

Unfair act of officials deprives farmers of fair price of wheat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Farmers have been deprived of the 'fair price' fixed by the government as food department of Domar upazila purchased wheat from giant food traders ignoring decision of upazila food purchase committee to procure wheat directly from farmers.

Termining it a gross irregularity, Domar upazila parishad Chairman Abdur Razzak Bosunia, also president of upazila food purchasing committee, and other elected public representatives of the upazila have demanded investigation into the matter.

The monthly meeting of Domar upazila parishad on April 26 decided that the food department of the upazila would purchase newly harvested wheat at government fixed price directly from farmers so that they could get fair price, said Domar upazila parishad Vice Chairman Abdur Jabbar.

He said the upazila food procurement committee asked all the union parishad (UP) chairmen to issue slips to genuine wheat farmers of their own area so that the food department officials could procure the grain from them at the government rate.

But ignoring the decision, the upazila

food department officials procured the total targeted wheat secretly from the big food traders of the upazila on the night of April 28, the upazila vice chairman said.

The authorities set a target to procure 125 tonnes of wheat from Domar upazila under the government's food procurement drive aimed at ensuring fair price to genuine farmers, sources said.

The government rate for a maund (40 kg) of wheat is Tk 780 but in the open markets farmers are compelled to sell it for much lower prices -- from Tk 575 to 625.

"As per government directive, wheat should be procured from the farmers from April 7 to May 7. But Domar upazila controller of food in the monthly meeting of upazila parishad on April 26 hurriedly passed a decision to complete wheat purchase from farmers within April 29," said upazila Chairman Abdur Razzak.

"Farmers have been deprived of fair price as wheat was purchased from big food traders. We informed the local law-

maker of the matter," he added.

Poor farmers have been deprived due to the intentional favour to big wheat traders, said Domar municipality Mayor

Al Azhar Hossain.

He demanded investigation into the matter.

Denying the allegation of corruption or irregularities in purchasing wheat, Domar upazila Controller of Food Abul Kashem told newsmen, "The decision of upazila food purchase committee did not have any word directing purchase of wheat from farmers. Besides, the concerned UP chairmen failed to provide slips of genuine farmers in time."

Upazila Chairman Abdur Razzak refuted the claim of food controller, saying, "The upazila food procurement committee made clear direction to food officials to purchase wheat from farmers. Otherwise, why should the purchase committee direct the concerned UP chairmen to issue slips of genuine farmers?"

When contacted, Domar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Abu Raihan Mia said, "The upazila chairman concerned is president of the food purchase committee that is empowered to take proper decision in this regard. We have not yet got any complaint from any corner."

BCL-JUBO LEAGUE 'TYRANNY' 5 Khagrachhari journo assaulted in 10 months

Two more threatened

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

Jubo League and Chhatra League men assaulted five local journalists and threatened two others for reporting on their illegal activities like extortion and tender manipulation in different upazilas of the district from June 2009 to March this year.

Immediately after the incidents, the victims filed four general diaries with the police stations concerned, but the attackers are moving freely under the nose of the law enforcers.

Panchhari Chhatra league activists led by upazila unit President Nikhil Chowdhury assaulted Khagrachhari correspondent of the Inqilab AHM Faruq at Fatema Nagar under the upazila on June 23 last year for publishing a report on extortion by BCL men.

On July 27, Jubo League activists led by district unit member Partho Pratim Tripura attacked Kafil Mahmud, district correspondent of News Today. He received head injuries and was under treatment at Khagrachhari Adhunik Sadar Hospital for over 15 days.

Jubo League men led by their leader Rampru Chai Marma assaulted district correspondent of Dainik Janata Mohammad Nurul Alam on November 14 following a report published in the daily on tender manipulation. He also took treatment at Khagrachhari Adhunik Sadar Hospital.

On January 22, Manikchhari Jubo League leaders and cadres led by upazila unit Vice-

President Mintu Tajul Islam alias Babul assaulted Mintu Marma, Khagrachhi correspondent of Chittagong based Bangla daily "Suprovat Bangladesh", and Shahidul Islam, district correspondent of Dainik Dinkal, at Manikchhari Bazar for publishing reports in the newspapers on looting materials of a flood-damaged bailey bridge by the Jubo League men in the upazila.

The leaders of the ruling Awami League's associate bodies also threatened Dainik Desh Bangla correspondent Saiful Islam and Chittagong based Dainik Azadi correspondent Mohammad Ali for publishing news on illegal toll collection by the activists of the two organisations in Mach this year.

Termining the incidents unexpected, Chhatra League district unit President Mongshi Prue Chowdhury Apu said they are investigating the matters and will take stern actions against the party men involved.

Contacted, local lawmaker Joytirindra Lal Tripura said he asked the law enforcers to take legal actions against the attackers. Acting Police Superintendent Mohammad Amir Jafar told this correspondent that the incidents are under investigation.

Khagrachhari Press Club President Ataur Rahman Chowdhury and Reporters' Unit President Chaitowai Marma have demanded immediate arrest of and exemplary punishment to the attackers. Otherwise, they threatened to launch an agitation programme.

Bogra BNP calls 8-hour hartal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

BNP has called an eight-hour hartal in Bogra from 6:00am today to protest the killing of its leader Zakir Hossain in an attack at Natore on his way to the Wednesday's grand rally in Rajshahi.

A BNP convoy from Bogra came under attack at Singra of Natore on the day that left Zakir Hossain, joint convener of Garidah union unit under Sherpur upazila of Bogra, and many others injured.

Zakir succumbed to his injuries on way to the hospital in Bogra town.

Jubo League Bogra district unit General Secretary Sagar Kumar Roy said they have no programme to resist the hartal. Neither AL nor Chhatra League has taken up any programme against the hartal.

Additional police have been deployed in the district town to maintain law and order during the hartal.

Rival AL men vandalise podium in Jessore

A CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Intra-party rivals vandalised a podium raised for a meeting of local Awami League and blocked the motorcade of lawmaker Khan Tipu Sultan in Monirampur upazila of Jessore yesterday.

Locals and police said a rival group led by upazila AL member Habib Khan stopped the lawmaker's motorcade by putting logs on the road in Khataltola area at noon when the MP was heading towards Moshimnagar to attend an extended meeting of the union AL.

Enraged at not getting invitation to join the programme at Moshimnagar Bazar, Habib's men ransacked the dais and also attacked the house of local AL activist Abul Hossain.

However, the road barricade was withdrawn at around 1:00pm following a negotiation between the rival groups.

Robbers loot house injuring 4 in Bagerhat

UNB, Bagerhat

Robbers looted valuables worth Tk 4 lakh injuring four members of a house at Kashimpur village in Sadar upazila early Friday.

Police quoting locals said a gang numbering 10/12 entered the house of Mostafa Howladar breaking open the door late at night.

They took the house members hostage at gunpoint, beat them up and looted Tk 45,000 in cash, gold ornaments and other valuables worth Tk 4 lakh and fled the scene safely.

The injured are Mostafa Howladar, 50, his two daughters-Zakia Begum, 30, and Begum Khanam, 22, and son Ratan, 26.



Upazila administration seizes three maunds (around 114 kg) of carnivorous piranha as it was being taken for sale in the market from Eidga Dighi pond near Sholsna Bazar in Faridganj upazila of Chandpur district yesterday. Earlier the prime minister directed the authorities concerned to take action against cultivation and sale of the foreign species that poses threat to fishes and other aquatic lives.

27 high schools in Lalmonirhat have no headmaster

A CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Twenty-seven secondary schools in different upazilas of Lalmonirhat have been running without headmasters for long, hampering proper education of students of these institutions.

Local sources said the teachers working as acting headmasters are mostly inefficient and as a result, they cannot properly carry out their administrative works.

The posts of headmaster lie vacant in five schools each in Lalmonirhat sadar and Aditmari upazilas, four in Kaliganj, seven in Hatibandha, and six in Patgram upazilas, sources at the district education office said.

Most of the acting headmasters lack knowledge about administrative work, as they are ignorant of the rules and regulations of the education board, alleged some teachers of different schools.

Three sued on war crime charges

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Saikhira

Son of a martyred freedom fighter on Thursday sued three alleged collaborators of Pakistan occupation forces on charge of killing his father and looting, arson in Shyamnagar upazila in 1971.

The accused are Shahbaz Ali Gazi, son of Karim Boksa Gazi and Mahmud Ali Gazi and Hossain Ali Gazi, sons of Shahbaz Ali Gazi of village Chhotokupot in Shyamnagar upazila, court sources said.

Complainant GM Ishaque Ali, son of martyred freedom fighter Abdul Mannan of village Chhotokupot in Shyamnagar upazila filed the case with the Judicial Magistrate's Court accusing the aforesaid three of family of killing his father at village

Baduria Mollapara in Shyamnagar upazila in 1971.

In the petition, the complainant stated that on the fateful day his father Abdul Mannan came to house to meet his family members. On getting information, the accused attacked the house and looted cash and other valuables and torched the house.

Later they tied the eyes of Mannan with a piece of cloth and took him to the bank of Mollapara canal and chopped him to death on the last day of Bangla month of Bhadra.

Judge Abu Syeed of the Judicial Magistrate's Court accepted the petition and ordered Shyamnagar police station officer-in-Charge (OC) to investigate the matter and take necessary legal action against the accused.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS



This young barking deer, hurt during its capture from Pahar Barshijura village near Moulvibazar town on Friday noon, succumbed to its injuries yesterday, as attempts to heal it at Moulvibazar Veterinary Hospital failed.

Pirates loot three trawlers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Pirates looted fishes, fuel and nets worth about Tk 20 lakh from three fishing trawlers in the Bay on Friday evening. Six fishermen were injured as they tried to resist the gang. The injured are Joyanal, 40, Shah Alam, 30, Zakir, 28, Abdur Rahim, 35, Eusuf, 34 and Tofazzel, 32. They all hail from different villages under Kalapra and Galachipa upazilas in the district. The trawlers came under attack while returning to Kuakata from deep sea after catching hilsa. Police and injured fishermen said, three fishing trawlers FB Salauddin, FB Mayer Doa and FB Ferdousi were crossing Mudobi channel when at least 20/25 pirates on two trawlers attacked them and looted nets, fish and fuel.

2 rescued, trafficker held

A CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

BDR yesterday afternoon rescued two young women and arrested an alleged woman trafficker from Benapole transport stand while they were being taken to India. BDR sources said, acting on a tip off, a team of BDR raided the spot and arrested Khadiza Khatun and rescued Hayatunnessa, 18, daughter of Haider Ali of Bhabnagar village under Ghurudah police station in Jhenidah district and Sabina Khatun, 19, daughter of Arshad Ali of Chanduria village under Sharsha upazila. Khadiza is the wife of Amir Ali of Bhabnagar. The two rescued women said the traffickers took Tk 50,000 from each of them promising to give better job in India.

Human chain in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

A human chain was formed on Dhaka-Sylhet highway at Chandura point in Brahmanbaria yesterday demanding setting up of the upazila headquarters of newly formed Bioyngar upazila at Mirzapur. At around 9:00 am, the people of Mirzapur union headed by Mirzapur union parishad chairman Haji Akhter Hossain formed the human chain. The participants said as per office order, the headquarters of newly formed Bioyngar upazila was to be set up at Mirzapur. But an influential group is trying to set it up at Milon Bazaar.



Partial view of the Buddhist stupa-shrine excavated from thousand-year-old Bowalar Mandop at Sandalpur in Birampur upazila of Dinajpur district.

A unique thing of the past relives history

HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU, Bogra

Ecological archaeologists of Jahangirnagar University (JU) have excavated a unique Buddhist stupa-shrine from about thousand-year-old 'Bowalar Mandop' at Sandalpur in Birampur upazila of Dinajpur recently.

Much of the original features of the structure has been lost with passage of time but its unique ground plan can still be observed, said Swadhin Sen, assistant professor, Department of Archaeology at JU, and director of the excavation team.

On the basis of pottery assemblage it is thought that the structure was built around 9th -- 10th century and went through four construction and reconstruction phases. A drain and a large storage jar are other notable finds from the structural remains.

According to Swadhin Sen, postholes on the structure suggest that the stupa-cum-

shrine at the centre was covered with a thatched roof.

"We have inferred with a considerable degree of certainty that the excavated brick-built structure lying on the bank of an abandoned channel of Karatoa River system was a Buddhist stupa that was later turned into a Buddhist shrine," he said.

The structure was built on a three-tier platform, as Dr Arun Nag, reader of Bishwabharati University and an eminent scholar on Eastern Indian Architecture, analysed.

The first tier has brick-built chambers or cells that is commonly known as cellular architecture in Bengal, Swadhin Sen said.

Prof Dipak Ranjan Das of Calcutta University and Prof Mozammel Hoque of the Department of Archaeology of Jahangirnagar University have supported the idea that the structure is a Buddhist stupa-shrine, said Swadhin Sen.



Residents of Sylhet city join a colourful procession led by Sylhet City Corporation Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran yesterday to celebrate Sylhet-born Rushnara Ali's election as a member of British parliament.