

Hartals, blockades hamper transportation of fertiliser

Boro season may face serious crisis as Baghabari cannot ensure supply

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR
TOPU, back from Baghabari, Sirajganj

Huge fertiliser is lying stockpiled at Baghabari river port as continuous political agitation like blockades and hartals badly hamper transportation of goods, posing risk of serious fertiliser crisis in northern districts in the boro season.

"At least 60 thousand

tonnes of imported fertiliser and eight thousand tonnes of coal are stacked in the port for the last two months due to transportation problem. Entire yard of the port is occupied with goods and so, there is no room for unloading goods here now," Md Abdus Salam, lease holder of the port, said during this correspondent's visit there a couple of days

ago.

"Around 50 thousand bags of fertiliser are daily supplied from here in normal time. But in last two months only 1.5 to 2 lakh bags were supplied as political unrest disrupted transportation. Eight hundred workers of the port often pass idle time due to the situation," he said.

"Twenty days ago, 14

vessels loaded with 10 thousand tonnes of imported chemical fertiliser came to the port but we could not unload the goods due to lack of room," said Md Sohrab Hossain, manager of Poton Traders, a leading carrying contract firm.

"We are counting huge demurrage for the last two months due to lack of room

for unloading goods at Baghabari port as we have to pay high amount of additional fare if we cannot unload a vessel within 22 days of loading goods," he added.

Md Abdur Rahman, staff of MV Moumita, claimed his ship come to the port with 500 tonnes of imported fertiliser on November 12 but they are too unfortunate to unload the ship till now.

"I reached Baghabari port on December 3, carrying 500 tonnes of imported fertiliser from Chittagong port but the vessel is yet to be unloaded," said Md Sohrab Hossain Master, pilot of the AKM Shahnewaz.

At least 40 fertiliser laden vessels loaded with around 20 thousand tonnes of imported chemical fertiliser are waiting in the river for unloading the goods but there is no room for the purpose at the port, said Md Abdur Razzak, Baghabari port officer.

"At least 250 to 300 trucks daily carry fertiliser for depots in the northern districts in normal time but in last two months we could not supply more than 200 trucks a week due to continuous blockades and hartals," he said.

"There was a target to supply 13 thousand tonnes of fertiliser from Baghabari depot in November and first week of December but we could not supply even half of the amount due to poor transportation facility," said Shukdeb Babu, manager of Baghabari BCIC fertiliser



PHOTO: STAR

A number of vessels loaded with fertiliser, coal and other goods wait for days for their turn to unload the goods at Baghabari river port in Sirajganj district as the already overloaded godowns and the yards of the port can hardly accommodate any more. Inset, huge fertiliser lies stockpiled on the premises of the port due to transport problem caused by continuous political agitation like blockades and hartals during the last couple of weeks.

Jubo League leader stabbed to death in Laxmipur

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Laxmipur

A local leader of Jubo League (JL), the youth wing of the ruling Awami League, was stabbed to death by criminals at Uttar Raipur village in Raipur upazila on Tuesday night.

The deceased was identified as Kiron Hossain Pathan, 30, organising secretary of Char Mohana union unit Jubo League and son of Awami League leader Mansur Hossain Pathan of the village.

Officer in-charge of Raipur police station Nasiruzzaman said unidentified criminals stabbed Kiron near his home around 9:30pm, leaving him dead on the spot.

Locals said, Dulal Pathan of Pathan Bari of the village was at loggerheads over a piece of disputed land for long with Mansur Pathan.

Over the issue, they had an altercation at their home in the morning.

As a sequel to it, Dulal Pathan and his supporters stabbed Kiron indiscriminately in front of their home at night.

However, JL Raipur upazila unit joint convener AKM Salaududdin Tipu blamed local cadres of Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Chhatra Shibir for the killing and demanded their arrest and punishment.

The body was sent to Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Teacher stabbed to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Moulvibazar

A madrasa teacher was stabbed to death allegedly by some students at Bahubol auto stand in Bahubol upazila of Habiganj district on Tuesday.

The dead is Maulana Abdul Jalil, teacher of Bahubol Khasimul Ulum Madrasa.

Police said Oli Miah, a student of the madrasa, along with a few friends attacked Jalil with sharp weapons, leaving him critically injured. He was rushed to Habiganj Sadar Hospital where he died in the evening.

Abdul Wadud, officer in-charge of Bahubol police station, said Oli and Jalil's younger brother Khalilur Rahman Khalil had an altercation over a trivial

Petrol bomb hurled at AL man's house

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Criminals hurled a petrol bomb at the house of a local Awami League leader at Kabarstan Road in Bagerhat town on Tuesday night.

Officer in-charge of Mongla police station M Aminul Islam said a gang hurled the petrol bomb at the house of Sheikh Abdur Rahman, general secretary of Mongla municipality unit AL around 8:30am, which exploded on its veranda.

No one was injured in the blast.

Abdur Rahman blamed Jamaat-Shibir activists for the attack.

In Chuadanga, criminals hurled a crude at Doctor's House at College Para in Alamdanga

upazila town on Tuesday night.

Locals and police said local extortionists demanded Tk 3,00,000 from the owner of New Life Surgical Clinic Dr Monzur, 45, son of Abdul Halim over mobile phone recently.

As he refused to pay the illegal, a gang threw the bomb when Monzur along with his family members was watching television at his residence at around 7:30pm.

The bomb exploded with big bang creating panic among the locals.

All business houses and shops pulled their shutter down in fear of attack after the incident.

However none was injured in the incident.



PHOTO: STAR

Armoury and lock-up that were gutted in a fire at Manikchhari Police Station in Khagrachhari district yesterday morning.

FIRE IN KHAGRACHHARI

Armoury, barracks of police station gutted

64 arms, 4500 bullets damaged

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Khagrachhari

Armoury, police barracks and lock-up of Manikchhari Police Station in the district were gutted in a fire yesterday morning.

According to Officer-in-Charge (OC) Keshob Chakraborty, the fire originated from an electric short circuit in the barrack of the police station at around 7:00am and soon spread to the armoury and lock-up.

Being informed, fire fighters from Ramgarh Fire Service Station rushed to the spot and doused the flames at around 8:00am.

Police men came out of the barrack safely, but could not save their belongings as ammunition kept in the amourey stated exploding at that time, the OC said.

Contacted, Police Superintendent Sheikh Mohammad Mizanur Rahman said the armoury, police barrack and lock-up were gutted in the fire.

The fire badly damaged around 64 firearms, 4,500 bullets and instruments in the radio room, the SP said, adding that the extent of damaged caused by the fire could go up to



PHOTO: STAR

A partial view of the arms and ammunition damaged by the fire in the armoury of Manikchhari Police Station. The fire originated from police barracks and soon spread to the armoury and lock-up.

Tk one crore.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Police of Chittagong Range Md Nowsher Ali, Commander of Guimara Army Region Brigadier General Md Anwarul Islam, Superintendent of Khagrachhari Police Sheikh Mohammad Mizanur Rahman and Additional Deputy Magistrate of Khagrachhari Anar Koli visited the police station at noon.

A four-member committee headed by Additional Superintendent of Police of Khagrachhari Joynul Abedin has been formed to probe fire incident.

Police with the help of army personnel put up four tents on the premises of the police station yesterday evening for their temporary accommodation and carrying out their regular activities.

Fodder grass feeds also the family of grower

KM REZAUL HOQUE,
Gaibandha

Abdul Gafur of Baraipara village in Palashbari upazila under the district has changed his life by cultivating foddergrass.

"Earlier I struggled to arrange two square meals a day for my family as I had only .09 decimal of paternal land and two cows. Facing serious fodder crisis due to massive flooding in the area five years ago, I sought advice from Mostafa Kamal, upazila livestock officer," Gafur said.

"Following his suggestion, I started cultivating high yielding Napier grass on my small plot. The produce helped to meet requirement for my cows and earn some money from selling the rest.

"In 2010 I cultivated Napier grass on five bighas of land on contract basis and earned a good amount. Last year I cultivated grass on nine bighas of leased land.

"It costs Tk 10,000 to cultivate grass per bigha and the yearly output can be around Tk 1 lakh. From the same roots, growers can collect grass seven times a year as use of cow dung, sometimes urea fertiliser,



PHOTO: STAR

A field of high yielding Napier grass at Baraipara village in Palashbari upazila of Gaibandha district. One Abdul Gafur of the village cultivated the fodder grass to meet requirement of his cows and earn money from selling the rest.

brings better yield," said Gafur.

With the earning from selling grass, Gafur has purchased six bighas of land and made a brick-built house. He has also made a cowshed with a plan to set up a dairy farm with at least 20 cows.

"Napier grass has great demand in the market and dairy farm owners often contact me for supplying grass. Witnessing my success in grass farming, many poor farmers are

trying to do the same," said Abdul Gafur.

Quddus Mia, a landless peasant of the same village, said being encouraged by Abdul Gafur, he cultivated fodder grass on his homestead and earned Tk 25,000 last year.

Abdul Gafur has played a pioneer role in fodder grass cultivation that encourages many other poor and marginal farmers in the area, said Abul Kashem, district livestock officer of Gaibandha.

Gunpowder seized, arms recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Kushia

Police seized two kg of gunpowder from Bildhola village in Gangni upazila of Meherpur district on Tuesday night.

However, none was arrested in this connection, said Masudul Alam, officer in-charge of Gangni police station.

Informed that a gang of smugglers were bringing firearms and gunpowder to the village from India, a police team from Dhola camp raided the area and seized the explosives kept in two bags at 8:30pm.

However, the smugglers managed to flee the scene, sensing the presence of the law enforcers, said the OC.

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two alleged arms peddlers at Boroitupi village in Sadar upazila early yesterday.

They also recovered one

foreign made pistol, a rifle and six bullets from their possession, said Rab sources.

The arrestees are Minnat Mandol, 37, son of late Jalal Mandol and Laltu Sheikh, 32, son of Hujur Ali of the village.

On secret information, a team of Rab-12 raided a house in the area and arrested the duo along with the arms and bullets.

Meanwhile, police arrested a youth along with a foreign made pistol and two magazines in Dapunia Chandpur area of Pabna Sadar upazila yesterday.

The arrestee is Abu Bakkar Hossain alias Sujon, 26, son of Nurul Islam of Awatapara village in Ishwardi upazila, reports our correspondent.

Officer in-charge of Sadar police station Kazi Haniful Islam said, acting on a tip-off a team raided the area at 1:30pm and arrested Sujon along with the arms.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

A farmer tends flowering bean plants at his field at Samilpur in Ishwardi upazila under Pabna district, an area famous for growing different winter vegetables.