Innovative cold storage that needs no power

KONGKON KARMAKAR, *Dinajpur*

A newly devised cold storage made with locally available resources bears bright prospect for preserving perishable items like potato, broccoli and mango for up to six months without using any electricity.

Tauhidul Islam Bakul, a resident of Birganj upazila in of Dinajpur, is the mind behind the device while Dilip Kumar Saha, an engineer of Local Government and Engineering Department of Dinajpur, designed the structure for the purpose.

Clay, bamboo, water and straw were used for building the 60-foot-long, 30-foot-wide and 9-foot-high structure on 4.5 decimal land at Sujalpur village in Birganj upazila

The eye-catching building has clay-made walls, bamboo-made floor and a rooftop with straw and bamboo. Under the floor, a four-foot water layer is used to maintain moisture inside the cold storage.

"Frustrated with as power crisis, lack of adequate cold storage and its high maintenance cost, I thought of an alternative storage facility to preserve perishable agricultural products," said Md Tauhidul Islam Bakul, the inventor of the powerless cold storage.

The construction works started in April last year and completed in December and it cost him Tk 7 lakh only.

"The cold storage has capacity to store 110 tonnes of items. We have already conducted successful test run. We stored potatoes for six months (February to July), broccoli for 28 days and cabbages for 75 days. No problem was reported during the time," said Bakul, pioneer of the project.

"Maintenance of air flow and moister inside the cold storage is the key mechanism used to retain oxygen inside. The perishable goods can be stored for long if flow of oxygen and humidity can be managed properly.

"Preservation in such a cold storage is much cheaper. Storage of potatoes will cost a farmer Tk 0.86 per kg while it costs Tk 4.5 at power-run cold storages.

"I just use two adjust fans inside the cold storage and I have been receiving only Tk 200 monthly electricity bill for the last six months. Bringing some modification can help to get more storage duration here," said Bakul.

Fish farming is also possible in the water, he added.

Twenty-nine scientists and experts from different organisations including Mymensigh Agriculture University, Hajee Danesh Science and Technology University of Dinajpur, Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Dinajpur, Rangpur and Bogra visited the spot on July 5 and expressed their satisfaction over the functioning of the newly devised cold storage.

Farmers across the country can be benefited by using the affordable technology for storing their produces, said Anwarul Alam, deputy

Potatoes stacked inside the innovative cold storage developed by Dilip Kumar Saha, *right*, the water layer under the floor that maintains moisture inside the clay-made device.

PHOTO: STAR

Transport strike continues

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Chapainawabganj*

The indefinite strike enforced by transport workers in the district on Monday, continued for the third consecutive day yesterday.

Road communication between the district and other parts of the country remained snapped, much to the sufferings of the passengers and traders.

The strike followed a clash between labourers of Chapainawabganj and Rajshahi districts and manhandling of a union leader in the early hours of Monday.

Shariful Islam, organising secretary of Chapainawabganj Truck and Motor Sramik union filed a case against drivers Ali, Saiful, Asad and Liton and other ten unnamed workers of Rajshahi Bus Workers Union with Shah Mokhdum police station in Rajshahi on Tuesday evening on charge of assaulting their leader Abdul Khalek.

Croc drags away fisherman

UNB, *Bagerhat*

A crocodile dragged a fisherman from his boat in the East Sundarbans under Sharankhola upazila on Tuesday.

Alamgir Boyati, 35, of Chalabunia village in the upazila was fishing in the Kumirmara canal near Terabeka Camp. All of a sudden, a crocodile jumped out of water and dragged Alamgir into deep waters, said the other fishermen who witnessed the incident.

They said they had been fishing in the canal from Monday night. They tried their best to save Alamgir, but failed.

Workers of the forest department and fishermen could not retrieve the body of the victim, said DFO Mihir Kumar Do.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

A large portion of the Baniajan spars set up to protect the embankment in Bhandarbari union of Dhunat upazila of Bogra was washed away by a turbulent Jamuna on Tuesday, posing a threat to 20 nearby villages.

Fresh areas flooded in Gaibandha, Netrakona

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The flood situation further deteriorated in Gaibandha while it remained unchanged in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram yesterday.

In Netrakona, the situation has slightly improved in the areas adjacent to the border under Durgapur and Kalmakanda upazila and turned worse in the low-lying areas of the upazilas.

According to our Gaibandha correspondent, fresh areas in 19 unions of Sadar, Fulchhari, Sundarganj and Saghata upazila have been inundated, marooning over 50,000 people.

The Jamuna was flowing 16 centimetres above the danger mark at Balashi ferry ghat point yesterday noon. District administration sources said about 75 villages in 19 unions are now in the grip of flood.

The affected unions are Tarapur, Dahabandh, Belka, Haripur, Chandipur, Kapasia, Sreepur in Sundarganj upazila, Haldia, Ghuridaha, Jumarbari, Bharatkhali in Saghata upazila, Gajaria, Arendabari, Fazlupur, Uria, Kanchipra in Fulchhari upazila, Kamarjani, Gideri Mollar char in Gaibandha Sader upazila.

With the rise in water level of Teesta and Jamuna, erosion has taken a serious turn at 20 points in Fulchhari upazila, leaving at least 300 families homeless in the last two days. The affected people have taken shelter on high lands and flood control embankments.

Our Lalmonirhat correspondent reports: The flood situation at 75 villages of 16 unions under Hatibandha, Aditmari, Kaliganj, Patgram and Lalmonirhat Sadar upazilas remained static yesterday.

The flood-hit unions are Angarpota-Dahagram, Bawra, Kuchlibari of Patgram upazila, Votmari, Kakina of Kaliganj upazila; Goddimari, Sindurna, Dawabari, Patikapara of Hatibandha upazila; Mohishkhocha and Durgapur of Aditmari upazila; and Khuniyagachh, Rajpur, Gokunda, Mogolhat and Kulaghat of Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila

Since all the rivers, including Dharla, Teesta, Dudhkumar and Brahmaputra, swelled further following heavy rains on Tuesday night, the flood situation in nine upazilas of Kurigram district has not changed, says our correspondent.

Phulbari UP Chairman Md Moynul Haque said flood damaged about 200 metres of Phulbari-Lalmonirhat Road in Kulaghat area in the last two days. Buraburi Char Mohammadpur Registered Primary School was damaged in the deluge on Tuesday, said UP Chairman Md Sohrab Hossen Chand.

Our Netrakona correspondent adds: The situation slightly improved in the areas adjacent to the border in Kalmakanda and Durgapur upazila and further deteriorated in the low-lying areas of the two upazilas yesterday morning.

The fresh areas affected by flood are Rudranagar, Montola, Ricka, Bishorpasha and Isapur village in Kalmakanda upazila, and Nawapara, Kapasia, Haludhati, Rambari, Bhadua Shreepur and Ishorkhola in Durgapur upazila.

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Two Hizbut Tawhid men held

A CORRESPONDENT, *Bagerhat*

Two activists of Islamist outfit Hizbut Tawhid were arrested from in front of Daratana Bridge toll plaza in the district town yesterday.

The arrestees were identified as Mohibul Islam, 22, son of Golam Mawla of Kaliganj upazila of the district and Shawkat Molla, 50, son of late Moksed Molla of Kalia upazila in Narail district.

Abu Zihad Fakhrul Khan, inspector (Investigation) of Bagerhat Model police station, said a team of patrol police held the duo from the area while distributing leaflets and *jihadi* books around 11:00am yesterday.

A good number of *jihadi* books and leaflets were seized from them, he said.

Mohibul and Shawkat, however, claimed that they were book vendors and had no connection with the organisation.

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