

# Sudden rain adds to woes of potato growers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

A sudden rain has added to the woes of the potato growers in the region.

It drizzled for about 24 hours till yesterday noon in Dinajpur and other northern districts ruining the last hope of potato farmers who already had incurred losses due to political chaos during the peak season.

The Dinajpur Met Office recorded 20.4mm rain since Friday noon. Mercury also dipped increasing the suffering of poor people, especially the daily labourers.

The potato growers of Dinajpur and Jyoti said, they had no buyers from other districts due to political unrest between early December to end of January this year, which inflicted huge losses to them.

Per kilogram potatoes was being

sold between Tk 1 to 1.5 in the districts during the period.

As the prices were going down, farmers of different areas kept matured potatoes on their fields hoping that they would collect those when the situation improves. But untimely rain has ruined the hopes of the farmers.

Talking to this correspondent, most farmers in Dinajpur Sadar upazila said that the potatoes which were left on the fields during the last harvest would be damaged because of rain.

"Now I have no way left to recover losses," said Rezzakul Islam of Nasipur village in Dinajpur Sadar upazila. He cultivated two acres of land and already sold a portion of potatoes at Tk 1.5 per kilogram. He had kept the rest one acre on the field hoping to sell those at good prices.

According to the Dinajpur DAE, at

least 43,500 hectares were brought under potato farming in the district this season.

"If the rain continues, potato growers will be hit hard," said Anwarul Alam, Deputy Director of DAE.

Meanwhile, the Dinajpur Met Office officials predicted more rain ahead.

In Rangpur, rain couple with cold in the last 24 hours since Friday paralysed normal life in the district.

Atiqur Rahman, chief meteorologist at Rangpur Met Office told our Rangpur correspondent that they recorded 14.9mm rainfall in the city and its surrounding areas during the period.

He said the lowest temperature was recorded 13.1 degree Celsius in Rangpur yesterday while it was 9.8 on Friday.

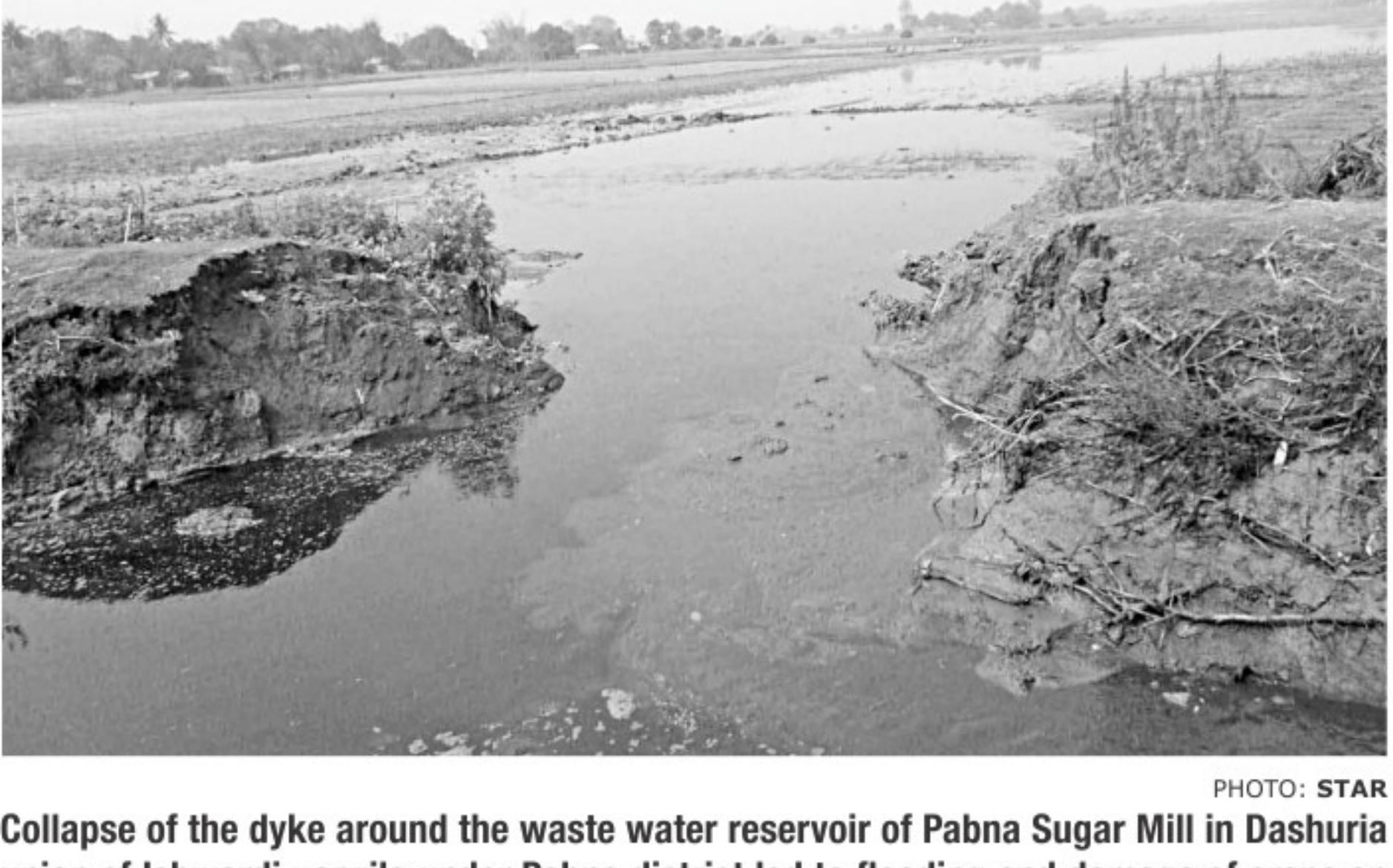


PHOTO: STAR

**Collapse of the dyke around the waste water reservoir of Pabna Sugar Mill in Dashuria union of Ishwardi upazila under Pabna district led to flooding and damage of crops on over three hundred bighas of land yesterday.**

## DYKE COLLAPSE IN ISHWARDI Waste water of sugar mill floods farmland

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pabna*

Crops on over three hundred bighas of land got flooded as the dyke of the pond containing waste water from Pabna Sugar Mill in Dashuria union of Ishwardi upazila under the district collapsed yesterday morning.

Agitated farmers besieged the mill officials and put barricade on Dashuria-Salimpur road at noon, demanding compensation for the crop damage due to 'negligence' of the mill authorities.

The mill officials and the Ishwardi upazila nirbahi officer went to the spot and eased the situation by assuring compensation to the affected farmers.

"The dyke collapsed at about 7:00am today [Saturday]. As the mill authority did not repair it immediately, overflowing waste water from the mill zone flooded at least three hundred bighas of cultivated land in Dashuria and

Salimpur unions, causing damage of crops worth Tk 5 crore," Md Aminul Islam, chairman of Dashuria union parishad.

The damaged crops include mustard, onion, cauliflower and pulses in three hundred bighas of land, said victim farmers Abdul Hamid, Year Ali, and Azizul Sardar.

"A five-member committee headed by the upazila agriculture officer will submit report on the amount of loss of the framers within three working days. Another committee has been formed to investigate why the dyke collapsed," said Md Sanwar Hossain, Ishwardi upazila nirbahi officer.

Komol Kanti Sarkar, managing director of Pabna Sugar Mill, said, "The dyke collapse is an accident. It could not be repaired immediately as farmers became agitated and besieged our staffs. If negligence of our staffs is found behind the incident, we will punish them."

## Ring leader of forest robbers killed in 'gunfight'

UNB, *Khulna*

Ringleader of a gang of forest robbers was killed in a 'gunfight' between his cohorts and police in Karamjal tourist area of the Sundarbans in Dakope upazila on Friday afternoon.

The deceased was identified as Siraj Shikdar, chief of the notorious forest robber gang 'Siraj Shikdar Bahini'.

Shikdar Akkas Ali, officer in-charge of Dakope police station, said acting on a secret information that a gang of robbers was gathering in the area, a joint team of Dakope and Paikgaccha police raided the Karamjal tourist area, two kilometers deep into the forest, at about 3:00pm.

Sensing the presence of the law enforcers, the robbers opened fire on police, prompting the law enforcers to retaliate, which triggered a gunfight.

The robbers fired 50-60 rounds of bullets at police while police returned 26 fires.

After 30 minutes of the gunfight, the gang members fled the scene.

Later police recovered the bullet-hit body of Siraj Shikdar from the spot.

One gun, two pipe guns, 10 bullets and five sharp weapons were recovered from the spot.

## KAZI AREF MURDER

# Another year over, verdict in case yet to be executed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*

Verdict in Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) president and freedom fighter Kazi Aref Ahmed murder case could not be executed 15 years into the killing as the appeal hearing of the case remains pending with the Appellate Division.

Kazi Aref along with four leaders of JSD Kushtia district unit was killed by an armed gang at a rally at Kalidaspur village under Daulatpur upazila of Kushtia on February 16, 1999.

The four other slain leaders were JSD Kushtia unit president Lokman Hossain, general secretary Yakub Ali, local JSD leaders Shamser Ali and Ismail Hossain.

The then additional district and sessions judge of Kushtia Fazlur Rahman pronounced the verdict in the case on August 30, 2004, sentencing 10 people to death and 12 others to life imprisonment.

Those awarded death penalty are Ilyas Hossain, Sahir Uddin, Baker, Mannan Mollah, Anwar Hossain, Rashedul Islam Jhantu, Jahan Ali, Jalal, Safayat Hossain, and Roushan.

Of them, Mannan Mollah, Jahan, Jalal and Baker have been absconding.



Kazi Aref Ahmed

while Roushan was killed in a 'shootout' with police on August 27, 2006.

Those sentenced to life imprisonment are Nuruzzaman Laltu, Rofat, Asgar, Mohit, Faraz, Tashar and Garesh Sardar, Majid, Mahtab, Oliur, Akubbar and Tikka.

Of the lifers, Mahtab, Oliur and Akubbar are still at large while Mohit was killed in 'crossfire' with police on February 12, 2005.

On August 5, 2008, a High Court bench upheld the lower court verdict. After the High Court judgment, an appeal petition was filed with the Supreme Court. Hearing on the petition still remains pending with the court.

Meanwhile, JSD Kushtia unit will pay homage to their slain leaders today (Sunday) by holding different programmes, rally and discussion.

## DINAJPUR

# 38 to contest polls in two upazilas

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

At least 38 people including 10 women filed nomination papers yesterday to contest polls in two upazilas of the district.

Seventeen filed their nomination papers for chairman posts, 11 for vice chairman posts and 10 for woman vice chairman posts in Dinajpur Sadar and Nawabganj upazilas, said election officials.

Rebel candidates of AL, Jamiat and BNP also filed their nomination papers yesterday.

The chairman candidates of Dinajpur Sadar upazila are Faridul Islam (AL), Mukur Chowdhury (BNP), Aktaruzzama Jewel (BNP), Mokarram Hossain (BNP), Murad Ahmed (BNP), Ahmed Sharif Rubel (JJP) and Mozibor Rahman (Independent).

The vice chairman candidates in Sadar upazila are Kishore Kumar Roy (AL), Nurul Alam (BNP), Mahbul Haq Koreishi (Jamiat), Foysal Ibne Aziz (AL), and Mahbulul Alam Noni (JGP).

The woman vice chairman post candidates are Hasmin Luna (AL), Shahin Sulma Beauty (BNP), Khaleda Parveen (BNP) and Moriam Begum (BNP).

The chairman candidates in Nawabganj upazila are Ataur Rahman (AL), Abdul Latif (AL), Abdul Motin (AL), Tariqul Islam (BNP), Mokbul Hossain

# Hindus in Patgram fear fresh attack after upazila polls

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Salmonirhat*

Hindus in Patgram upazila fear that there may be a fresh attack on them after the upazila elections scheduled to be held on February 27.

Earlier, the bordering areas of the upazila witnessed a spate of attack on Hindus centring the January 5 parliamentary polls this year.

Many victims on condition of anonymity said they had decided to leave their ancestral home being in fear of fresh attack by the BNP and Jammat-Shibir men.

Ghoshpara Durga Temple president, Manaranjan Chandra Ghosh, 80, said at least 50 Hindu families in Ghoshpara village who suffered most in the attacks on November 28 last year, were in panic.

"Hindus fled their village leaving their homestead and shelters in different areas of the upazila. Many Hindu women of the village are still staying at

their relatives' houses in fear of further attack," he added.

Fearing fresh attack, they did not arrange any yearly religious function on the premises of Ghoshpara Durga Temple this month, said Satya Narayan Ghosh, another Hindu local.

Sunil Chandra Sen, a Hindu community leader in Shafinagar village, said over 100 Hindu families had been passing their days in panic as they were attacked twice on October 27 in 2013 and January 4 this year.

"The masterminds of the attacks are yet to be arrested which is a major reason for panic and uncertainty," he said.

"I don't know what would happen in future as Jammat-Shibir men might flex muscles with their ferocious character anytime here following the upazila polls," said a local trader Majibar Rahman of the town.

Amiruzzaman, officer in-charge of

Patgram Police Station said the attackers went into hiding immediately after the incidents and police were trying their best to arrest them.

Police had ensured security of the Hindus and were giving them legal support, he added.

So far 37 cases were lodged with Patgram police station, accusing 750 named and over 2,000 unnamed BNP and Jammat-Shibir men in the last three months.

Of them, 140 were arrested while the mastermind Shibir leader, Sohel Rana, is still on the run.

Police said seven people, including one Awami League, three BNP and three Shibir men were killed in Patgram town, Kafirbazar and Shafinagar villages in the upazila during the attack.

More than 100 houses and shops were vandalised, looted and torched in Ghoshpara and Shafinagar villages.

## WHIP VISITS OKRABARI IN DINAJPUR

# Victims yet to file any case for fear of reprisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

An AL lawmaker of Dinajpur and JS whip visited Okrabari village in Chiribandar upazila yesterday just to hear that after 40 days of an attack on Hindus,

the victims were yet to file any case against the culprits who torched their 43 shops.

During his visit, whip Iqbal Rahim ensured the victims all kinds of cooperation and action.

According to the locals, the Jammat-Shibir and BNP men carried out the arson attack and looted and damaged 43 shops of Hindus at Okrabari soon after the end of January 5 election.

The villagers alleged that those opposed to election attacked the Hindus for casting vote on that day.

Ahsanul Haque, general secretary of Chiribandar upazila AL and principal of Khosna SC School and College, said his institution was a poll centre in the area and Jammat-Shibir and BNP men attacked it after 2:00pm on January 5.

After that, around 60 to 70 Jammat-Shibir and BNP men, armed with sharp weapons and wooden sticks, came to the area and started searching for shops of Hindus. They attacked, damaged, looted and torched them, Haque told the whip.

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Two rooms of the polling centre were also burnt, he added.

Boidyanath Roy, a grocery shop owner at Okrabari village said he had shut and left his shop on January 5 guessing something wrong in the area.

Also the victims are yet to file any case in connection with the incident, fearing reprisal by Jammat-Shibir men and BNP, said several villagers.

PHOTO: STAR



**Jatiya Sangsad Whip and Awami League leader Iqbal Rahim yesterday visits Okrabari bazaar where shops belonging to Hindus were torched allegedly by BNP and Jammat activists after January 5 JS polls.**

## RURAL POWER COMPANY LIMITED (RPCL) Invitation for International Tenders

Sealed tender is hereby invited from the bonafide manufacturer/ supplier/contractor's for the under mentioned supply of Goods and Works with the following conditions:

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources /Power Division		
2	Agency	Rural Power Company Limited(RPCL)		
3	Procuring Entity Name	Executive Director (Engineering), Rural Power Company Limited		
4	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka		
5	Invitation for	1. Procurement of Goods 2. Procurement of Works		
6	Invitation Reference No.	1. PUR- 073/2013-14 (OTM) (International )		
7	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method ( 1 stage 2 envelop method)		
8	Source of Funds	RPCL's own fund		
9	Starting Date and Time for Selling Tender Document.	Date 16.02.2014 Time 10:00 AM (Local Time)		
10	Last Date and Time for selling Tender document	Date 30.03.2014 Time 05:00 PM (Local Time)		
11	Last Date and Time for Submission of Tenders	Date 31.03.2014 Time 12:00 Noon (Local Time)		