

# Seasonal job crisis brings woe to farm labourers

## Govt's 40-day job scheme for the poor in Lalmonirhat yet to start this season

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

A good numbers of day labourers in remote villages of Teesta and Dharla river basin areas in the district are passing a hard time amid seasonal unemployment while the government's 40-day job scheme meant for the poor people during the crisis period is yet to start.

Many people are selling their labour in advance to the local farm owners for lower prices while others are borrowing money from money lenders at high interest rates.

"There are at least 50 thousand farm labourers in five upazilas of the district. Their ongoing job crisis is likely to continue until start of IRII-boro paddy harvest in the first week of June. Now many farm labourers are going to different areas of the country in search of job," said Safayet Hossain, deputy director of the Department of Agriculture Extension in Lalmonirhat.

Mansur Ali, 46, of Teesta River basin Char Gobordhan village in Aditmari upazila said he has already sold his labour in advance to a local farm owner for low price, as there is hardly any option during this crisis period.

"We earn Tk 250 to 300



PHOTO: STAR

**A few farm labourers of Megharam village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila return frustrated after failing to get any work as there is very little demand for their work during the ongoing off-period that will continue until the harvest of now growing IRII-Boro paddy starts in early June.**

per day for work in the farm during job period but now we are selling labour in advance for Tk 150 to 180 a day," he added.

"I became jobless early this month. I go out of home daily but fail to get any work throughout the day," said Sahidar Rahman, 52, a day labourer at Teesta River basin Tazpur Char village in Aditmari upazila.

Hapless farm labourers at different villages have demanded that the government start the 40-day job programme for the poor people in the district immediately.

Locals have also urged the industrialists of the country to set up mills and factories in the area for creating job opportunity in the backward region.

Lalmonirhat District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer Mahasinul Haque said, "The 40-day job scheme meant for several thousand poor people during this crisis period will start immediately after getting direction from the ministry concerned. Our staffs are selecting names of beneficiaries of the scheme."

# Schoolhouse, playground used for fair

## Obscene dance, gambling spoil local atmosphere

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Classes at Dhukurjhari High School and the adjoining primary school in Biral upazila under the district is badly hampered as a month-long fair occupying the playground and a building started on April 5.

The noise from loud-speakers, especially at night, has become a nuisance for locals.

The area sees a yearly animal trade fair styled Dhukurjhari Poshu Mela for the last 65 years but this year the organisers have arranged gambling and obscene dance there, occupying a large portion of the school

ground and also the primary school building, locals said.

Contacted over phone, Dhukurjhari High School managing committee chairman Ichhat Ali Sarker, also president of Dhukurjhari Poshu Mela Committee, said, "The fair is not affecting the study of the students. We help mosques and a temple with the collected money."

Ichhat Ali is also president of Biral upazila unit of Awami League.

Visiting the fair site a couple of days ago, this correspondent found several shops. Not a single animal was seen there.

"This year gambling and

obscene dance have been arranged instead of an animal fair. It leaves bad effect in the mind of children. The noise from loud speakers at night also disturbs the study of HSC students in the neighbourhood," said Md Ansar Ali, an elderly resident of the area.

"The fair is badly affecting our classes. Now many female students feel embarrassed to attend school," said a teacher of Dhukurjhari High School, seeking anonymity.

"Our study is badly disturbed due to the fair," said Ariful Islam, a class X student of the school.

Bimal Chandra Das, headmaster of the school,

said he rescheduled the classes for the fair at the school compound.

Seeking anonymity, several teachers of the school alleged that the fair was organised without any resolution of the school managing committee.

"I verbally informed Biral upazila Education Officer Md Jufikar Ali of the matter," the headmaster said.

This correspondent failed to contact the official to talk regarding the matter.

Contacted, Dinajpur District Education Officer Enayed Hossain said he is unaware about the fair at Dhukurjhari High School in Biral upazila.



PHOTO: STAR

**Seating arrangements covered by a large canopy occupy the playground of Dhukurjhari High School in Biral upazila under Dinajpur district as unscrupulous people are organising obscene dances and gambling in the name of a month-long fair there.**

# Girl rescued while being trafficked to India, two arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT Benapole, Jessore

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) personnel rescued a girl while she was being trafficked to India through Dhanyakholo border under Benapole Port Police Station Wednesday evening.

They also arrested two

traffickers on the spot. The arrestees are Masud Rana, 23, and Shaon Gazi, 24, son of Rafique Gazi of Sharsa upazila under Jessore district.

Lt Col Matiur Rahman, commanding officer of 26-BGB, said a BGB team, acting on a tip-off, raided

the area at around 7:00pm, rescued the girl and arrested traffickers Masud and Shaon.

The victim told the BGB men that the traffickers brought her from Koyra upazila of Khulna district, promising a good job in India.

The girl and the traffick-

ers were later handed over to Benapole Port Police Station. Police produced the traffickers, Masud and Shaon, in the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal, Jessore, yesterday.

The court rejected the bail prayers of the two and sent them to jail.

# Bullet-hit body of abducted UP member found

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A union parishad member, abducted by a circus pandal in Palashbari upazila on April 9, was found dead at Tekani near Thutiapakur Bazaar on Gaibandha-Palashbari Road yesterday morning.

Locals found the body of Shamsul Islam Sabu, 55, a member of Bedkapa Union Parishad (UP) in the upazila, at around 9:00am and informed the police.

Law enforcers from Palashbari Police Station went to the spot, recovered the bullet-hit body and sent it to Gaibandha Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Azma Khatun, wife of the slain UP member, said an unidentified gang picked up her husband night from the circus pandal in the union on the night of April 9. Since then, he remained untraced, Azama added.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) Gopal Chandra Chakraborty of the police station said they are trying to arrest the gang involved in the murder.

Shamsul Islam Sabu was accused in several cases, including for murder and robbery, filed with the police station, the OC further said.

# Rangpur medical students go on strike

UNB, Rangpur

Students of Rangpur Medical College went on an indefinite strike yesterday afternoon to press home their eight-point demand.

They called the strike after criminals beat up one of their fellows at a hostel.

The demands include setting up of a permanent police camp on the campus and closed circuit cameras at all dormitories, arrest of the attackers and restriction on outsiders' entry into the campus, and steps to ensure security of the students and doctors.

Campus sources said a group of outsiders entered Dr Mukta Hostel and started beating Nazmul Hasan Rishad in his room No 9 around 1:00pm.

They also took away a laptop, a mobile phone set and money from Rishad.

Protesting the incident, the general students took out a procession on the campus and held a rally at the administrative building where they vowed to continue their strike until the demands are met.

Officer in-charge of Kotwali Police Station Abdul Kader Zilani confirmed the incident. He, however, said no case was filed in this connection.

# Lightning kills Krishak League leader

UNB, Kishoreganj

A local Krishak League leader was killed by lightning at Shapla Bonde in Sadar upazila yesterday morning. The deceased was identified as Matiur Rahman, 70, president of Itna upazila unit of Krishak League, associate body of the ruling AL for farmers.

He hailed from Chipahati village in the upazila, said locals.

Lightning struck Matiur while he was visiting a paddy field in the area at about 8:30 am and died on the spot, they said.



PHOTO: STAR

**An elephant gives welcoming gesture to visitors at the inauguration of the month-long international trade fair organised by Bogra Chamber of Commerce and Industry at Kadamtali Ghat in Bogra town yesterday.**

# Nine Khulna upazila health complexes in poor health

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Nine upazila health complexes in the district are limping with manifold problems, including acute shortage of doctors and staff, much to the sufferings of the patients.

The health complexes in Rupsha, Terokhada, Phultala, Dumuria, Batiaghata, Digholia, Paikgachha, Koyra and Dakope upazilas comprising around seven lakh people, are running without any resident medical officers and consultants for long.

A total of 353 posts of 1st and 3rd class staffs are lying vacant, against 1486 posts in the health complexes, said sources.

The ambulances often go out of order.

Amid the prevailing situation, a large number of patients, most of them women and children, are deprived of medical treatment at the hospitals.

Those who come to the hospitals seeking treatment for delivery cases and other complicated diseases like

hepatitis-B are facing multiple complexities.

They are being compelled to receive treatment at higher cost at different clinics and hospitals either in the district or other places.

Many critical patients have reportedly died on way to the distant hospitals and clinics.

During a recent visit to Phultala Upazila Health Complex, this correspondent found Aleya Begum, 33, of Jugnipasha village, who came here with severe gynecological problem, returning home without treatment for want of physicians.

Three other patients -- Saleha, 28, Arpita Das, 32, and Kamrun Nahar, 26, -- said they did not get proper treatment at the hospital.

This correspondent also visited Dumuria and Batiaghata upazila health complexes which are beset with similar problems.

The patients often fail to get necessary medicines as these are allegedly sold to outside pharmacies. Substandard foods are

served to the patients, alleged the treatment seekers at the health complexes.

Admitting the acute shortage of doctors, staff and other logistics, acting Civil Surgeon Dr Yasmin Ali Sarder said, "We have already

# Temple torched in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Unidentified criminals set fire to a temple at Bholardighee village in Aditmari upazila of the district early yesterday.

Police and locals said an unknown gang set tin-roofed Radha Govinda Durga Mandir (temple) afire when the villagers were asleep.

Being informed, fire fighters from Lalmonirhat district headquarters went to the spot and extinguished the blaze. Local lawmaker Nuruzzaman Ahmed Aditmari Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Rezaul Alam, Officer-in-Charge Aslam Iqbal visited the spot yesterday.

# JAN 7 VIOLENCE IN BOGRA

# Tragic death of veg trader leaves his family ruined

MAMUN-UR-RASHID, Bogra

Vegetable trader Milon Ali's tragic death, due to a bomb attack during the BNP-led 18-party alliance's country-wide blockade on January 7, also left the family shattered.

Milon, 24, son of Lutfar Rahman Pramanik and Jahanara Begum of Goneshpur Purbopara in Shibganj upazila of Bogra district, had a dream to see his younger brother Tarajul Islam, an honours first year student of Azizul Haque College, highly educated.

"But my son's life came to a tragic end as the pickets threw a petrol bomb on the truck carrying him at Horgati on Dhaka-Bogra highway in Ullapara of Sirajganj district on January 7 night," sighed Lutfar Rahman at his shabby house.

"Milon discontinued study after his HSC as he joined my vegetable trading to support the family. He used to go to Dhaka two or three times a week. He also pulled rickshaw in the area," he said.



PHOTO: STAR

**Mother of Milon, burnt to death in a petrol bomb attack by picketers during the countrywide blockade sponsored by BNP-led 18-party alliance on January 7, shows all signs of distress in front of the house at Goneshpur in Shibganj upazila under Bogra district as the tragic death left the family devastated.**

The bomb attack also left Milon's companion Imran Alam, 23, killed and truck driver Shafat Ali, 55, seriously injured.

Now burdened with high-interest loan from an NGO and a few people, Milon's family members

have sought urgent help from the government as a way out.

Milon's premature death also left his newly married wife Afroja Begum, hailing from Kalai upazila in Joypurhat district, in an utterly hapless state.



## ১২তম জাতীয় ফার্নিচার মেলা ২০১৪

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