

Jute cultivation falls in 8 districts of Rangpur divn

MEHEDY HASAN, Rangpur

Cultivation of jute has decreased by 70,593 acres in eight districts of Rangpur Division in the current season. Growers said they were reluctant to cultivate jute this season due to a fall in the prices of the fibre last year. Officials at the local office of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), however, attributed it to an extensive increase in cultivation of maize and other Robi crops in the region. The farmers who cultivated jute last year told this correspondent that they did not get the fair price of their produce and so, out of frustration, they refrained from cultivating jute in the current season. Jute was sold between Tk 900 and

Tk 1,000 per maund last year whereas the price varied from Tk 2,000 to Tk 2,200 per maund in 2010, farmers said. The DAE sources said 2,23,801 acres of land have been brought under jute cultivation in the eight districts under Rangpur division in the current season. On the other hand, jute was cultivated on 2,94,394 acres of land last year. DAE sources said, in the current season, local variety jute was cultivated on 28,360 acres while Tosa variety on 1,95,441 acres of lands in the eight districts. This year's district-wise break up shows 38,047 acres were brought under jute farming in Rangpur,

27,107 acres in Gaibandha, 42,103 acres in Kurigram, 20,678 acres in Lalmonirhat, 29,170 acres in Nilphamari, 19,170 acres in Dinajpur, 29,412 acres in Thakurgoan and 18,161 acres in Panchagarh. Last year, the break up was 42,666 acres in Rangpur, 35,283 acres in Gaibandha, 57,931 acres in Kurigram, 17,245 acres in Lalmonirhat, 32,888 acres in Nilphamari, 29,686 acres in Dinajpur, 40,199 acres in Thakurgoan and 38,492 acres in Panchagarh. Out of the total, local variety was cultivated on 29,179 acres and Tosa variety on 2,55,215 acres last year. Shajahan Mia, 50, a farmer of Machhari village in Kaunia upazila of Rangpur, said many farmers in the upazila lost interest in cultivating

jute this year as they incurred losses by cultivating the fibre last year. Others said absence of necessary rainfall and crisis of labourers added to the situation. A large number of farmers said they may totally stop planting jute in future if they do not get fair price next year. Agriculturists expressed concern over the decline in cultivation of jute in the region in the current season. They urged the government to take necessary steps to fix fair prices of jute to encourage the farmers to cultivate it. Sikandar Ali, additional director of Rangpur DAE, said despite all odds, they were trying their best to retain the quality and quantity of



PHOTO: STAR

The Trading Corporation of Bangladesh has introduced mobile vans in Rajshahi city to sell edible oil, sugar, gram and pulses at reasonable prices ahead of Ramadan.

RANGPUR CARMICHAEL COLLEGE

Agitation on to stop principal's transfer

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Students of Carmichael College yesterday vandalised a laboratory, boycotted classes and put the administrative building under lock and key. They also brought out a procession and staged demonstration, demanding withdrawal of the transfer of college principal Dr. Depokendra Nath Das. Campus sources said, the students paraded the campus in the morning and agitated in front of the administrative building in favour of their demand. During the agitation, they vandalised the Mathematics department's laboratory and put the classrooms, office of the principal and administrative building under lock and key. Meanwhile, all the classes and examinations at the college were suspended while most of the residential students left their hostels yesterday. Students said, Chhatra League, Chhatra Samaj, Chhatra Union college units along with general students jointly organised yesterday's agitation. The speakers at a rally in front of the administrative building threatened to continue the indefinite strike till their

demand for withdrawal of the transfer order was fulfilled. They alleged that a few teachers, backed by a group of anti-liberation force, in collusion with some corrupt officials of the education ministry, transferred the principal to Government Azizul Haque College, Bogra to their college to create campus unrest. It was done in a bid to strengthen the hold of Islami Chhatra Shibir, student's wing of the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, at Carmichael College, they added. They also vowed to foil the joining of Professor Shah Md. Moksed Ali of Azizul Haque College at any cost. They said Dr. Depokendra Nath Das, after his takeover as the principal of the college, had improved the academic atmosphere significantly. The students of the college enforced the strike from July 4 opposing the move for his transfer to Government Azizul Haque College, Bogra. Both the teachers were supposed to join their respective colleges within May 20. However, in the wake of protests, the ministry retreated from its decision and stayed the order. College sources said Dr. Depokendra was again transferred to the same college on

MC College shut, 12 Shibir men held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Government Murari Chand College was closed for an indefinite period yesterday following Sunday's violence between the activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League and Islami Chhatra Shibir. The authorities of the college also asked the students yesterday to vacate all the dormitories by 6:00pm. At least 20 people were injured as the activists of BCL and Shibir clashed on the college campus on Sunday. The BCL activists also torched at least 42 rooms of the college hostel soon after the clash. An academic committee headed by Dhiresh Chandra Sarkar, principal of the college, yesterday took the decision to shut the college. A five-member committee has been formed to investigate the incident. The committee is to submit its reports within 15 days, sources said. Earlier, in the morning, police detained 12 Shibir leaders and activists on charge of their alleged involvement in the violence. Of them, five were arrested for their alleged involvement with the arson and seven were picked up from different parts of the city for questioning, said Rezaul Karim, deputy commissioner of Sylhet Metropolitan Police. The arrestees include college unit Shibir secretary Mamun Hossain. Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet metropolitan police (SMP) Rezaul Karim said,

Shaokat Hosain Mashuk, a student of 2nd year Economics filed a case accusing 39 named and 50 unnamed people on charge of torching his room Sunday night. Of the accused, five Shibir activists were caught yesterday morning, he added. Principal Dhiresh Sarkar said, MC College had never witnessed such a shameful incident. He said 42 rooms were totally gutted while 70 others affected. Books, computers, furnitures and other valuables in those rooms were burnt to ashes, he added. City Shibir president Anwarul Wadud Tipu said the BCL men forced their activists out of the dormitory before setting their rooms afire. He refuted the allegation of beating a BCL man first on Sunday on the campus. College sources said, at about 6:30pm Sunday, activists of BCL and Shibir locked in an altercation on the college playground over playing football. As a sequel to that, Shibir men later picked up Ujjal Sarkar, a BCL activist to the dormitory where they beat him up. When the news spread, the BCL men stormed into the dormitory, triggering fierce clash for about an hour. At a stage, the Shibir men left the dormitory and the BCL activists set the rooms afire. Contacted, city BCL president Rahat Tarafder refuted the allegation. He claimed that the Shibir men swooped on BCL activists and set the rooms afire before leaving the spot.

'Introduce promised intercity train from C'nawabganj'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Townspople formed a human chain and held a rally in front of Shaheed Satu Hall yesterday to press for their five-point demand, including early introduction of intercity train service between the district town and the capital. Their other demands are upgrading 100-bed Chapainawabganj Adhunik Sadar Hospital to a 250-bed one, ending harassment of people in the name of digital meter installation by the Power Development Board (PDB) and action against drug abusers and stalkers in the town. Chapainawabganj Nagorik Unnayan Committee, a citizens' body for development, organised the programme. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a rally here on April 23 last year announced that intercity train service



PHOTO: STAR

A human chain was held in Chapainawabganj town yesterday to realise a 5-point demand, including introduction of intercity train linking with the capital.

between Dhaka and Chapainawabganj would be introduced soon and Chapainawabganj Adhunik Sadar Hospital would be upgraded to a 250-bed one, speakers said at the rally. On February 1 this year, Bangladesh Railway introduced a shuttle train on Chapainawabganj-Rajshahi route and it helped passengers willing to travel on

Rajshahi-Dhaka-Rajshahi Padma Express. But introduction of other connecting trains from Chapainawabganj is needed for passengers using the trains plying Rajshahi-Dhaka route as well as arrangement of direct intercity train service between Chapainawabganj and Dhaka has become an urgent requirement for the

Buses on indefinite strike in Bhola

UNB, Bhola

Bus workers went on an indefinite strike on all routes of the district yesterday, protesting death of one of their fellows in a clash with students on Sunday. Road communications of the district with other parts of the country remained suspended following the strike, causing immense sufferings to the passengers. Local sources said, bus workers yesterday staged demonstration, blocking Bhola-Charfasson road in the district town and burning tyres at different places since morning. Meanwhile, the students of Bhola Government College also demonstrated on the campus, demanding trial of those responsible for attack on their college. A bus worker was killed and 50 other people, including policemen, were injured in a series of clashes between the college students and

transport workers in the district town on Sunday. The students also torched and damaged at least 30 buses. Police said, an Honours 2nd year student of Bhola Government College got on a Bhola-bound bus in Charfasson upazila headquarters on Sunday morning. He offered Tk 50 as fare from Charfasson to Bhola town. The bus conductor refused to accept the amount as the fare for the distance fixed by the government was Tk 95. It triggered an altercation and at a stage the student got down from the bus in front of Ruposhi Cinema Hall. The clash ensued when students of the college, equipped with stone chips, iron rods and bamboo sticks, attacked the running buses and smashed their windshields, doors and windowpanes, leaving several people injured. One of the injured, Momin, died on the way to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla

The Daily Star - রবি ENGLISH FAIR



PHOTO: STAR

Students respond positively to a question during an event at the English language fair held at Mobarak Ali High School auditorium in Kaliganj upazila of Jhenidah yesterday.

Creative events, joyful day for kids of 11 more schools

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Students of 11 more schools in Kurigram, Joypurhat, Jhenidah, Habiganj and Narsingdi districts yesterday spent an eventful day as they took part in 'English language fairs held under English in Schools (EIS) programme, a joint initiative of The Daily Star and mobile operator Robi.



PHOTO: STAR

Two students of Narsingdi Government Girls' High School take part in a role play at the fair held at the school auditorium yesterday.

Adcomm Ltd is the creative and event partner of the fairs. Over 150 students of Kurigram Government Boys' High School and Kurigram Government Girls' High School joined the fair held at the boys' high school auditorium in the morning, reports our correspondent. Farida Yasmin, headmaster of Kurigram Government Boys' High School, inaugurated the fair at around 10:30am. Following screening of The Lion King, a globally renowned movie, the students of the two schools participated in spot quiz, vocabulary test and situation based question answer-all based on movie. Selected students took part in extempore speech on different topics and role play. Headmaster Farida Yasmin distributed prizes among the winners of different competitions at the end of the programme. In Joypurhat, at least 200 students of Kalai Girls' High School, Punot Girls' High School and Kalai MU High School in Kalai upazila of the district participated in joyful activities at the English language fair held at Kalai Girls' High school auditorium. After watching The Lion King, students of the three schools took part in spot quiz, vocabulary test and situation based question answer-all based on movie. Selected students took part in extempore speech and role play, according to our Dinajpur correspondent. Our Jhenidah correspondent reported that over 180 students from Mobarak Ali High School and Gopalpur High School in Kaliganj upazila of the

district joined the fair held at Mobarak Ali High School in the morning. Md Liakat Ali, headmaster of the school, inaugurated the fair at around 11:00am. Robi Area Manager Raihan Kabir, teachers of the two institutions and guardians of the students were present. Following screening of The Lion King, the students



participated in spot quiz vocabulary test, questions and answers, one word question, situation based question, extempore speech and role play. They also entertained the audience by reciting poems, telling jokes and singing songs. Prizes were distributed among the winners of different competitions at the end of the programme. Our staff correspondent from Sylhet adds: Around 200 students of Habiganj Girls' High school and BKG Government Girls' high School eagerly took part at the English language fair in the morning. Fatema Begum, headmaster of BKG Government Girls' High School, inaugurated the fair at the school auditorium at around 11:00am. After watching the globally renowned movie, The Lion King, students participated in different events. Selected students took part in extempore speech on different topics and role play. Prizes were distributed among the winners of different competitions at the end of the programme. Students of Narsingdi Government Girls' High School and Narsingdi Pilot High School and joined the English language fair held at the girls' school auditorium at noon, according to a correspondent. Goutam Chandra Mitra, headmaster of Narsingdi Government Girls' High School, opened the fair. Teachers of the two institutions and guardians of the students were present. Following screening of The Lion King, students participated in spot quiz vocabulary test, questions and answers, one word question and situation based questionall based on the movie. Selected students took part in extempore speech and role play. Robi official Md Konak Khan conducted the programme. Students entertained the audience by reciting poems, telling jokes and singing songs. Prizes were distributed among the winners at the end of the programme. Aiming to promote English language learning among school students across the country, The Daily Star in cooperation with Robi



PHOTO: STAR

Prize-winning students pose for photograph at the end of the English language fair at Kurigram Government High School auditorium yesterday.