



PHOTO: STAR

Two women from ultra poor families making doormat at Doljor Doormat Factory in Aditmari upazila of Lalmonirhat. Five such factories under a CARE project have made over a hundred women self-reliant in the district.

Doormat making opens door to prosperity

Over a hundred ultra-poor families now self-reliant in Lalmonirhat

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Over a hundred women from ultra poor families in different areas of the district have gained self-reliance through working in doormat factories, thanks to the initiative of CARE Bangladesh.

Around two years ago, Setu Project of CARE Bangladesh arranged training on doormat making for these distressed women and Classical Handmade Products BD involved them in gainful work at five factories in different areas of the district.

"Earlier I passed hard days with my family. After getting training on doormat making from Setu

Project of CARE Bangladesh, I started working at the factory of Classical Handmade Products BD here 18 months ago," said Kalpona Begum, 42, wife of Abdul Matin at Balapukur village of Aditmari upazila.

"I am earning Tk 3,500 to 4,200 a month by producing doormats at the factory. Now I support my poor family and maintain schooling cost of my two children," she said.

"I can produce at least 10 doormats daily and get Tk 14 against one piece. I use a portion of the earning for schooling of our children and save the rest," Sondhya Rani, 35, wife of Nirmol Chandro

Roy at Bhatpara village of Aditmari upazila.

Bina Rani Saha, an official of Setu project, said the earning from producing doormats are helping the poor women to get rid of the cycle of poverty as they can pay off debts, arrange schooling for children, meet family requirements and save for future.

"The items produced by them are of high quality and now exported abroad. The whole process can be more streamlined for socio-economic development of thousands of ultra poor people in the monga (seasonal famine-like situation) prone area," she said.

LOW PRODUCTION COST, GOOD PROFIT

Coriander is now grown on large scale in hill dists

SHANTIMOY CHAKMA, Rangamati

Coriander cultivation is gaining popularity among farmers in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) as it has become profitable because of low production cost and easy farming methods

Ethnic farmers in Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban districts are cultivating coriander, locally known as "bilati dhonia", and earning handsome amount of money, sources in the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) said.

In Rangamati, coriander

is grown on a large scale in Wagga, Betunia, Ghagra, Kawkhali and Sadar upazila. Commercial cultivation of coriander started in hills about ten years ago, and it can be grown in plain, slope and even in high land.

Coriander cultivation does not entail huge cost, but it requires proper nursing, said Ajit Tangchangya, a farmer in Sakkrachhari village in Wagga.

He also said that it is more profitable than many other crops. By cultivating coriander a farmer can earn profit several times higher than that of paddy, he added.

Farmers cultivate coriander in January and harvest it within four months. They harvest coriander leaves three to four times from a single farm. Coriander leaves are in high demand in local markets. A kg of leave is sold at Tk 80-120.

"I got Tk 2 lakh by selling coriander leaves last year. Hopefully, I will get more than Tk 3 lakh this season," farmer Ajit said.

Md Altabor Rahman, deputy director of DAE in Rangamati, said they encourage farmers to cultivate coriander as it is more profitable than others crops.



PHOTO: STAR

Coriander is now grown on a large scale in several upazilas of Rangamati district. The photo was taken from Sadar upazila a few days ago.

Housewife murdered for dowry

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A housewife was killed allegedly by her husband for dowry at Kastoshinga village in Sadar upazila early yesterday.

The deceased is Shila Parvin, 20, wife of Al-Amin, 25, of the village.

Police quoted victim's father Abu Bakar Siddik as saying that Al-Amin, son of Joynal Abedin, used to torture his daughter for dowry since their marriage about two years back.

At one stage of their altercation over the issue, Al-Amin strangled Shila to death around 2:00am and fled the scene.

Meanwhile, police arrested Al-Amin and his father Joynal, from their house around 4:30pm, for their alleged involvement with the murder, said the officer.

Woman hurt in bomb blast

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kustia

A woman was injured as a crude bomb went off at Harabhanga village in Gangni upazila of Meherpur district yesterday.

The injured is Rehena Khatun, 40, wife of Raital Haq of the village.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) Reazul Islam of Gangni Police Station quoted locals as saying that Rehena found a bag in the yard of her house at around 12:30pm.

When she took the bag in her hand, a crude bomb went off, leaving her seriously injured.

She was admitted to Meherpur General Hospital. Being informed.

Railroad on bridge demanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram

A rally was brought out from Chilmari to Kurigram district headquarters yesterday morning, demanding railroad on the second bridge over the Teesta River.

Around 200 people joined the procession organised by Kurigram Development Committee.

The processionists also held meetings at Chilmari, Balabari, Ulipur, Panchpir, Rajarhat and in Kurigram town to press the demand.

Convener of the committee Nahid Hasan, Tuhin Wadud, Saidul and Prof Shafiqur Rahman spoke, among others. The speaker also demanded an express train service on Ramna-Rangpur route.

Jhalakathi guava growers deprived of fair price

UNB, Jhalakathi

Guava growers in the district are being deprived of fair price of their produce due to communication problem.

Sources concerned said, for the development of the communication system in the district, especially the part covering the guava growing areas, Jica (Japan International Cooperation Agency) started implementing a project one year ago.

Then guava growers hoped that they would be able to earn good profit by sending their produce to different districts, including Dhaka using the roadways, on implementation of the project financed by Japan.

However, construction work of the two kilometre road from Bawkathi to Bhimruli, main floating market of guava, and four bridges remained stuck halfway.

Guava growers said due to communication hindrance, they are being deprived of getting fair price of their produce.

They said guava is grown in the orchards at 36 villages in Sadar upazila and Sharupkathi upazila.

CHILD PATIENTS SUFFER AT HOSPITAL

Paediatric ward shut for 2 weeks for Puja, Eid

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Child patients are being deprived of proper treatment at Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital as the hospital's paediatric ward has remained closed for two weeks due to Durga Puja and Eid-ul-Azha.

Hospital sources said child patients are now undergoing treatment at surgery ward, which struggle to cope with an influx of patients.

While visiting the hospital yesterday, this correspondent saw at least 20 child patients along with their mothers took shelter on the floor of the surgery ward due to lack of beds, sources added. However, the hospital authorities said the paediatric ward will reopen today.

"My four-month-old daughter has been suffering from pneumonia since Eid Day. I along with my daughter is now staying on the floor of the surgery ward," said Rahima Begum of Kulaghat village under Sadar upazila.

Zinat Begum of Shiberkuti village in the

same upazila said her five months old son has been suffering from fever since Eid Day. "He was admitted to the surgery ward on the day due to closure of the hospital's paediatric ward," she said, adding that her son is now lying on the floor of the ward for lack of bed.

"As child patients are not getting proper treatment at the surgery ward, I took my three-year-old son to a local clinic in the town on Wednesday," said Hamidul Haque of Durakuti village in Sadar upazila.

Residential Medical Officer (RMO) Dr Nabiur

Rahman said doctors of the hospital are providing proper treatment to child patients at the surgery ward. "Mothers and their kids face a bit problem due to a sudden surge of patients," the RMO said, adding that the problem will be solved in a day or two.



PHOTO: STAR

Mothers along with their kids crowd the floor of surgery ward of Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital as the paediatric ward has remained closed for two weeks on the occasion of Durga Puja and Eid-ul-Azha. However, the hospital authorities will reopen the ward in a day or two.

4 killed, 50 injured as rival villagers clash in 3 dists

STAR COUNTRY DESK

At least five people were killed and 80 others injured as rival villagers clashed in Habiganj, Satkhira and Noakhali districts yesterday and the day before.

Two people were killed and 40 others injured in a clash between two rival BNP groups at Bejura village in Madhabpur upazila yesterday, reports our staff correspondent in Sylhet.

The deceased were identified as Rina Begum, 17, daughter of Khurshed Mia, and Jalal Miah, 80, of the village.

Quoting locals, police said Enayetullah, president of Madhabpur upazila Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, and Arzu Mia, vice-president of the upazila unit of BNP, had long been at loggerheads over establishing supremacy in the area.

Yesterday, when two children of the village locked in a clash over a trifling matter, both groups equipped with sharp weapons, swooped on each other around 11:00am, triggering a fierce clash.

On information, police rushed to the spot and fired rubber bullets and teargas shells to bring the situation under control.

Rina and Jalal died on the spot while the injured were admitted to

Madhabpur upazila health complex and Habiganj Sadar Hospital.

In Satkhira, a man was killed and 15 others were injured in a clash between two rival groups over a shrimp enclosure in Shyamnagar upazila yesterday afternoon.

The deceased was identified as Azizul Moral, 50, son of Khalil Moral of Gabura village, reports UNB.

Locals said, there had been a long-standing dispute between Mazid Member and Asadullah Galib over the ownership of a shrimp farm.

The supporters of Mazid killed Galib a few months ago over the issue.

The trouble erupted anew when the supporters of slain Galib went to the fish enclosure around 2pm yesterday.

The both groups locked into a clash and exchanged fire, blasted crude bombs, leaving Azizul, a supporter of Mazid, dead on the spot and 15 people injured.

Of the injured, seven received bullet injuries.

In Noakhali, an expatriate was killed and 10 others were injured in a clash at Saydullahpur village in Kabirhat upazila, reports our correspondent.

The deceased was identified as Wali Ullah, 38, son of Ahsan Ullah of Naulua

village under Dhanshiri union of the upazila. The injured were admitted to Kabirhat upazila health complex.

Police quoting the locals said, Kuwait expatriate Wali Ullah went to his father in law Abul Khair's house on Wednesday noon.

There was a land dispute between Abul Khair and Hakim Ali of the village for the last three years.

When Abul Khair obstructed Hakim's men from entering the land, Hakim son Mojibur, along with 20-25 supporters attacked Khair's house.

They injured 10 people including women and children.

Seriously injured Wali Ullah later died on the way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital early yesterday.

In Kalikapur village in Sadar upazila of Madaripur, a man was killed and 15 others were injured in a fierce clash between two rival groups on Wednesday night, reports our correspondent.

The clash was sequel to previous enmity.

The dead was identified as Sahadat Kha.

His family claimed that the youth was killed in an attack on their house by over 100 people of the rival group at dead of night.

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