



Employees of Abdul Arif's Jamdani factory hard at work in Kurigram.

Traditional Jamdani made in Kurigram

ABUL WAHED, Kurigram

Various Jamdani Sharee are produced in Biswashar village of Belgachha Union under Kurigram Sadar Upazila.

Abdul Arif, age 29, of the village makes Jamdani sharee in his factory, which is located at his home. Taking loan, he wants to expand thus create more jobs in his factory. 12 people of different ages work in his Jamdani factory. Of them, six including two of his younger brothers have been trained to work in the factory by Abdul Arif himself.

Abdul Arif himself worked at a factory in Morkakur village of Narayanganj. There, for 12 years, he worked at a Jamdani loom factory of Shahmsur Ali.

Returning back in 2006, he started to weave Jamdani with two weaving machines in his house. It took him about twenty thousand taka to set up the factory. Now, he has six weaving more machines in his factory. His younger brothers Abdul Khalek and Abdul Malek were trained during the start of his factory.

"There is no difference between Kurigram's Jamdani and Rupganj's or Norsingdi's Jamdani. One helper works in the factory with the wage of Tk 150 to Tk 200 daily, while a technician receives Tk 700 to Tk 800 for producing each sharee. One technician and one helper could produce one piece sharee in five days. Per piece sharee is sold for Tk 3,000 to Tk 5,000 to the whole-seller in Narayanganj – production cost is around Tk.2,000", Arif said.

Approximately least 30 sharees are made in his factory per month. The local market activity is not thriving as he expected – caused by various kinds of problems. Abdul Arif feels that the local Bangladesh Small & Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) department did not learn well about the motion of the weaving factory.

"I purchase thread and colour (dye) for weaving Jamdani in Narayanganj and have to sell there. I go to Narayanganj once a month to purchase raw materials and others necessities. I would like to extend my factory. But, lack of funding and capital is a barrier to my expansion", Arif said.

"An NGO activist offered me loan, but I refused because of high interest rate. I am interested to receive loan of a marginal interest" Arif added.

An officer of Kurigram BSCIC Md. Makbul Hossain said that they have heard about Arif's factory and will soon go visit it. He also added that a marginal loan can be provided after the visit.

Cuet student drowns in Kaptai Lake

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

A student of Chittagong University of Engineering of Technology (Cuet) drowned in Kaptai Lake on Friday afternoon.

The deceased was identified as Mohammad Al-Zobair, 21, a first year student of mechanical engineering department of the university. He was son of Md. Zillur Rahman of Osman Para village in Gaibandha.

Dr. Kazi Delwar Hossain, chairman of electronics and telecommuni-

cation department, said Zobair went to the district in the morning as a member of a picnic team of the university.

He along with friends was going to Shuvolong by an engine boat. Suddenly he lost his balance and fell into the lake.

Zobair, who did not know how to swim, remained missing till filing of this report yesterday afternoon.

Divers of Bangladesh Navy and local fire fighting unit were still trying to trace the victim said SI Ashaf of Kotwali PS.

Bring killers of little Naim to book

Demand protesters in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A human chain was formed in Bottola area of Kahaloo upazila town on Friday, demanding immediate arrest and punishment of the killers of schoolboy Naim.

People from all walks of life, including teachers and students of Kahaloo Pilot High School, took part at the programme.

On April 5 last year, Naimul Islam Naim, 13, a class seven student of the school, and son of Rafiqul Islam of village Rostamchapor, was kidnapped on his way to the school.

The kidnappers demanded Tk 5 lakh ransom from his family. Failing to realise the amount, they strangled Naim and burnt his body to ashes by throwing it into a stove of a brick kiln in the upazila.

Rafiqul Islam filed a case



Naimul Islam Naim

accusing 10 people with Kahaloo police station of the murder.

Police so far arrested seven people but the three main accused are still out of the dragnet, said the participants at the human chain.

Tofazzal Hossain, officer in-charge of the PS, said police were trying to arrest the rest of the accused.

Assistant superintendent of police Ashraful Islam said, they have sent a letter to the home ministry for speedy trial of the case.



PHOTO: STAR

Farmers at a cotton field at Dhankhola village in Gangni upazila of Meherpur district. The photo was taken recently.

10 districts likely to have bumper cotton output

PONUEL S BOSE, Narail

Farmers and agronomists are expecting a bumper production of cotton in the ten southern districts this season.

Good temperature, use of compost and standard HYV seeds, bank loans on easy terms and conditions and no pest attack are the reasons behind the bumper output while easy cultivation process, lower production cost and increasing market demand made cotton cultivation popular in the region, said Cotton Development Board (CDB) Jessore regional office sources.

The office has been divided into four zones-- Jessore (Jessore, Satkhira, Narail and Kaliganj upazila of Jhenidah districts), Kushtia (Kushtia, a part of Meherpur and another of Rajbari districts), Jhenidah (Jhenidah, Magura and Faridpur districts) and Chuadanga (Meherpur and Chuadanga districts).

This season, about 15,122 hectares of land have been brought under cotton cultivation in the four zones.

Of them, Jessore saw cultivation of 6,326 hectares, Kushtia 7291, Jhenidah 4139 and Chuadanga 4149 hectares. Last year, the zones brought 13,617 hectares on the previous year and 6,050 under the cotton farming.

The target to produce cotton this season was set at 47,840 metric tons. However,

this target is likely to exceed as farmers are expecting 36 to 45 maunds of cotton from each acre as harvesting is going on in different areas, said the sources.

Kamrul Hasan, expert at Jagodishpur cotton laboratory, Jessore, said the production of the crop would be 12 to 15 maunds per bigha this year because of the use of HYV seed.

Md Musa, farmer of Bagharpara in Jessore, told this correspondent that they witnessed a bumper production of cotton due to a favourable weather condition, adequate supply of fertilisers and bank loan without any problem.

Another farmer, Mostak Ahmed, of Gangni upazila in Meherpur, said production of cotton was easier and more profitable than other items as its per bigha cost was not more than Tk 7,000 while it brought Tk 35,000 to Tk 40,000 from each bigha.

Jafor Ali, deputy director of CDB, Jessore, said they had to work hard to bring a 'revolutionary change' in cotton farming in the region.

Favorable weather condition, adequate supply of fertilisers, bank loan on easy terms and conditions and introduction of new variety of short-term seed helped achieve a bumper production this year, he said.

No recognition for a veteran

POUNEL S BOSE, Narail

Language movement veteran Nurul Alam, 79, who has been living with much hardship at Voakhali village under Narail municipality is still looking for any national recognition.

Nurul Alam was born at Lohagara in Narail district in 1934. He got involved in the Language Movement in 1949 when he was a student of Jagannath College. He used to join different meetings and processions with his elder brother Shamsul Alam, who was then a student of Dhaka Medical College.

Later in 1952, he also got himself admitted into Dhaka Medical College. Since then, he became more active in the Language Movement under the banner of all party students forum.

Nurul Alam said with pride and glory that on February 21, 1952 after the meeting of the All-Party Students Action Committee at Battala (under the banyan tree) of Dhaka University, he joined the procession along with his elder brother violating section 144 as per the decision of the meeting.



Language veteran Nurul Alam

Police charged the students with baton and the procession was dispersed. They took shelter in the Medical College hostel. At 3pm, being reorganized they began to bring out demonstrations again. Suddenly, the police fired on the procession – Shafiur got bullet injury.

He along with his brother and fellow students rushed Shafiur to the Medical College Hospital. On the way, he breathed his last. The next day he joined the protest procession.

He feels proud that he took part in the construction of the very first Shaheed Minar which had been damaged afterwards by the police.

With a sigh, the weak

and feeble hero of the language movement added that to escape arrest he left the college hostel. For some months, he tried to go back to his studies living outside, but considering the situation, he finally had to give up studies and his long cherished desire of being a physician came to an end.

After that he joined Chittagong Steel Mills as a clerk and retired in 1992. Since then he has been living in with his wife, three sons and one daughter.

Now, at age 79, Nurul feels proud because February 21 is being observed as International Mother Language Day.

Nurul Alam dreams that the new generation will be able to lead the country for a better future and will remove illiteracy, poverty, corruption, communalism and exploitation from Bangladesh.

With disappointed he said that the goal in which they fought for mother language is yet to be implemented. He added that now he is eighty years old and don't know how many days he will be alive but he strongly believes that Bangla will be used in every sphere of national life in the future.

He urges the government to pay a little attention to those who worked for upholding the dignity of the mother tongue in 1952 language movement and take initiative so that language heroes get state honour.

Hason Raja's property in neglect



Hason Raja's bungalow in Rampasha is on the verge of ruin

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

The village Rampasha under Biswanath upazila of Sylhet has the house of the great mystic poet, Hason Raja. His songs might still be celebrated all over Bangladesh, but his house stands there in utmost neglect. People dump garbage near the house and the land is in danger of falling under the clutches of the local influentials. If the house could be restored and maintained, it could attract many visitors and tourists. Great mystic poet Hason Raja has many popular songs. 'Loke bole bolery, ghar bari bala nay amar, ki ghor banaimu ami shunneri majhar', 'agey Jodi janto Hason, bachbo koto din, banaito ghor bari koria rongin' and 'baula ke banailo, hason rajare baula ke banailo re' are some of the popular creations with a unique mystic attachment. These are immensely accepted to the people of all ages.

Hason was born at village Rampasha under Biswanath upazila of Sylhet and passed an important part of his youth there. Huge property of his ancestral *Zamindari* is spread around the area. Some members of the famous and well-to-do family are in the country and abroad, but the historic village house has been lying uncared for due to utter neglect for long.

Besides, the huge pond in front of the house still remains neglected. Dumping of wastes by some locals is polluting the environment badly. Due to the lack of minimum care, it is about to be ruined. Some local influentials are trying to grab the adjacent land and part of the huge pond.

Locals feel the family members, well placed at home and abroad are not interested in taking care of this property. Every day a good number of people from different areas visit the site. The people in the village expect that initiatives should be taken to make the site a tourist spot. Cultural events may also be organised there.

Seeing the poor state of the site, they remember the poet's popular song '*matir o pinjirar majhe bondi hoia rey, kandeý Hason Rajar mon monay ray*'. The state of the house resembles the song.

BHUAPUR TEMPLE TORCHING

Jubo League leader, 11 BNP men sued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A case was filed on Friday night accusing a local leader of Jubo League and 11 BNP men of torching a Hindu temple at Falda in Bhuapur upazila on April 2.

President of Sarbojonin Kali Mandir Committee, also general secretary of Falda union unit of Awami League (AL) Saran Datta filed the case with Bhuapur police station against Taherul Islam Tota, convenor of Bhuapur upazila unit of Jubo League, Falda union BNP general secretary Abdul Hannan, and local BNP activists Nazmul Sarkar, Ershad Ali, Harunor-Rashid, Anisur Rahman

Jammu, Abdul Malek, Shah Alam, Asad Sarker, Nayem Miah, Mizanur Rahman Auntu and Belal Hossain.

Hares Ali Miah, officer in-charge (OC) of Bhuapur police station, told this correspondent that the plaintiff accused the 12 of torching the temple out of previous enmity.

He also alleged that property worth Tk 60 lakh of the 120-year-old temple was damaged as the hoodlums also looted five tolas of gold ornament from the idols during the incident.

Another official of the PS said, police have already arrested three of the accused-- Asad Sarker, Mizanur Rahman and Shah Alam in this connection.

Local sources said, main accused Taherul Islam Tota was defeated in the union parishad (UP) election on June, 2011 as the local Hindus did not support him as the AL backed candidate. That is why local AL men led by Tota vandalised several houses in the area including that of the Kali Mandir Committee general secretary Santosh Datta on June 3, they said.

The temple torching might have followed the incident, local Hindus said.

A gang poured petrol and set the Sarbojonin Kali Mandir, the oldest and biggest temple in the upazila, on fire early Tuesday, they said.

Girl, woman 'commit suicide'

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Three people allegedly committed suicide in Chuadanga, Pabna and Bogra districts yesterday and the day before.

A teenage girl allegedly committed suicide by taking poison at Ramnagar village under Damurhuda upazila in Chuadanga district yesterday afternoon.

Deceased Monira Khatun, 18, was daughter of Anwar Hossain of the village, reports a correspondent.

Quoting the girl's family members, police said Monira locked in an altercation with her parents over a trifling matter in the morning.

Later, she took insecti-

cides at her bedroom.

The family members took her to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital where she died under treatment at about 4:30pm.

In Pabna, a peon of a school committed suicide inside the school building in Bhangura upazila yesterday.

The body of Amin Hossain, 27, was found hanging from the ceiling of a room at Prisom Kindergarten School, reports our correspondent.

Officer in-charge of Bhangura police station Subroto Kumar said teachers of the school saw the body at a classroom early yesterday and informed the police.

Amin was suffering

from chest disease for long. He did not get proper treatment for poverty. Failing to bear it anymore, he might have killed himself, said the OC.

In Bogra, a house-wife allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from the ceiling of her house following a family feud at Mirzapur Dakkhinpara village under Sherpur upazila on Friday evening.

The deceased was identified as Nargis Akhter, 22, wife of Sultan Mahmud of the village, reports our correspondent.

Police quoting her family members said Nargis had quarreled with her family members over a trivial matter hours before killing himself.