

Dense fog damaging boro seedlings

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

The ongoing cold wave and foggy weather is causing damage to boro seedbeds, much to the worry of farmers in the district.

Boro seedlings are turning whitish or yellowish due to the adverse weather and production may be hampered if it continues for long, said farmers in different villages.

"My 21-day-old BR-28 seedlings have turned yellowish due to severe cold and fog for the last few days. We will have to suffer great loss if our seedlings are damaged totally," said Abdul Goni, 45, a farmer at Rajpur village in Sadar upazila.

Taher Ali, 52, another farmer of the same village, said, "I cultivated boro seedlings on 20 decimal of land. If the seedlings are totally damaged I will not be able to cultivate boro this season."

Habibur Rahman, chairman of Mogholhat union parishad in Sadar upazila said the boro farmers in his union became worried as daylong dense fog coupled with severe cold

affected their seedlings.

"My boro seedlings on 40 decimal land are becoming yellow as they are not getting adequate sun due to dense fog and cold," said Khitish Chandra Barmon, 48, a farmer at Mogholhat village.

The Department of Agriculture Extension in Lalmonirhat has set a target of cultivating boro on 66 thousand hectares of land including high yielding varieties on 41 thousand hectares, hybrid on 12 thousand hectares and local varieties on 13 thousand hectares.

Farmers begin preparation of seedbeds in mid-November.

"My office has received reports that boro seedlings in many areas are turning yellowish due to dense fog and severe cold. We, however, hope that boro cultivation will not be affected much as the temperature is rising," said Lalmonirhat Sadar Upazila Agriculture Officer Mohammad Nuruzzaman.

He suggested covering the seedbeds with polythene to save them from cold and fog.

Convict flees court on hearing verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A convict fled the trial room of divisional speedy trial tribunal yesterday immediately after hearing the verdict in a rape and murder case.

Tribunal judge Dilip Kumar Devnath earlier sentenced six people to life imprisonment in a sensational case for killing a teenage girl after rape.

The convicts are: Shah Alam, Fotu Miah and Anu Miah of village Baralitila, Abdul Ahad *alias* Ahad and Ripon Miah and his brother Shipon Miah of village Purbo Kalenga under Komolganj upazila in Moulvibazar district. Among them, Shipon and Anu are still at large.

According to the prosecution, Ripon Miah had a relationship with the teenage daughter of poor woodseller Zainal Abedin of Purba Kalenga village. Ripon became annoyed when the girl's father told him not to come to his house any more.

Ripon allured the girl and took her to Borshijora Eco Park in Moulvibazar on 17 November of 2009. There he, along with others, raped the girl before hacking her to death.

Police caught four accused, all of whom secured bail from the High Court. They appeared before the court yesterday too. But on hearing the judgement yesterday afternoon, Ahad managed to flee the courtroom.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE FAIR AT SCHOOLS



PHOTO: STAR

Two students of Rangamati Government Girls' High School receive prizes for their good performance in the 'role play' session.

Learners of five more schools take part

STAR NATIONAL DESK

English language fairs held under English in Schools (EIS) programme, a joint initiative of The Daily Star and mobile operator Robi, saw lively participation of young learners at five high schools of Rangamati, Mymensingh and Barisal districts yesterday.

Around 200 students of three schools--Rangamati Government High School, Rangamati Government Girls' High School and Monoghar High school--eagerly took part in different competitions at the English language fair held at the auditorium of Rangamati Government Girls' High School, reports our correspondent.

Sarit Kumar Chakma, headmaster of Rangamati Girls' High School, inaugurated the fair as chief guest at around 11:00am.

After watching Lion King, a globally renowned movie, the students spontaneously responded to questions in English.

Later, they participated in other events including situation-based question-answer session, extempore speech, role-play and vocabulary practice.

Ripayan Barua, area manager of Robi, distributed prizes among the winners of different competitions at the end of the programme.

The students also formed an English language club at their respective schools.

In Mymensingh, over 100 students of Nazrul Academy at Darirampur in Trishal upazila took part in different competitions at the English language fair held at the institution, reports our Mymensingh correspondent.

Family members of the students and teachers also joined the festival titled "Safalyo Ashbei (success is

part in spot quiz, vocabulary test, one-word question, extempore speech and role play.

Nasiruddin Hawlader, headmaster of the school attended the programme as the chief guest. Adcomm representatives Imran Hossain and Rashif Rahman were present.

The students also entertained the audience by reciting poems, telling jokes and singing songs.

After the events, prizes were awarded to the winning students and they formed an English language club.

The three-year EIS programme, initiated two years ago to promote English learning in secondary schools, covers seven lakh students in one thousand schools, including 317 government and 683 non-government ones, across the country.

Under the initiative, three complimentary copies of The Daily Star, with a special page on English lessons prepared by the Centre for Languages of Brac University and coordinated by the Ministry of Education, are given to each of one thousand schools five days a week.

Adcomm Ltd is working as the creative and event partner of the English language fairs.



a must).

Following screening of Lion King, the students participated in spot quiz, vocabulary test, one-word question and quick questions--all based on the movie. Several students took part in extempore speech on different topics and role-play.

Our Barisal correspondent adds: More than 100 students of Mahamudjan Madhyamik Bidyalaya in Muladi upazila of the district participated in the English language fair at the school auditorium.

A movie was screened at the fair and students took

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS

Youth jailed for stalking

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A mobile court on Tuesday night sentenced a young man to one year imprisonment for sexually harassing a schoolgirl at Chhoto Gorail village in Harirampur upazila. The stalker is Julfikar Rahman Sabuj, 28, of the village. Shawkat Ali, officer in-charge of Harirampur police station, said Sabuj used to harass a female student of class ten on her way to coaching class for the last six months. On information, police arrested the stalker from the spot at about 12:00pm on Tuesday and handed him over to the court led by Upazila Nirbahi Officer Apurba Kumer Mandal.

Man's body recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narail

Police recovered the body of an elderly man from Debipur terminal of Noboganga River in Salamabad union of Kalia upazila on Tuesday. The deceased, Ohiduzzaman Biswas, 50, of Sotfa village in Gopalganj, went missing since December 15, said Motiar Rahman, officer in-charge of Kalia police station. On information, police recovered the body from the spot on Tuesday afternoon and sent it to Narail Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy, the OC added.

Construction worker killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A construction worker was electrocuted at a bazar in Pirganj upazila on Tuesday night. The victim is Robiul Islam, 27, son of Khoirat Ali of Jogotha village in the upazila. Police said Robiul came in contact with a live wire when he was carrying iron rods on the roof of Hafezia Madrasa at Pirganj Bazar around 4:00pm. Later, the victim was admitted to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital in critical condition where he died at about 8:00pm.



PHOTO: STAR

A mobile court on Tuesday raided a wholesale fish market and seized a pick-up van with 500 kilograms of harmful Piranha in Srimongal upazila town of Moulvibazar district. However, the owner of the van managed to flee the scene.



PHOTO: STAR

Rapid Action Battalion arrests Mazharul Islam *alias* Mazhar, member of ward No 3 of Motmura union parishad in Gangni upazila under Meherpur district yesterday, on charge of extortion identifying himself as an outlaw.

Outlaw 'in guise of' UP member held with arms

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishitia

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Meherpur yesterday arrested a union parishad (UP) member who had allegedly been extorting people identifying himself as regional leader of an outlawed party for long.

The arrestee, Mazharul Islam *alias* Mazhar, is member of Ward-3 of Motmura union parishad in Gangni upazila. Rab recovered a shutter gun and five bullets from his possession.

Officer in-charge (OC) of Gangni police station Golam Mustafa said, Mazharul is accused in at least six cases including four for murder and two for bomb blasts with the PS.

Lieutenant Sazzad Raihan of Rab-6, Meherpur said they raided Mazhar's house at Motmura village at about 8:30am. They recovered a gun and five bullets from a hidden place in the house.

Lt. Raihan said one Raju, identifying himself as regional leader of PBCP Janajuddho, phoned a few brick kiln owners and asked them to pay illegal toll fixing

deadlines.

Cadres of the same outfit on Tuesday night went to Bamundi Brick Kiln and wanted to know the whereabouts of its owner Kamrul Islam.

As the workers failed to give any information, the outlaws severed the tendons of legs of Mahirul, 40, and beat up five others -- Sumon, 35, Kabil, 25, Rustom, 45, Hasu, 31 and Bakkar, 22.

"We arrested him (Mazhar) following allegations by a number of people of the area including the brick kiln owners", said Lt. Raihan.

Rab sources said, local brick kiln owners submitted a written allegation a few days ago saying Mazhar collects illegal toll in the name of outlawed Janajuddho.

Rab investigated the matter and found the allegation based on facts.

According to brick kiln owners, criminals demanded Tk 50 lakh from 16 brick kiln owners in the last 15 days since December 6.

Rab was quizzing Mazhar at their office at the time of filing the report at about 2:30pm yesterday.

BCL men accused of stalking in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A college girl was sexually harassed allegedly by some Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) men in front of the victim's college yesterday.

Following the incident, the girl filed a case accusing four people with Patuakhali police station in the evening.

The victim, a student of Patuakhali Government College, hails from Sonakhali village under Amtali upazila in Barguna district.

Police and the victim said, when the girl was leaving her college for her nearby aunt's house at noon, four youths Sumon, Mahbub, Zakir and Nuruzzaman attacked the girl.

All of them are activists of local Chhatra League (BCL) unit, locals and the victim claimed but Sahanur Rahman Sujon, secretary of district unit of BCL, claimed that the accused are not his party activists.

They might take part in the party processions on the campus but I do not know them, said Rezaul Haque Reza, president of district BCL unit.

The four boys looted gold ornaments, cellphone and cash Tk 50,000 from the girl, according to the case.

Three bombs recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole, Jessore

Police recovered three bombs from Benapole Primary School area early yesterday.

However, none was arrested, said police. Hasan Hafizur Rahman, officer in-charge of Benapole police station, said acting on a tip-off, they raided the area and recovered the bombs from the spot at around 3:30am.

Shibir leader arrested in Jhalakathi

UNB, Jhalakathi

Police arrested a leader of Islami Chhatra Shibir at Baghri Bazar in Rajapur upazila yesterday morning.

The arrestee is Firoz Abdullah, president of Shibir upazila unit.

Abdul Halim Talukdar, sub-inspector of Rajapur police station, said on secret information, they raided the bazar and arrested Firoz while Shibir men, numbering 10/12, led by the arrestee were holding a secret meeting.

However, others managed to flee.

Violent incidents claim lives of 5 Sust students in 6 yrs

SUST CORRESPONDENT

With the murder of two students of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (Sust) by muggers on Saturday last, different incidents claimed five students of the university in the last six years.

The first incident took place on the campus on July 13 in 2005. Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) university unit vice-president Rafiqul Islam Patwari Liton was beaten to death by his rival party men on the day.

Though a case was filed with the police station concerned in connection with the murder, none of the accused has been punished as yet. Only a few accused were expelled from the university soon after the incident.

Mosharraf Hossain Shamim of business administration (BBA) department was shot dead during a clash

between the students of Sust and Sylhet Jalalbad Ragib Rabeya Medical College and Hospital over a trivial matter on May 14 in 2006.

Following the incident, the university remained closed for six months. Report of the SUST probe body formed on the incident is yet to be published.

BBA student Aminul Islam Milan was stabbed to death by a gang of muggers in Pathantula area while he was coming to the campus from Sylhet city in a taxicab on March 29 in 2008. None was arrested in connection with the murder.

Victims of the latest incident took place on Saturday last are Khairul Kabir and Dipankar Ghosh Anik. Both were second year students of chemical engineering and polymer science department of the university.

Bodies of two students were found

in a Sylhet canal in the morning, 12 hours after a gang of muggers allegedly attacked their boat. Police said local fishermen found the bodies of Kabir and Anik floating in Chenger Khal (canal) at Putimara, some 4km off the campus.

The university authorities formed a five-member committee headed by Prof Md. Zakir Hossain, chairman of statistics department, to probe the murder of the two. The committee have been asked to submit its report as soon as possible.

Law enforcers have so far arrested five people in connection with the murder of Kabir and Anik. Contacted, Sylhet Metropolitan Police Commissioner Amulya Bushan Barua said they are investigating the incident and looking for other culprits involved in the killing.

Post-UP election violence after 6 months: 1 killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narail

One person was killed and another critically injured by their rivals in Kotakol launch terminal area under Lohagara upazila of Narail district yesterday.

The deceased is Akkas Sheikh, 50, son of Arik Sheikh, and the injured is Sifat Sheikh, 40, brother of Arik Sheikh of Kotakol village.

Locals said a rivalry between Kotakol Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Khan Jahangir Alam and Hemayet Hossain Biswas Himu of Kotakol village surfaced over the election

in the union held on June 26 this year.

Alam won the election, defeating his rival candidate Himu. Both belong to the ruling Awami League. Alam was an AL rebel candidate while Himu backed by the party.

Akkas and Sifat directly campaigned against Alam and sought vote for Himu during the election, locals said, adding that the attack on the two was in revenge for that.

Alam's supporters swooped on Sifat at the launch terminal at around 8:30am, beat him up and cut a tendon of his right leg.

As Akkas came to the

spot to rescue his nephew, Alam's men beat him dead and left the scene. Sifat was admitted to Lohagara Health Complex.

Lohagara police reached the spot at around 9:30am, recovered the body and sent it to Narail Sadar Hospital for autopsy. No case in connection with the incident was filed with the police station concerned as of 5:00pm yesterday.

After the UP election, the supporters of Himu led by Dulu Munshi attacked 15 houses of their rivals at Kotakol village and injured at least 20 people, villagers said.

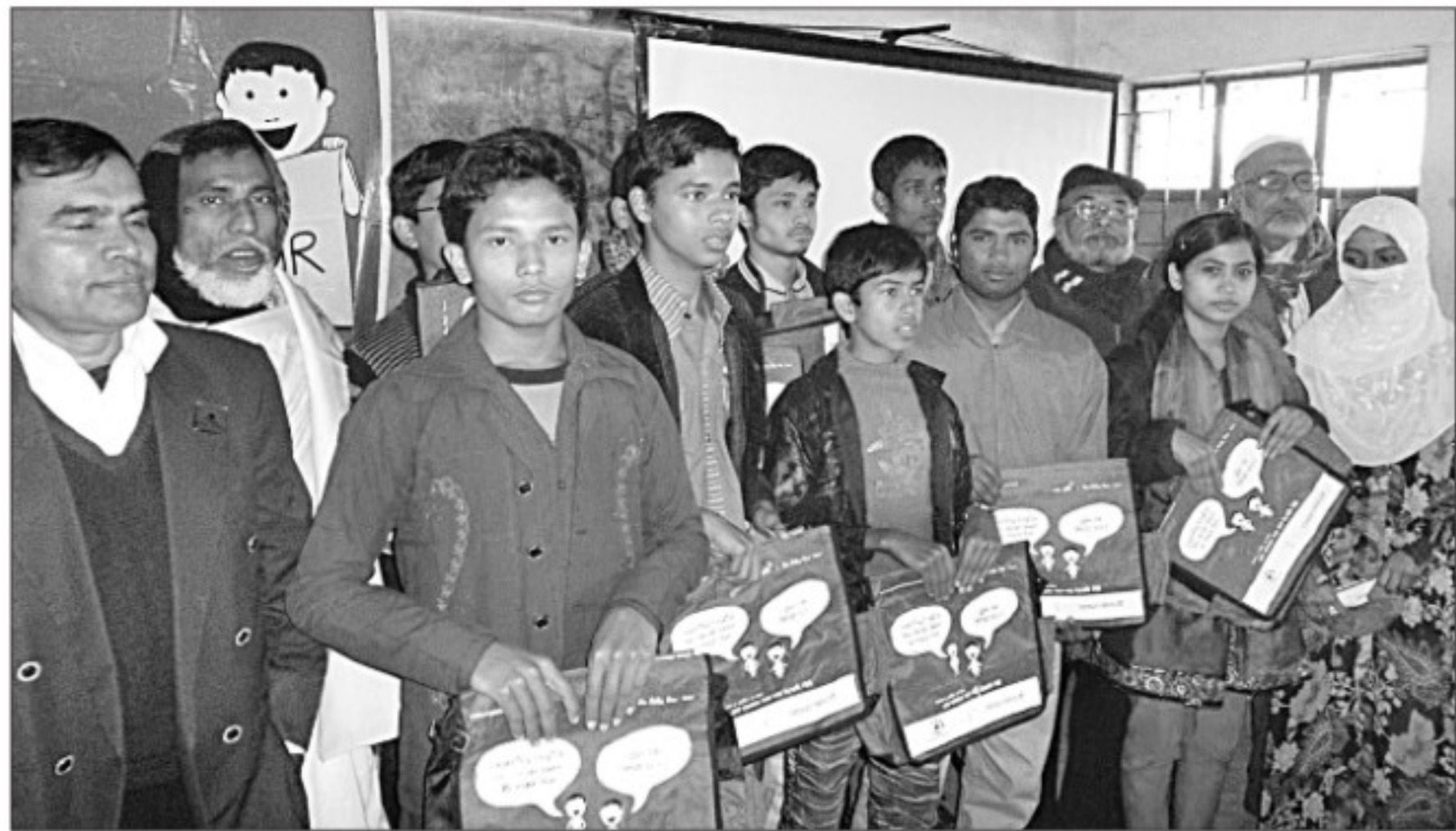


PHOTO: STAR

Prize winning students of Nazrul Academy at Darirampur in Trishal upazila of Mymensingh with their teachers after the English language fair held at the school yesterday.