tk 66 while the rate was Tk 60 last year, sources said. The price of sugarcane has been fixed so that the farmers can get fair price.

This year sugarcane was cultivated on 1,28,580 hectares of land under the management of the BSFIC



A mobile court of BRTA realises fines and files cases against owners and drivers of vehicles without valid documents at Manik Mia Avenue in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

JS session today

FROM PAGE 1 likely to be passed during the session.

The third session of the ninth parliament started on September 7 without the main opposition BNP and was adjourned on September 15.

Opposition Chief Whip Zaitul Abidin Faroque yesterday told The Daily Star that their return to the House is uncertain.

"We will consult with the party chairperson today or tomorrow on the issue. The BNP parliamentary party will hold a meeting on the matter if the party chief asks us to," said Faroque.

On September 29, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia said the ruling party has not made seating arrangement for the opposition in the House.

Party Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain also alleged on Friday that the environment of the House is not right yet for their return.

A number of senior BNP leaders including Salauddin Quader Chowdhury recently told The Daily Star that the party chairperson is not inter-

ested in returning to the House.

However, a major portion of BNP lawmakers, especially the young MPs, have expressed their desire to join the House.

The BNP-led opposition has been boycotting House proceedings since April 7, the concluding day of the first session of this parliament. The BNP made a number of demands including increasing number of seats in the front row of the House and ensuring security of its chief.

Prime Minister and Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina and even Speaker Abdul Hamid alleged that BNP is boycotting parliament not because of the seating issue but the dispute centring its internal sitting order.

Addressing an all-party reception at a New York hotel on September 27, Hasina urged the BNP to return to parliament for the sake of democracy and reminded Khaleda of the consequences of the 1/11 political episode.

Salahuddin

FROM PAGE 16

The dynamic BFF boss was the popular choice to replace an unimpressive Nepalese Ganesh Thapa and it took only five minutes for the Congress to vote Salahuddin for a four-year term.

Thapa has been holding the reins of the eight-nation football body since 1999. Salahuddin took over the BFF presidency in April last year at a time when the popular game in the country was struggling. He then promised to bring football back to the field for ten months in a year and under his able leadership the game is slowly but surely moving upward.

The awarding of the eight-nation SAFF Championship to Dhaka in December and Salahuddin's ascendance to SAFF presidency are the results of his relentless efforts both at home and on international circuit.

The All India Football Federation general secretary Alberto Colaco has been elected as SAFF general secretary.

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