



PHOTO: STAR

Jobless farm labourers coming from rural areas wait at Mission Intersection in Lalmonirhat town with hope to get any menial job to survive the ongoing seasonal crisis period. The photo was taken on Monday.

# Seasonal job crisis brings woe to farm labourers

Government's 40-day job scheme yet to start in Lalmonirhat

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

A good numbers of farm labourers in rural areas of the district are struggling for survival amid seasonal job crisis that is likely to continue until start of the aman paddy harvesting in late November.

The government's 40-day yearly job scheme meant for mitigating sufferings of the unemployed farm labourers during this period is yet to start this year, adding to the situation.

As there is hardly any job opportunity for farm labourers in the region during the Bangla months

of Ashwin and Kartik (October-November), most of them are going to different towns and cities including the capital in search of job, locals said.

But many labourers return home frustrated as there is not sufficient job in towns too, said several farm labourers.

"I and 30 other farm labourers of the village are preparing to go capital Dhaka for searching job," said Noor Miah, 58, of Dewdoba village in Aditmari upazila.

"After failing to find job in the town, many farm workers like me are selling

labour in advance to the local farm owners for low payments," said Gajendra Nath Barmon, 48, of Bhadai village in the same upazila.

Farm labourers Abdul Miah, 62, Isa Ali, 50, Azizul Islam, 45, and others at Kalmati village in Lalmonirhat Sadar also talked about their utter helplessness due to the job crisis.

Farm labourers get job opportunity under the government-run 40-day job scheme during this period every year, but the project is delayed this year as the authorities are yet to sanc-

tion fund for the purpose, said Ziaur Rahman, project implementation officer in Aditmari upazila.

Nadim Sarowar, district relief and rehabilitation officer of Lalmonirhat (Additional Charge), said his office will get the government fund for running the 40-day job scheme programme very soon.

Lalmonirhat District Relief and Rehabilitation Office sources said, the government sanctioned Tk 4 crore 75 lakh and 68 thousand to arrange job opportunity for 5,946 ultra poor people in October-November last year.

# 100 roadside trees illegally sold in Panchagarh

UP members, stakeholders submit complaints against UP chairman, secy to DC

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Over a hundred roadside trees in Hafizabad union under Panchagarh Sadar upazila have been felled and sold off in last few months, allegedly defying rules.

Seven members of the union parishad (UP) along with locals filed a complaint to Deputy Commissioner (UP) along with locals filed a complaint to Deputy Commissioner (UP) on October 23, stating that the chairman and the secretary of the UP illegally felled and sold off the trees.

Earlier on October 21, several beneficiaries (local people who look after the roadside trees for growing up) also submitted the same complaint to the DC.

They gave the copies of the complaint to local reporters on Wednesday afternoon.

"UP Chairman Sahadat Hossain and Secretary Sahadat Hossain [another person] felled over a hundred different species of trees including mahogany and eucalyptus along nine kilometres road from Diabari Dakkhin Talma to Bhitargarh Balurghat via Uttar Talma in Hafizabad union during last several months without maintaining rules or arranging auction," goes the complaint.

The duo also felled 25-30 roadside trees during October 17-20 in the same way, it adds.

The trees were planted along the road in 1990 under an afforestation project with the financial assistance of World Food

Programme, UP sources said.

As per the agreement, the trees are to be sold thorough proper auction procedure when they gain maturity, and the beneficiaries who take care of the trees will get 55 percent, upazila parishad 30 percent and local union parishad 15 percent of the money.

But the stakeholders are deprived as the UP chairman and the secretary felled and sold off over a

hundred trees in last few months without taking permission or arranging auction, said UP Member Rashidul Islam, and Aminar Rahman, one of the beneficiaries who looked after the trees.

Asked about the matter, UP Chairman Sahadat Hossain told this correspondent over cell phone, "We cut down several roadside dead trees adjacent to people's houses as those created risk and nuisance

for them."

Contacted over cell phone, Upazila Nirbahi Officer Maksuda Begum Siddika said, "A show cause notice was served to the UP chairman in this connection. Assistant Commissioner (Land) Ilias Mehedi is investigating the matter and will submit report soon to the deputy commissioner. Legal action will be taken against the accused if anomalies are found."



PHOTO: STAR

Logs from illegally felled roadside trees lie on the premises of Hafizabad union parishad complex in Panchagarh Sadar upazila on Wednesday afternoon. Inset, stub of such a tree at Uttar Talma village in the union.



# Youth killed in clash over land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

A youth was killed in a clash over a piece of disputed land at Pirijpur village in Bajitpur upazila yesterday.

The deceased is Saiful Islam, 25, son of Chandu Mia of the village.

Police said there had been a longstanding conflict between Chandu and his neighbour Bokul Mia over the land.

As a sequel to the conflict, they locked in a fierce clash, leaving Saiful seriously injured.

Later, he died on way to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital. A case filed in this connection.

# One held for vandalising idols in Kurigram

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram

One of the accused in the case for vandalising Hindu idols at a temple in Rajarhat upazila on Tuesday was arrested yesterday.

Nizamuddin Sarkar, 35, was held at Nazimkhan Bazar in the morning, said Abdur Rashid, officer-in-charge of Rajarhat Police Station.

Other accused in the case are Nur Uddin, 65, father of the arrestee, and his another son, Nasir Uddin, 28, of Somnarayan village.

They had gone into hiding soon after filing of the case.

Police and locals said Hindu devotees found three idols at Shashan Kali Mandir damaged when they went to the temple for worship on Tuesday evening.

Immediate after the incident, Rabindra Nath Karmokar, general secretary of Hindu-Buddha-Christian Oikya Parishad, visited the spot.

The incident took place at midnight, said Shuzan Bakshi, president of the temple committee.

Later, a case was filed, accusing the three, said the OC, adding that police were raiding different areas to arrest the accused.

# Abducted housewife traceless for 22 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A housewife, abducted from Jamuna village in Shajahanpur upazila of the district on October 8, still remains traceless.

The victim is Shefali Rani Das, 26, wife of Shiblal Robi Das, a member of village police, and also a resident of the village.

Victim's family sources said Shefali went missing from Bogra town on October 8.

Shiblal filed a general diary (GD) with Shajahanpur police station on October 10. Finding no positive result, he submitted an application with the police station on Tuesday night, seeking permission to file a case against Mehedi Hasan Babu, 32, son of Shajahan Ali of the village.

When asked, Shiblal told this correspondent that Babu used to stalk his wife Shefali over phone for long.

Recently, he verbally requested Babu not to harass Shefali any more, but the accused did not pay any heed to his request.

He also threatened him to abduct Shefali from her residence, Shiblal alleged.

Contacted, Abdul Mannan, officer-in-charge of Shajahanpur Police Station, said they are investigating the matter and trying to rescue the housewife.

# SCHOOLS IN JHALAKATHI

# Notebooks replace textbooks as aid for good results!

M JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL, Jhalakathi

Teachers and students of the schools in the district often do away with English textbooks provided by the government as they consider notebooks and guide books 'more helpful' for doing good results.

This correspondent got the picture during his visit to 20 classes of as many schools including two government schools in four upazilas of the district.

"I never read English textbooks from classes VI to X as school teachers did not use it while teaching. They taught us questions and answers with selected guide books that helped us to do good results," said Suma Aktar who scored golden GPA in the SSC from Rajapur Pilot Girls' High School in 2012.

"I could not enter any university this year as I failed to get qualifying marks in English. Now I understand the consequence of ignoring English textbooks," she said.

"The students are not interested to read textbooks as no question is set from there in the examinations," said Tapan Kumar

Karmakar, English teacher of Jhalakathi Government Hara Chandra Girls' High School.

"We usually carry guides in school for our classes as the teachers teach us from it," said Taslima Aktar, a student of the school.

In the 20 schools visited, this correspondent found not a single student who could smoothly read out a few passages from their English textbooks and say its meaning.

The students of 15 of the schools could not even read out a single line form the text with meaning.

Amir Khosru, senior English teacher of Rajapur Girls' High School, informed that he tried to teach students with the help of English textbooks in school but none felt interested.

Kazi Sumaia Moon, who secured GPA-5 in the SSC and golden GPA in the HSC, is now studying in economics department of BM College in Barisal.

"I did not get chance at any university for failing in English in admission tests as I remained weak in English for not reading textbooks in my school," she said.

"Syllabus for communicative English (up to Class XII) would be excellent for students' English learning if textbooks are followed systematically," said Dr Muhammad Muhsin, associate professor of English and dean of arts faculty, Barisal University.

"But teachers and students often ignore textbooks and follow guide books for doing good results as question patterns of communicative English in JSC, SSC and HSC examinations enable students to score 80 percent marks without learning English well."

Only seven students got qualifying marks for studying honours in English in last year's admission test of Barisal University, he added.

"English teachers encourage students to read guide books as they get financial benefit from publishers of such books," said an English teacher seeking anonymity.

Nikhil Ranjan Chakrobarty, district educational officer, Jhalakathi, said he found teaching guides in some schools and warned the teachers of its bad effect.

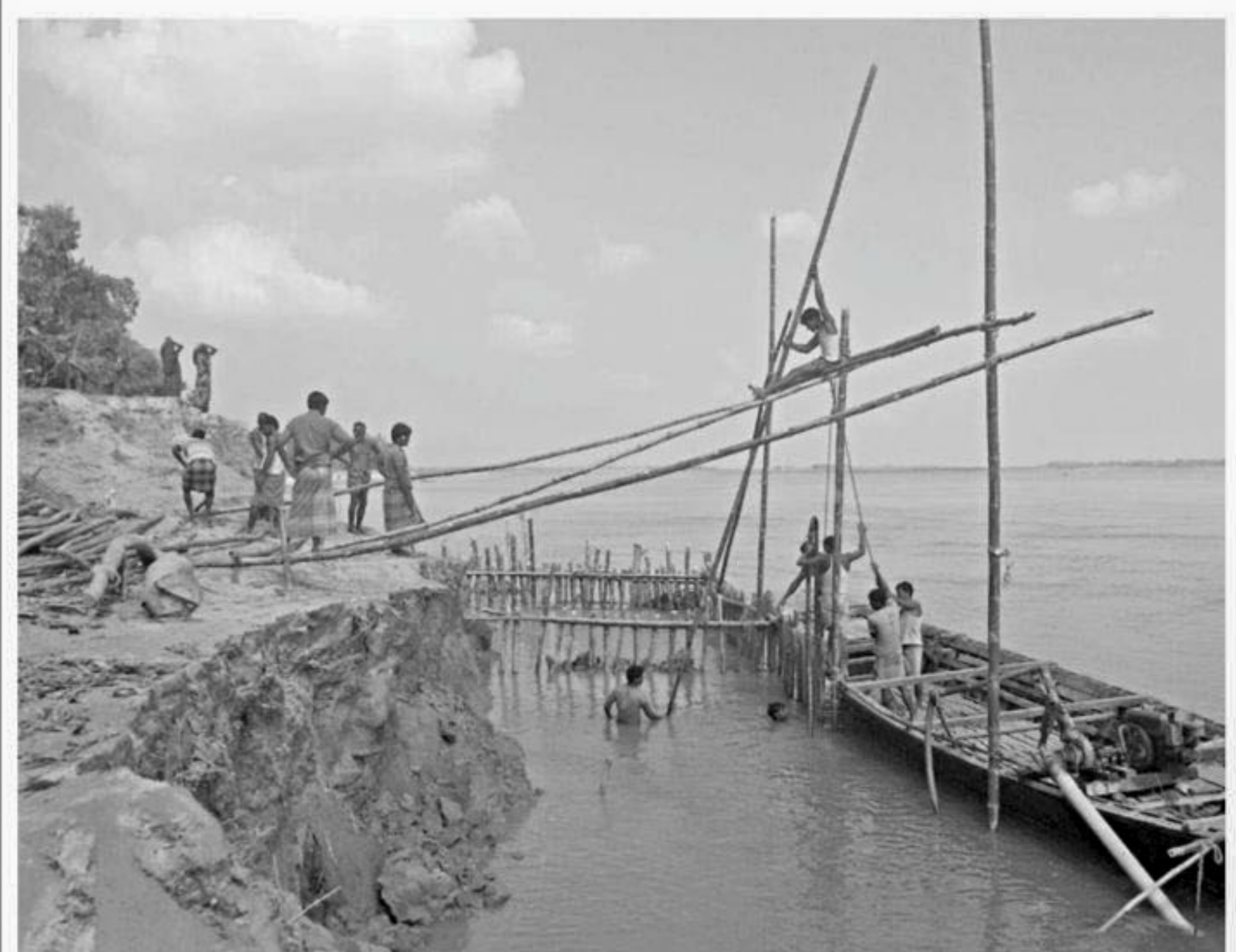


PHOTO: STAR

Locals render voluntary service, setting bamboo pilings to check erosion by the Dudhkumar River in Ghogadaha union under Kurigram Sadar upazila yesterday.

# BSF returns bodies of three Bangladeshis

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

The bodies of three Bangladeshis, killed by locals at Khowai town in the Indian state of Tripura early Tuesday, were handed over to Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) yesterday evening.

The victims are Sujan Mia, 22, Param Ali, 40, and Akkel Mia, 19, from Gazipur union of Chunarughat upazila.

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) handed over the bodies to BGB on Balla border in the upazila at around

7:00pm.

Commanding officer of BGB Srimangal 46 Battalion Lt Col Mohammad Nasir Uddin received the bodies, said officer-in-charge of Chunarughat Police Station Amulya Kumar Chowdhury who was also present there.

Five cattle traders, including the three, of Gazipur union under Chunarughat upazila crossed the border into India on Monday night, Gazipur Union Chairman Tajul Islam told this correspondent.

A mob swooped on

them at Khowai early Tuesday. Sujan and Param died on the spot and Akkel at a hospital in the town. Tajul told this correspondent, quoting the two cattle traders, who escaped the attack and returned home yesterday.

A battalion commander-level flag meeting between the BGB and the BSF was held at the frontier on Wednesday. At the meeting, the BSF officials assured the BGB of handing over the bodies after conducting autopsies, the BGB official said.

# AL activists clash over tender in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Two groups belonging to the ruling party clashed over submitting tender documents at LGED (Local Government Engineering Department) office in the town yesterday.

At least two people sustained injuries during the incident.

Of the injured, Rahat, 30, an activist of Awami League (AL), took primary treatment at a local clinic, while the identity of the other could not be known immediately.

Sources said LGED authorities floated a tender of Tk 6.46 crore for the 2014-15 fiscal years to build roads, culverts and markets in different upazilas of the district.

Yesterday was the last date for the bidding, but since morning two groups—one reportedly backed by former state minister for religious affairs Advocate Shahjahan Mia, also president of the district unit AL, and another by Dr Saiful Islam, mayor of Patuakhali municipality prevented each other from dropping bid documents.

At around 12:00noon, Rahat, a cadre allegedly loyal to Shahjahan waylaid Saiful's man Jewel when the latter was about to enter the LGED office for dropping tender documents, leading to the clash.

Being informed, police went to the spot and brought the situation under control.

Abu Hanif, executive engineer of LGED in Patuakhali, said all the bidders were able to drop their tender documents in presence of the law-enforcers.