



A farmer harvests mint at his field of Karnapur village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

# Lalmonirhat mint farmers hit hard by blockade

Good yield, but prices low as supply to the capital hampered

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Good yield of mint in the district this season fails to make farmers happy as they are facing problem to market the aromatic plant amid the countrywide non-stop blockade enforced by the BNP-led 20-party alliance.

Mint growers at Fulgachh, Karnapur and Etapota villages of Mogholhat union in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila said their earning from the item decreased this year as they are selling it in the local market for low prices.

There are hardly any buyers from capital Dhaka and other places of the country amid the non-stop blockade, they said.

A farmer can get at least 10 kg of mint from a decimal of land, said agriculture officials.

"I have cultivated mint on four decimals of land this year. I harvested 14 kg of mint in last three weeks and earned only Tk 3,000 from selling it in the local market. The price was much higher last year as buyers from capital Dhaka and other places came here," said Ruhul Amin, 47, of

Karnapur village.

People purchase mint for high prices as the aromatic herb helps to cure different diseases, especially of pregnant women, he said.

But the prices have fallen this season due to marketing problem, he added.

Mint grower Rabi Kanta Barmon of the same village said, he spent only Tk 500 for cultivating mint on five decimals of land.

However, the item requires regular care and so, his wife and two sons are also engaged in the work with him.

Mohammad Nuruzzaman, Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila agriculture officer, said, "Farmers got bumper yield of mint this year due to favorable weather and good seeds. Besides, we provided necessary suggestions to mint growers at different villages."

"But growers are frustrated due to its low prices in the local market. Arrangement of its marketing in the capital and other places of the country would encourage more farmers in the district to cultivate mint."



Youths pledge to remain away from corruption at a programme organised by Chapainawabganj district anti-corruption committee at the deputy commissioner's conference room in the town yesterday. Similar programmes were held in different districts across the country marking the ongoing Corruption Prevention Week.

PHOTO: STAR

# Pistol, phensidyl, Yaba seized

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) in separate drives seized firearm, cumin and phensidyl from bordering areas of Gomostapur upazila of the district early yesterday.

Tipped off, a team of BGB 43 Battalion conducted a drive in Rokonpur area and seized one pistol, one bullet and four packets of cumin from the spot.

Besides, the BGB members also seized 300 bottles of phensidyl from Shialmara area and 50 bottles of phensidyl from Chanshikari area around 1:00am.

The seized firearm, bullet, phensidyl and cumin were deposited to Gomostapur Police Station, said Rokonpur BoP Commander Nayeab Subedar Motalab Mia.

Our Manikganj correspondent reported that a trucker and his helper were arrested with 234 bottles of phensidyl

at Muljan on Dhaka-Aricha Highway at around 12:00 noon yesterday.

The arrestees were identified as trucker Yasin Hossain, 25, son of Abdul Quddus of Kagajpur village, and helper Abul Hasan, 22, son of Liakat Ali of Bhabaraber village under Benapol Police Station of Jessore.

Sub-Inspector Shah Alam of Manikganj Police Station said they seized the bottles of phensidyl syrup from the truck.

In Magura, detectives in a drive arrested four people with 175 Yaba tablet from Laxmikandar area in Sadar upazila yesterday.

The arrestees are Faruk Mollah, Azharul, Swapan and Selim Mia of Boro village in the upazila.

Being informed, a team of the Detective Branch of Police (DB) conducted a raid in the area and arrested the four along with the Yaba tablets in the morning.

# 6 hurt as AL, Jubo League men clash

UNB, Rajshahi

At least six people were injured in a clash between the ruling Awami League (AL) and its youth front Jubo League (JL) in Bagha upazila on Friday night.

Sources said the clash ensued when the supporters of Tasikul Islam, a leader of Bagha municipality unit of Jubo League, beat up Amir Hossain, a supporter of Abdul Kuddus, president of Bagha municipality unit of AL, around 9:00pm.

Amir Hossain came under attack on way to Bagha in a CNG-run auto-rickshaw as he had earlier refused to give the supporters of Tasikul Tk 20,000 as toll.

Hearing the news, Kuddus' supporter Lal Chand rushed to the spot, but he was also beaten up by Tasikul's men.

After a few minutes, the

supporters of Kuddus, equipped with sharp weapons, went to the spot and swooped on their rivals.

They chased each other and traded bullets during the clash that left at least six people from both sides injured.

On information, police rushed to the spot, fired several blank shots to disperse the clashing groups.

Two of the injured were admitted to Bagha Upazila Health Complex while the rest given first aid at the hospital, said Aminur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Bagha Police Station.

No case was filed in connection with the incident as of filing of this report at 6:00pm yesterday.

# Elephant kills boy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A minor boy was killed and a girl injured by a wild elephant at Kalachand village in Chakaria upazila of the district yesterday.

The deceased is Delwar Hossain, 4, son of Md Yousuf of the village.

Police quoted victim's father Yousuf as saying that a wild elephant from the adjacent hills entered the village around 12:00noon. It attacked the kids while they were playing in the yard beside their houses, leaving Delwar dead on the spot and Aysha injured.

Critically injured Aysha, 5, daughter of Abdul Khaleque, was admitted to a clinic in the upazila headquarters, said Probbash Chandra Dhar, officer-in-charge of Chokoria Police Station.

# 11 gamblers jailed in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A mobile court sentenced 11 gamblers to seven days' imprisonment in Kaliganj upazila of the district yesterday.

The convicts are Siddik Mia, 28, Soleman Mia, 35, Mahubar Mia, 33, Mithu Mia, 31, Anwarul Islam, 32, Mofizul Islam, Mozammel Hossain, 36, Mosharrif Hossain, 26, Ramzan Ali, 46, and Enamul Haque, 30.

They all hail from different areas of Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Gaibandha and Sylhet districts.

Monjurul Rahman, officer-in-charge of Kaliganj Police Station, said a police team conducted a drive at Bukshula village in the upazila at around 3:00am and arrested the 11 while they were gambling at a house.

The arrestees were later produced before the mobile court led by Executive Magistrate Asaduzzaman. After a hearing, the court pronounced the verdict.

# 21 held while going to India illegally

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole, Jessore

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh detained 21 Bangladeshi nationals while they were going to India through Putkhali border without valid documents early yesterday.

The arrestees are from different areas of Gopalganj and Narail districts.

BGB sources said the border guards, acting on a tip-off, raided the Putkhali border area around 4:00am and arrested 21 Bangladeshis, including eight women and three children, while they were crossing the border without passports.

The arrestees were later handed over to Benapole Port Police Station. They were yesterday produced in a court that sent them to jail, said Shamsur Rahman, Putkhali camp in-charge of BGB 26 Battalion.

# Girl burnt alive in Satkhira

UNB, Satkhira

A two-year-old girl was burnt to death as a fire broke out at a house at Binerpota Basundhara village in Sadar upazila on Friday night.

The deceased was identified as Sonia, daughter of Babar Ali of the village.

Officer-in-Charge of Sadar Police Station Emdad Sheikh said the fire originated from the cow shed of Babar Ali around 10:30pm and soon engulfed the house.

Sonia was burnt alive as she could not come out of the house. Later, police recovered her charred body.

Additional Superintendent of Police Mir Modasser Hossain confirmed the incident.

# Minor boy, Dakhil examinee abducted in Sunamganj, Bogra

STAR COUNTRY DESK

A five-year-old boy was abducted from Batirkandi village in Chhatak upazila of Sunamganj district on Friday.

The victim is Md Imon, son of Johur Ali of the village, reports our Moulvibazar correspondent.

Police quoted family members as saying that a gang picked up Imon from Chhatak-Doara Road near their house at around 4:00pm.

Later, the gang phoned Johur Ali, demanding Tk two lakh as ransom for release of his son. Johur filed a case with Chhatak Police Station the same day.

Officer-in-Charge

Harun-ur-Rashid of the police station said law enforcers are raiding different areas to rescue the boy.

Our Bogra correspondent adds: An SSC examinee was abducted from Shimulbari village under Bhandarbari union in Dhunat upazila of the district yesterday morning.

The victim is appearing in the Dakhil examinations from Manik Potal Dhakhil Madrasa of the area.

The victim's mother filed a complaint with Dhunat Police Station, saying that a leader of BCL ward No 4 unit of the union, forcibly picked up her daughter from their house at around 7:00am.

Police detained the BCL

leader's mother in the afternoon for interrogation.

The complainant, also a leader of Dhunat upazila unit of Mohila Awami League, stated that she was undergoing treatment at Dhunat Upazila Health Complex during the incident.

This correspondent could not reach the BCL leader over his cellphone as it remained switched off.

Contacted, Officer-in-Charge (OC) Ziaur Rahman of Dhunat Police Station said they received a complaint filed by the victim's mother against the BCL man.

Police have already launched a drive to rescue the girl, the OC added.



A large number of Hindu devotees from different areas of the country as well as neighbouring India through the bank of Sindurmoti pond at Sindurmoti village in Panchgram union under Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila to join a traditional religious fair there yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

# Gang leader shot in 'shootout' with cops

Police say infamous 'Jihad Bahini' chief Deen Mohammad Jihad is accused in 9 cases

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A gang leader sustained bullet injuries during a 'shootout' between his cohorts and law enforcers in Sadar upazila of Laxmipur district early yesterday.

The injured is Deen Mohammad Jihad, 30, chief of infamous 'Jihad Bahini' and son of Ruhul Amin of Kansanarayanpur village in Laxmipur Sadar upazila.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) Md Nasim Uddin of Chatkhil Police Station said law enforcers arrested Jihad and his cohorts Moin Uddin

and Main Uddin in a brick-field area in Khilpara union under Chatkhil upazila of Noakhali district at around 8:00pm on Friday.

Chatkhil Police handed them over to Chandraganj Police the same night. On the basis of Jihad's statement, police along with Jihad conducted a drive in Balaishpur area to recover firearms at around 3:30am.

Sensing the presence of the police, Jihad's cohorts opened fire, prompting the law enforcers to retaliate, police said.

Jihad received bullets during the gunfight while

his cohorts managed to flee. He was taken to Laxmipur Sadar Hospital. Police found a light gun and three bullets on the spot.

Three constables, who were injured by bullets during the gunfight, were admitted to the police hospital and then shifted to Sadar Hospital. They are Satyanarjan Chakma, Milon Kanti Chakma and Amirul.

Police Superintendent (SP) Shah Mizan Shafiur Rahman said Jihad is a listed criminal. He was wanted in nine cases, including those for murder and robbery, the SP added.



The local union parishad chairman with the help of police seized 38 dead chicken from three shops at Khochabari Haat in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila as the traders had processed the items for sale yesterday afternoon. The alleged perpetrators fled the scene, sensing the presence of law enforcers.

PHOTO: STAR