

Long queue for OMS rice, many go empty-handed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Many people are returning empty-handed from open market sale (OMS) outlets in the district as demand has greatly exceeded the supply of rice.

OMS dealer of Library Bazar area Md Ashraf Ali said, "I receive one thousand kg rice a day to sell among 200 people. The allotted amount usually gets finished within an hour or so of opening the shop at 9:00am. Still many people wait in queue as we are supposed to

stay open till 4:00 in the evening."

Md Abu Sufian, a dealer at Mohonganj Bazar of Bera upazila told the same tale.

"The number of people at my shop is two to three times bigger than the quantity of rice I get for distribution," he said.

The same situation seems to prevail in all 68 OMS shops of the district.

"I was waiting in the line since 5:30am. But the dealer says today's allotment has already been sold. I don't know how to feed my family

in the next two days as the shop would remain closed on Friday," said Begum Khatun, a 60-year-old woman of village Chatiani.

She was returning empty handed from the OMS outlet at Library Bazar yesterday.

Atiar Rahman, a day-labourer of the same village however expressed his happiness as he could collect 5 kg rice from the shop at about 10:00am even though he had to stand in queue from early morning.

The village people are also suffering largely

because of abject poverty. Most of them cannot afford to buy rice from open market because of high price.

There are 68 OMS dealers in nine upazilas of the district. They sell rice at the government fixed rate of Tk 24 per kg for the variety that sells at Tk 34-36 in the retail outlets.

Mayna Khatun, of village Betbaria in Bera municipality said, "I stand in queue everyday to collect the cheaper rice but unfortunately I do not get it on many occasions. Many people, like me, return empty handed despite waiting in line from very early morning."

District Food Controller (DC food) Md Abdur Rakib admitted that the allotment of rice is too meagre compared to the demand in the district.

"As per the government order we are permitted to provide each dealer with one metric tonne of rice for distribution among 200 poor people but the allotment is too small compared to the requirement. The retail market price of rice is still very high and poor people are rushing to the OMS shops," he said.

"We are taking steps to increase the allotment so that the dealers can cope with the demand," Abdur Rakib added.



PHOTO: STAR

People in a long queue wait for their turn before an OMS outlet for coarse rice in Bera upazila in Pabna. But many of them return empty-handed as supply of rice is too meagre compared to the demand.

2 killed, 10 hurt in trawler capsiz

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Two passengers were killed and 10 others injured as their trawler capsized in the River Kala-Bader Wednesday night.

Police and locals said, more than 50 passengers from Charfessong upazila of Bhola district were going to attend a three-day Charmonai religious function in Barisal Sadar upazila.

When the trawler reached near Laharhat launch ghat, a sand-laden cargo, MV Bahok, hit the trawler from behind.

Within minutes the trawler capsized in the Kala-Bader River.

Local people and fishermen rushed to the spot and rescued most of passengers.

Bodies of two missing passengers were later recovered from the river at about 9:00 pm.

Distribution of VGF cards through lottery protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Women union parishad (UP) members and the ultra-poor on Wednesday staged a protest against distribution of VGF (Vulnerable Group Feeding) cards through lottery in Nawabganj upazila of the district.

Nine women UP members and about 1,000 ultra-poor villagers of different unions under Nawabganj upazila formed a human chain in front of the upazila parishad complex demanding cancellation of the VGF cards distributed through lottery.

In a memorandum submitted to the deputy commissioner on

February 22, the UP members alleged the ruling party men took advantage of the lottery system introduced by the local lawmaker. They demanded withdrawal of the VGF cards and ensure proper distribution of those through UP chairmen and members.

Sources said around 1,948 VGF cards have been distributed in nine unions of the upazila through lottery and most of the recipients are from among the ruling party men who are financially sound.

When asked, lawmaker Dr A z i z u l H a q u e Chowdhury said he introduced lottery system to bring transparency in VGF

card distribution system.

The women UP members said they repeatedly requested the lawmaker to withdraw the cards distributed through lottery, but to no effect. The VGF cards were distributed in exchange for money, they alleged.

Haresa Banu 20, wife Mizanur Rahman of Jagannathpur village under Golapganj union, said she failed to get the VGF card as she could not give money to the ruling party men.

The ultra-poor and women UP members also submitted a memorandum to prime minister through UNO Md Abdul Motaleb Sarker.

14 Hizb-ut Tawhid men held

A CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Police on Wednesday arrested 14 suspected members of Islamist outfit Hizb-ut Tawhid from Bushpara area of the town.

On secret information, a team raided one Saidur Rahman's house around midnight and captured them along with 36 double disc video CDs, 118 Islamic books, 4000 leaflets on different issues and 22 calendars.

The arrestees are -- Saidul Islam Habib, 50, son of Harun Uddin Sarker of village Hatila of Tangail district; Md. Fazlul Haque, 56, son of Late Abdul Hakim of village Bhangra of the same district; Md. Aminul Islam, 26, son of Harun-or-Rashid of village Kumulli of Tangail; Md. Sumon Khan, 25, son of Sumeju Khan of village Batulia of Tangail; Md. Anwar Hossain, 25, son of Jamal Hossain of village Ramkhali of Tangail; Md. Khokon Mia, 35, son of Shahjahan Mia of Battola of Jamalpur town; Arif Hossain, 24, son of Nur Jamal Hossain of village

Rampur of Tangail; Rafiqul Islam, 33, son of Saidul Islam of Bushpara of Jamalpur town; Aminul Islam Mintu, 33, son of Amjad Hossain of village Bonderbari of Jamalpur; Md. Arju Mia, 39, son of late Abdul Jabber of Bazrapur of Jamalpur town, Md. Naom Al-Islam, 20, son of Md. Anwar Hossain of village Bashtoli of Tangail; Md.

The same day, police arrested another member of the outfit from Satkhira

judge count premises.

Arrestee Moslem Ali, 41, of Debhata upazila was distributing leaflets and jadhi books inviting people to join their 'uprising'.

Police recovered six books including 'Dazzal' written by Humayun Khan Panni, founder of the outfit, besides a CD and the leaflets, from their possession.



PHOTO: STAR

The arrested activists of Islamist outfit Hizb-ut Tawhid line up in front of Jamalpur Sadar Police Station yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

A textile mill is releasing toxic waste into Louhajang River for long. Although the matter was brought to the notice of the authorities, no step has been taken yet to save the river from the mindless pollution. The picture was taken from Khudirampur pont under Tangail Sadar upazila yesterday.

Demonic teacher!

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A class four student of Porabari Government Primary school in Benapole became a victim of his teacher's savagery on Tuesday.

Habib, 9, son of Akbar Ali of Porabari village, is now undergoing treatment at Jessor Queen's Hospital.

Mujibur Rahman, a teacher of the school, slapped and punched Habib after his leg touched the leg of the teacher's daughter while entering the classroom in the morning.

After Habib fell to the ground, Mujibur started kicking the boy. Seeing the boy vomiting blood, other teachers of the school rescued him and took him to a nearby doctor who referred him to the hospital in Jessor town.

Alhaj Bazlur Rahman, president of the school managing committee, said the teacher, Mujibur Rahman, severely beat up three other students of the school in the past.

Mujibur damaged the eardrum of class three student Shampa. Besides, he seriously injured two other students- Helal and Shimul in the same way, he said.

"This time we will take action against him", he added.

Upazila Education Officer Akbar Hossain assured the father of the victim of taking necessary steps against the teacher.

Expat's house 'torched'

UNB, Sylhet

Criminals yesterday allegedly set fire to the house of a local BNP leader and USA expatriate at Kurar Bazaar in Bishnibazar upazila.

Police quoting family sources said a gang torched the house of Lokman Ahmed at around 1:00am damaging property and valuables worth several lakh taka.

On information, fire service personnel rushed to the spot and doused the flame with the help of local people.

Police suspected that the house was set on fire due to previous enmity.

EXPLOSIVES CASE AGAINST JMB MEN

Warrant against 6 PWs for skipping court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A court here yesterday issued a warrant against a former deputy commissioner and five others as they failed to appear before the court despite repeated notices to give deposition in a case.

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40 'land mines' recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Police on Wednesday recovered forty 'land mines' that were probably brought by the occupation forces for use during the Liberation War in 1971.



PHOTO: STAR

The 'land mines' and the two boxes recovered yesterday from a pond at Aruakandi village in Jhenidah district.

They recovered the mines from Aruakandi village under Sadar upazila.

SI Abdur Rashid at Narikel Baria outpost said, one Moshiur Rahman of the village on Wednesday morning found two boxes near a pond.

They were wrapped with polythene. At first he did not disclose it to others and took the two boxes to his house thinking there might be something precious in them.

But after breaking those open he found a few bomb like things. He got afraid and told this to his neighbours.

On information, police reached the spot at 9:30 pm and recovered the mines.

After examination by the army it will be known whether they are active or not, Rashid said.

Police Superintendent Rezaul Karim of Jhenidah said that the mines were probably used during the Liberation War in 1971.

The Pakistani occupation forces might have thrown them in the pond of Aruakandi village, he said adding that the mines might be active and powerful.

Experts will be able to say more after examination, he said.

Outlaw murdered, another held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

An outlaw was murdered in the district yesterday while another was arrested from Pangsha in Rajbari on Tuesday.

A hardened operative of outlawed PBCP Lalpata faction was hacked to death at Khairsuti village in Sadar upazila yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Md Abdul Aziz, 40, son of Komor Uddin of village Shibpur in Atghoria upazila.

Police said, following information by locals, they rushed to Khairsuti village at about 9:30am and recovered the body from the spot.

Officer-in-charge of Pabna Sadar police station said Aziz was hacked to death by rival and later dumped there.

Quoting family members, the OC said that the victim went missing from his residence a few days ago.

His rivals might have killed him over internal feud, the OC said. Aziz was a listed criminal and accused in several cases including for murder, he added.

Earlier on Tuesday, a joint team of Rajbari and Pabna police arrested a top operative of outlawed PBCP Lalpata faction.

The arrestee is Kismat Ali, 30, son of Moslem Mondol of village Char

Ramnagar of Pangsha in Rajbari district.

Officer-in-charge of Bera police station Sheikh Zillur Rahman said, following a secret information, a joint team of Rajbari and Bera police raided the remote char area of Pangsha at night where Kismat was hiding.

Police arrested him and brought him to Bera police station on Wednesday, the OC said.

The arrestee is the prime accused in the case for killing three unarmed policemen at Dhalarchar on 20 July, 2010.