

Weeklong rain keeps aman farmers' hopes alive in Rangpur division

MEHEDY HASAN, Rangpur

Long expected rainfall at the end of rainy season has come as a relief for the farmers of transplanted aman (T-aman) paddy in eight districts of Rangpur division.

In absence of sufficient rain during the peak period of the monsoon, farmers in this region had to depend on irrigation with electricity-driven deep tube-wells and diesel-run shallow pumps to save their crops but many farmers, especially the small and marginal ones, could not afford it.

However, the last one week saw a good amount of rainfall due to the depression in the Bay and Rangpur Met office recorded 301.3 millimetre rainfall from 6:00am on September 14 to 6:00am on September 20.

Against the backdrop of a drought-like situation, the rain has greatly benefited the farmers who had to count additional cost for irrigating their T-aman paddy fields, said Md Firoz Ahmed, deputy director of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Rangpur.

Shahajada Ali, 50, a farmer of Machhari village



PHOTO: STAR

Now eyeing a good yield, a farmer scatters fertiliser on his paddy field in Kaunia upazila of Rangpur district as the transplanted aman plants, drying earlier due to lack of water, becomes lively with adequate rainfall during the last one week.

under Kaunia upazila in Rangpur district, said, "Seeing the best rainfall of the current season during the last seven days, we are now very hopeful about good yield of T-aman."

DAE sources said, T-aman was cultivated on

10,24,068 hectares of land in eight districts under Rangpur Agricultural Zone this year although 10,84,074 hectares of land was brought under its cultivation in 2011.

Cultivation of T-aman has declined in this region this season as farmers did not get

fair prices last year, DAE sources said.

The recent rainfall during late Bhadra and early Ashwin (Bangla months) has come as a relief for farmers as the standing crops would not need water at least next half a month, they said,

adding that some of the late varieties can also be cultivated with this water.

With prospect of good yield now, the T-aman farmers in Rangpur division have urged the government to ensure fair prices of the crop.

Two Pabna roads to be renamed today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Shaheed Sadhan Road and Shaheed Bulbul College Road in the town will be renamed 'Air Vice Marshal (Retd) AK Khandaker (Bir Uttam) Road' and 'Abdur Rob (Boga Miah) Road' today.

Marking the occasions, Pabna municipality authorities have organised separate programmes in the morning.

AK Khandaker, the incumbent planning minister, was the chief of Bangladesh Air Force during the Liberation War, and late Abdur Rob, a former Awami League leader, was an organ-

iser of the Liberation War.

Earlier in 1998, the municipality authorities had named the two roads after martyred freedom fighters Golam Sarwar Khan Sadhan and Shamsul Alam Bulbul and a resolution was taken on March 19, 1998, in this regard.

Golam Sarwar Sadhan, a prominent singer of 70s, joined the Liberation War and embraced martyrdom in a front fight with the Pakistan occupation army at Nagarbari on September 10 while Shamsul Islam Bulbul was martyred during a fight with the occupation army in Pabna Bus Terminal area on March 27 in 1971, their family sources said.

WEDNESDAY'S FACTIONAL CLASHES

Two cases against over 200 Habiganj BNP men

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Two cases were filed against over 200 people of BNP and its front organisations yesterday on charge of vandalising restaurant of an AL leader and attacking police during a clash between BNP factions on Wednesday evening in Habiganj district town.

Sub-Inspector Nurul Islam of Habiganj Sadar police station filed a case accusing 150, including 85 named opposition activists.

The accused include district JCD convener Tajul Islam Chowdhury, district Jubo Dal president Azizur Rahman Kajol, district Sramik Dal joint-convener Islam Tarafder, Habiganj pourashava councilor Abdul Awal Maznu and district JCD joint convener Abdul Quaiyum.

Salim Uddin Ahmed,

manager of the Kolapata Restaurant owned by the Shaistaganj municipality unit AL president Salek Miah, filed the other case, accusing over 50 including 16 named activists of the opposition party's student front.

The accused include Habiganj municipal JCD general secretary Shafiqul Islam and Sarkari Brindaban College JCD joint convener Muhibur Rahman Shaon.

However, party insiders said most of the accused are supporters of district BNP general secretary GK Gous.

Police fired at least 44 rounds of rubber bullets and eight shotgun shots to bring the situation under control Wednesday evening after about 50 people were injured in the clash between two factions of BNP.

They locked in the clash when central BNP vice-

president Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury and central joint secretary Mohammad Shahjahan were holding a meeting with district leaders at Habiganj Press Club auditorium on the preparations to receive party chief Khaleida Zia during her visit to the district 6 October.

The trouble soon spread to other places of the town. A restaurant and a few motor-bikes were damaged. The rival factions also locked in clash in Shaistanagar area where they pelted brickbats on police as the law enforcers resorted to baton charge.

There had been a long-standing rivalry between the factions, one led by the Habiganj district BNP general secretary GK Gous, also Habiganj municipal mayor and the other by former state minister Syed Mohammad Faisal, also district BNP chief.



PHOTO: STAR

Cultural and rights activists and community leaders under the banner of Barisal Sangskritik Sangathan Samonnay Parishad form a human chain in the city yesterday protesting a vested interest group's eviction of 44 ultra poor Christian families from the land owned by Barisal Baptist Mission Church on September 8.

'Bring land grabber to book'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A human chain was formed in the city yesterday demanding rehabilitation of 44 poor Christian families who were evicted from a slum at Baptist Mission Road by a realtor on September 8.

Organised by Barisal Sangskritik Sangathan Samonnay Parishad, leaders of different socio-cultural organisations, professional bodies and human rights activists joined the programme on the premises of Ashwani Kumar Hall at 9:30am.

Addressing a rally at the venue, the

speakers alleged that the hired goons of Olympic Properties (OPL) Limited forcibly evicted 44 poor Christian families from the land, violating a court injunction.

They demanded that the authorities concerned bring the land grabber to book, recover the land and rehabilitate the poor Christian families. The speakers also demanded withdrawal of the 'false' cases filed against the poor Christian families by the realtor and his men.

Later, they handed over a memorandum to the deputy commissioner demanding punishment to the land grabber and rehabilitation of the evicted families.

TEESTA ROAD BRIDGE OPENS

A dream comes true for people of two districts

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

With the opening of Teesta road bridge, people of Lalmonirhat and Kurigram will now have easy access to the capital and other parts of the country.

Businesspeople said the bridge has ushered in a new era in socio-economic and communication sectors in the greater Rangpur region.

Prime Minister Shaikh Hasina inaugurated the much-awaited bridge over the Teesta at Kownia point on Rangpur-Kurigram highway at around 3:00pm, much to the delight of the people of Lalmonirhat and Kurigram.

They distributed sweets among themselves as their demand for a road bridge over the Teesta has been fulfilled.

Shaikh Abdul Hamid, president of Lalmonirhat Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said with the opening of the road bridge, trade and commerce in the region would get a boost and more industries would be set up.

"Many industrialists, who had earlier lost their interest to set up industries in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts due to

communication problems, will now get interested to invest in the two districts," he said.

Kurigram Chamber President Shafiqul Islam Chowdhury said Teesta Road Bridge will play an important role in the economic development of the two districts.

Local farmers said they were deprived of getting fair prices of the agricultural products as they could not supply their produce to the capital and other parts of the country due to lake of smooth road communications.

As communication problem is solved with the opening of the road bridge, we hope to get fair prices of our produce," the farmers said.

Bus owners of the two districts said Teesta Road Bridge will save time and money on fuel cost and mitigate the suffering of the passengers.

Meanwhile, people of Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts yesterday said goodbye to Teesta railway bridge, which they used for long to cross the river in buses and other vehicles.

Another bridge for vehicles was made in 1978 by placing wooden sleepers alongside the railroad, but the bridge had passed its usable life 12 years ago.

Lightning kills five

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Lighting killed at least five people in Chapainawabganj and Dinajpur yesterday.

Three fishermen were killed and nine others injured as a lightning struck them on Mohananda River at Mayamari village in Bholahat upazila of Chapainawabganj early yesterday, reports our correspondent.

The deceased were identified as Bairul Islam, 45, son of Abdur Gafur, Rafiqul Islam, 21, son of Sultan Ali and Akhtarul Islam, 22, son of Md. Sabuzzan of the village.

Police said the lightning struck the fishermen when they were fishing in the river, killing three of them on the spot.

In Dinajpur, at least two people were killed and another was injured in lightning strike at Nandanpur village in Nawabganj upazila yesterday, reports our correspondent.

The dead are Amena Khatun, 20, wife of Liton Mia and Sahazul Islam, 38, son of Lal Mia of the village.

Locals said a lightning struck Amena, Lal Mia and Bimal Chandra, 50, when they were working at a field during rain at noon. Amena and Lal Mia died while critically injured Bimal was admitted to the upazila health complex.

15 Jamaat, Shibir activists arrested

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Police arrested six Jamaat men in Mymensingh yesterday and nine Shibir activists in Jessore on the previous day.

Police picked up six leaders and activists of Jamaat-e-Islami including its district unit secretary Abdul Karim in Mymensingh yesterday, reports our correspondent.

The Jamaat men were going to join a procession in the town organised by BNP as part of a countrywide programme of the BNP-led 18 party alliance.

Police also charged batons to disperse the processionists.

In Jessore, nine Islami Chhatra Shibir activists were arrested early Wednesday on charge of planning subversive activities, reports our correspondent.

Police raided different messes in the town and arrested them.

The arrestees are as Golam Mostafa, son of Mizanur Rahman of Jhecorgachha, Nazmul Huda, son of Mokshed Ali of Bagda village in Monirampur upazila, Alamgir Hossain, son of Lutfar Rahman of Mazidpur, Shohanur Rahman, son of Mizanur

Rahman of Bagdi village in Kashabpur, Abu Bakkar, son of Abul Hossain of Raipur, Babul, son of Chand Ali of Bagherpara in Jessore, Jakir Hossain, son of Mizan Miah of Gauninathpur village under Kaliganj upazila in Jhenidah and Shariful, son of Abdus Salam of Rajgang in Monirampur upazila in Jessore.

Officer in-charge (OC) at Kotwali police station Golam Rahman said, acting on a tip off, a police team arrested them for plotting subversive activities to tarnish the image of the government.

In Moulvibazar, at least four policemen were injured in an attack by Jamaat-Shibir activists in Borolekha upazila on Wednesday.

The injured policemen are SI Rojob Ali and constables Hamid, Masum Ahmed and Saleh Ahmed, reports a correspondent.

Officer in-charge of Borolekha PS Jamir Uddin said that local Jamaat-Shibir activists brought out a procession without any prior permission of the administration.

When obstructed, the activists threw brickbats at police, leaving four law enforcers injured, he added.

SNIPPETS

IU treasurer's car attacked

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Criminals attacked and damaged a car of Islamic University (IU) treasurer on his way to the campus from Kushtia town yesterday. The incident took place at about 9.00am at Laxmipur bazaar in Sadar upazila, 7 kilometers off the university. According to police, a gang of 8/10, equipped with bamboo sticks, stopped the car of Professor Dr. Sahajahan Ali and asked him to get down. "As I declined to do so, the criminals attacked the car and damaged it," said Sahajahan Ali. On information, a team from IU police station rushed to the spot but the criminals fled the scene, the treasurer said.

Rokeya University admission

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

The authorities of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur have announced registration notice for the admission seekers into the honours programmes for the academic sessions 2012-13. According to the notice, the applicants can register for the admission tests from September 22 to October 22, said university sources. The tests under 20 departments of six faculties are scheduled on November 7 and 8 and results will publish on November 15. The admission seekers can also register through sending message (SMS) round the clock till October 22 from any place of the country. Further information about admission procedure will be available on the university website (www.brur.ac.bd) or (www.admission.brur.ac.bd).

Two children drown

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Two children drowned in the district yesterday. They are Rafi, 7, son of Rawshan Ali and Selim, 8, son of Monjur Hossain of Telikhola village under Singair upazila. Family sources said, Rafi and Selim went to Telikhola Jame Mosque's pond along with three other friends to take a dip at around 1:00pm. Three children returned to their houses after taking bath but the two others remained missing. Later locals recovered their bodies from the pond.

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