



**COLOURFUL STRAWBERRIES**  
Two farmers pluck strawberry from a field in Mohonpur upazila of Rajshahi district. Profitable cultivation of the fruit, bought by representatives of five-star hotels in the capital for Tk 500 to Tk 700 a kg, is gaining popularity among farmers in the area.

PHOTO: STAR

**SNAPS AND SNIPPETS**

**Power failure protested**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gaibandha*

Hundreds of people of Bamondanga in Sundarganj upazila staged a protest on Friday night against load shedding. Organised by local motor owners association and Bamondanga Nagorik Committee, the protesters paraded the main roads of the area chanting slogans and demanding uninterrupted power supply. Later they held a rally at Bamondanga Club premises. The speakers said that the irrigation pump have become inoperative due to frequent power failure affecting boro crop farming in the area. They demanded necessary steps to resolve crisis with immediate effect. Otherwise a greater movement will be launched, they warned.

**3 stalkers arrested**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pabna*

Locals caught and beat up three alleged stalkers when they were harassing young women on Chatmohar-Bhangura road in Bhangura upazila on Friday. Later police arrested Md Faysal Islam, 18, of Afratpara village, Mamun, 17, of Baluchar village, Sujon, 19, of Kazipara village in Chatmohar upazila from the spot. When a few girls were coming from Chatmohar upazila by a three-wheeler the accused stalkers chased them by a motorbike, police said. The boys forcibly took their photographs at Bhangura. As the driver of the vehicle protested, they beat him up. At this, the girls cried for help. Locals caught the three and beat them up.

**Outlaw held in Pabna**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pabna*

Police arrested top leader of an outlawed party from Kuchiamora village in Sadar upazila yesterday morning. The arrestee, Md Shahidullah of village Kuchiamora, is a regional leader of outlawed PBCP Red Flag faction, also accused in many cases including for murders, police said. Officer in-charge of Ataikula police station Md Robiul Hassan said, acting on a tip-off, a team of police arrested him from Kuchiamora Bazar area at about 9am yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

**Members of Muslim Institute in Mymensingh town bring out a colourful procession in the town on Friday marking 80th years of the institute.**

**10 shops gutted in fire**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

At least 10 business establishments in Mohipur Bazar under Kalapata town were gutted in a fire early Friday. Locals and police said, the fire originated at a confectionary owned by Billal Mia of Mohipur Bazar at about 1.45am and spread to other shops. The damaged shops include two confectionaries owned by Fazor Musulli and Billal Hossain, a stationary shop owned by Abdus Sattar, a hardware shop owned by Monir Pada, a cloth shop owned by Kabir Hossain and two shoe houses owned by Shipon.

**Political leader stabbed**

UNB, *Bogra*

A Swachhshabak League leader was injured as his rivals stabbed him over intra-party conflict at Satmatha here on Friday. The victim is Anwar Hossain Rana, 24, member of convening committee of Swachhshabak League. Party sources said rivals stabbed Rana indiscriminately at about 11.30am during a human chain formed by Awami League 14 parties in the area. He was admitted to Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College and Hospital. District AL president Mamtaz Uddin, general secretary Majibar Rahman Majnu and MP Khadija Khatun, joined the human chain.

**Hartal in Khagrachhari**

A CORRESPONDENT, *Khagrachhari*

A half-day hartal and a daylong road blockade programme enforced by business associations in the hilly district yesterday protesting setting afire of a rice-laden truck ended peacefully. The programme was called after the members of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) allegedly torched the truck on Friday night. Trucker Uttam Dev said six to seven UPDF men set his truck on fire in Shibmondir area of Sadar upazila at around 8:30pm when he refused to pay toll. Mostafizur Rahman, officer in-charge of Khagrachhari Sadar police station, said they have been trying to arrest the criminals. Meanwhile, Riko Chakma, information and publicity secretary of UPDF Khagrachhari district unit, refuted the allegation.

**JATKA PROTECTION PROGRAMME**  
**65pc of jobless fishermen deprived of food support**

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

The programme to support poor and jobless fishermen during the seven-month yearly ban on catching jatka seems too inadequate as 65 percent of 2.10 lakh fishermen in coastal districts Patuakhali, Barguna and Bhola are outside its coverage.

The support under VGF (Vulnerable Group Feeding) programme is given to the fishermen for four months from February to May although the ban under the government's Jatka Protection Programme extends for seven months from November to May.

Besides, this help, which is 30 kg of rice a month for a fisherman's family, is too scanty considering their overall need, said the fishermen.

The Department of Fisheries banned fishing of jatka (young hilsa under nine inches long) for seven

months of the year from November to May, according to a source in Patuakhali district fisheries office (DFO).

Around 2.10 lakh hilsa fishermen, including 41,000 in Patuakhali, 29,541 in Barguna and 1,40,000 in Bhola district become jobless during the ban period.

Of them, 21,504 in Patuakhali district, 11,682 fishermen in Barguna district, and 40,372 fishermen in Bhola district are getting support under the VGF programme this year, said sources of district fisheries offices.

The remaining 1,35,983 or 64.89 percent fishermen are outside the programme.

Under the VGF programme that began in 2009-2010 fiscal year, each listed fisherman is getting 30 kg of rice a month, said Faruq Ahmed, survey officer for Patuakhali district fisheries office.

A total 8,826.96 tonnes of rice has been allocated for the three districts under the programme this season, sources said.

Popular fish hilsa also serves as a good foreign exchange earner every year.

In 11 months (till May, 2011) in 2010-2011 fiscal year, the country earned Tk 334 crore by exporting 8321 tonnes of hilsa, said ABM Zahid Habib, project director of Jatka Protection, Alternative Job for Fishermen and Research Project, under the Department of Fisheries in Dhaka.

Authorities' initiative to protect jatka is helping to increase hilsa production in the country.

Following strictness in imposition of the ban on catching jatka, the country got additional 5.96 lakh tonnes of hilsa worth Tk 14,900 crore (per kg Tk 250 rate), in last seven years,

Zahid Habib said.

But the government help for the hilsa fishermen during the ban period is too inadequate, said several fishermen.

"During the ban period, we pass hard days with our family members as the government help, 30 kg of rice a month, is too small for a fisherman's family. Sufferings of those who are outside the programme is even more," said Abdul Mannan, a fisherman of Auliapur village under Sadar upazila.

Md Faruq Hossain, District Fisheries survey Officer, said, "All fishermen involved with hilsa fishing should be brought under the VGF programme and if possible, provided with alternative job during the ban period to discourage jatka catching. The country will get large sizes of hilsa in the season that will bring foreign currencies.

**Illegal sand lifters chase UNO, critically injure UP chairman**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

A UP chairman was critically injured as a group of illegal sand lifters attacked an inspection team led by Ghoraghat UNO at the site yesterday noon.

Victim Md Mofazzal Hossain Prodhan, is Chairman of Bulakipur union under the upazila and president of the UP unit of ruling AL.

According to the locals, a group of illegal sand lifters, led by one Atwar of Pirganj upazila under Rangpur district, had been taking away sand from the riverbed of Karatoa near Kulanandapur village in Ghoraghat upazila for long.

People of the area protested the matter several times but to no effect.

Recently, they officially complained to the UNO urging her to stop the illegal sand lifting from Karatoa.

At around 1:30pm yesterday, Maksud Begum Siddiqua, UNO of Ghoraghat, Mofazzal Hossain, UP chairman and president of Bulakipur Union AL, along with police force went to the spot.

As they arrived there, about 100 people, equipped with different types of lethal weapons including knives and wooden sticks, swooped on them and chased the UNO.

However police swung into action and rescued her.

But the criminals, led alleged by Atwar, caught the UP chairman and tried to slit his throat. Villagers rescued

him in critical condition and took him to Ghoraghat upazila health complex.

The attending doctors at the health complex later shifted Mofazzal to Dinajpur Medical College and Hospital as his condition deteriorated.

A large number of police have been deployed in the area to avoid any further clash between the villagers and sand lifters.

Sources said Atwar, a resident of Pirganj upazila in Rangpur was behind the attack on UNO and UP chairman.

Contacted, UNO Maksud Begum said she along with other officials went to visit the site but all of a sudden attacked them.

Meanwhile, hearing the news, the villagers of Bulakipur union blocked a highway in the evening, protesting attack on the UP chairman.

Ghoraghat police said hundreds of villagers blocked Dinajpur-Dhaka highway in Raniganj area and Hakimpur-Bogra link road in Dugdugi area of the upazila at about 6:00pm.

The road communication with different district remained cut off for hours.

The protesters also burning tyres at different points of the roads demanding arrest of the culprits who attacked Mofazzal Hossain.

Around 200 vehicles remained stranded at different points of Dinajpur-Dhaka highway and Hakimpur-Bogra link road causing immense sufferings to the passengers, witnesses said.

**3 fishermen abducted in Sundarbans**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Three fishermen were abducted by 'forest robbers' from the Matiranga canal in the river Mamundo in the Sundarbans for ransom on Thursday.

Police said, the robbers are demanding Tk. 30,000 from each victim's family for their release.

The robbers have set a three-day deadline for payment of the ransom, failing which the fishermen will face 'dire consequences', police said quoting fishermen.

Pay the ransom within the deadline or receive the dead bodies, relatives of the victims quoted a message sent by the robbers.

A group of fishermen, numbering about eight, went to the Sundarbans taking permission from the Kaikhali Forest Office on Thursday morning.

A gang of robbers attacked them while they were catching fish in the Matiranga canal.

The gang abducted three fishermen while the rest managed to escape, sources said.

One of the abducted fishermen was identified as Nur



**A large number of people throng Sree Sree Jagannath Temple at Roypara village in Lalmonirhat town on Friday following a rumour that four gold idols of Radha-Krishna and Gour-Nitai came out from under the ground. However, the idols, found by a devotee from under the soil beside his house on Thursday night, were later found to be as brass made ones.**

PHOTO: STAR

**7 KDA projects shelved for 3 yrs**

QUAZI AMANULLAH, *Khulna*

Seven development projects undertaken by Khulna Development Authority (KDA) during last three years are yet to see any sign of starting due to non-availability of fund and bureaucratic tangles.

Development Project Proposals (DPP) of these seven projects are still awaiting approval of the Ministry of Housing and PWD, said a reliable source of KDA.

These seven projects are -- expansion of Khulna Shipyard road at a cost of Tk 27 crore 65 lakh, construction of three link roads at a cost of Tk 79 crore 93 lakh, construction of KDA Water World at a cost of Tk 7 crore 63 lakh, development of Ahsannabad residential area at a cost of Tk 120 crore 80 lakh, digital archives and management at a cost of Tk 1 crore 49 lakh, construction of overpass at Phulbari rail crossing and reconstruction

of damaged roads at Shiromoni industrial belt at a cost of Tk 11 crore 60 lakh.

"We have undertaken the projects as we are committed to turning Khulna into a most modern city," said KDA Chairman Brig Gen Habibur Rahman Kamal.

KDA Planning Officer Md Mujibar Rahman said these seven projects were undertaken during last three years but KDA is yet to get approval of the ministry concerned.

The DPP of Khulna Shipyard road expansion project was sent to the ministry concerned on April 10 last year but this project is yet to be sent to the Planning Commission despite sending a letter in this regard on August 11 the same year, he said.

The DPP for construction of three link roads was sent to the ministry on June 15 last year but the project file is still gathering dust there.

The DPP for reconstruction of dam-

aged roads at Shiromoni industrial belt was sent to the ministry on July 21 last year and it has the same fate.

The DPP for construction of Water World Project was sent to the ministry on July 21 last year. This project is yet to get approval. Now, KDA is thinking of implementing this project from its own fund.

The project proposal for development of Ahsannabad residential area was sent to the ministry concerned on February 24 in 2011. File for this project was sent to the Planning Commission from the ministry on March 13, 2011.

The project proposal for digital archives that was sent to the ministry on March 9 in 2011 has also remained shelved there.

The DPP for construction of an overpass at Phulbari rail crossing was sent to the ministry on June 8 in the same year. File of this project has also been shelved there, the KDA planning officer said.

Follow us on

**INDIAN GEM & JEWELLERY CREATION**

Showroom with largest range in Kolkata  
Diamond, Kundan-Jadu, Gold & Gem Stones

**98 Wood Street,**  
Kolkata 700 016 (India),  
Ph: +91 33 2290 5000/01, 2290 3388/99  
Fax: +91 33 2281 6596  
Email: igjc@igjcreation.com, Website: www.igjcreation.com  
For further enquiries please call +91 8981390005