

Neck blast disease wreaks havoc on boro fields

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Neck blast disease has spread alarmingly in vast areas of boro fields in Sadullapur upazila of the district, much to the worry of farmers.

"We had expected a bumper production this season, but now we are worried due to the attack of the disease," said Amjad Ali, a farmer of Tilakpara village in Sadullapur upazila.

"Despite spraying of pesticide, the disease continued to spread prior to harvesting of late variety of boro crop," he added.

Agriculture experts visiting the areas identified the disease as neck blast that separates the stalk of paddy from the plants, and said the disease broke out due to weather and temperature fluctuation.

"Neck blast attacks the plants when the temperature remains high during the day time and foggy weather

prevails in the early morning. It is advisable to spray pesticide at the primary stage of the attack," said Tanjimul Islam, sub-assistant agriculture officer, Dhaperhat union.

According to the Upazila Agriculture Office, boro crop was cultivated on 14,765 hectare of land this season, and higher production than previous years is expected.

Farmers said the crop fields were also attacked by pests locally known as 'cur-

rent insects' that are damaging crops.

"I sprayed costly pesticide on my five bighas of land, but it did not help in controlling the pest," said Milon Mia, another farmer of the same village.

"Farmers growing boro crop this season will incur loss, and it is feared that it might be difficult to even realise production cost since the price of paddy has fallen drastically in the local market," he further said.



PHOTO: STAR

A farmer gives a hapless look as neck blast disease badly damaged boro plants on his field at Dhaperhat in Sadullapur upazila under Gaibandha district.

2 housewives murdered

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Two housewives were murdered in Pabna and Rangpur districts yesterday and the day before.

In Pabna, a woman was beaten to death allegedly by her drug addict husband at Choubaria village in Bhanguara upazila yesterday morning.

The deceased is Hasina Khatun, 30, wife of Farid Hossain of the village, reports our correspondent.

Md Abu Zafar, officer-in-charge of Bhanguara Police Station, said Farid beat up Hasina mercilessly as she refused to give him money for buying drugs.

Critically injured Hasina was rushed to the upazila health complex where the doctors declared her dead. Police arrested Farid.

According to our Rangpur correspondent, a housewife was strangled allegedly by her mother-in-law at Copinathpur village in Pirganj upazila on Saturday.

The deceased was identified as Morfia Begum, 20, daughter of late Saidur Rahman of Kumedpur village.

Police and locals said Morfia married Saiful Islam, 25, a garment worker in the capital, last year.

Following an altercation over a trivial matter on Saturday noon, Saiful's mother Rokeya Begum strangled Morfia.

Being informed by locals, police rushed to the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Rangpur Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Lightning kills one

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A man was killed by lightning at Kushiara village in Bera upazila of the district on Saturday evening.

The deceased was identified as Babul Fakir, 25, son of Abdul Aziz Fakir of the village.

Locals said Babul was struck by a thunderbolt while he was returning home from their farmland at the village at around 6:30pm. He died instantly.

Six robbers held, looted truck recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Police yesterday arrested six members of a robbers' gang from different upazilas of Barisal and Rajbari districts and seized a truck snatched by the gang on April 24.

The arrestees are Sirajul Hawladar, Rubel Hawladar, Milon Hawladar, Abdullah, Swapan Karikar and Hasan Bepari. They all hail from different villages in Ujirpur upazila of Barisal.

Police said one Sirajul of Bhedaran village in Ujirpur village hired a truck over phone for carrying goods from the village to the

upazila headquarters on April 24.

As the truck reached the village around 11:00pm, a gang waylaid the vehicle. They tied up trucker Arun to a roadside tree and fled the scene with the truck, said Nurul Islam, officer-in-charge of Ujirpur Police Station.

Informed by the local people, police rescued Arun the following morning.

According to Arun's statement, police arrested Sirajul, who hired the truck, from Dehergati village in Babuganj upazila around 11:00pm on Saturday.

According to his confessional statement, police arrested Rubel, Milon, Abdullah and Swapan from Bhedaran village early yesterday.

After grilling the five, a team of the law enforcers, led by Sub-inspector Ali Ahmed raided Sardarpara village in Goalandu upazila of Rajbari yesterday morning and arrested Hasan Bepari. They later seized the truck from a place in Faridpur district.

Sirajul Islam, owner of the vehicle, lodged a case, accusing the six arrestees with Ujirpur Police Station.



PHOTO: STAR

Police arrested six robbers yesterday and recovered from their possession a truck that had been hijacked by the gang from Bhedaran village in Ujirpur upazila under Barisal district on Friday night.

AL leader shot dead in Teknaf, 4 arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A local leader of Awami League (AL) was shot dead by an unknown gang at Rangikhali village under Teknaf upazila of the district on Saturday night.

The deceased, Shafique Ahmad, 44, was president of Ward No-7 unit of AL under Lilla union in the upazila.

Police quoted witnesses and family members as saying that a gang of 25 to 30 criminals sprayed bullets on Shafique when he was taking tea at a tea shop at the village at around 9:00pm.

As locals rushed to the spot, the gang opened fire and fled the scene. They (locals) took Shafique to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital where the doctors declared

him dead.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) Ataur Rahman Khandaker of Teknaf Model Police Station said law enforcers arrested four people yesterday and on Saturday night for their alleged involvement in the killing.

Drive is on to arrest the rest of the gang members, the OC said, adding that police have been deployed in the area.

Hospital vandalised after patient's death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Relatives of a patient vandalised a hospital and its owner's house following the death of the patient due to alleged wrong treatment in the district town on Saturday night.

Ahsan Sheikh, 42, son of Kafil Sheikh of Ghoramara village in Sadar upazila, died at Hamdah Prince Hospital in the town due to wrong treatment, alleged his younger brother Fazlu Sheikh.

Last week, Ahsan was advised to be operated for having stones in the gall-bladder when he contacted a doctor of the hospital following stomach pain.

Ahsan's condition deteriorated after he was given anaesthesia by one Kabir Hossain at the hospital. Dr Jahidur Rahman Feroj started conducting operation at around 7:30pm on Saturday.

He later died but fearing rage of the patient's relatives, the hospital authorities said Ahsan should be referred to a hospital on Green Road in the capital without much delay as his condition deteriorated, said the victim's wife Roksana Khatun.

On way to Dhaka, the patient's brother found him dead at Goalpara Bazar in the upazila, she said.

As the death news spread, the relatives of the deceased attacked the hospital, its owner's house and a private car.

Despite repeated calls, this correspondent could not reach the doctor and hospital owner Alamgir Hossain for their comments in this regard as their cellphones remained switched off.

Biplob Kunmar Nath, officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station, confirmed the incident.



PHOTO: STAR

The memorial built by locals in honour of around 300 people who embraced martyrdom in the hand of barbaric Pakistan occupation army at Kaliganj village in Jaldhaka upazila under Nilphamari district on April 27 in 1971.

'Kaliganj massacre day' today

Hardly any programme to remember the martyrs, families yet to get govt recognition

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Today is April 27, 'Kaliganj massacre day'.

On this day in 1971, the Pakistani occupation army brutally killed around 300 innocent people at Kaliganj village in Jaldhaka upazila under the district when they were proceeding towards the border for a safe shelter in India.

Around 1500 people, including women, children and elderly ones from Kanthali, Balagram, Golna, Jaldhaka and other villages reached Kaliganj on their way to the Indian border when Pakistani troops on a jeep and a lorry appeared there and ordered them to stop.

The barbaric force separated 300 young men and fired them with machine guns.

Then they charged bayo-

net to confirm death of some of the injured ones. Before leaving for Jaldhaka, they lifted some young girls onto their vehicles.

Amor Krishna, 63, a former high school teacher of Balagram village, lost his father, two brothers, uncles and eight other relatives on that fateful day.

"I was then a young man of 19 years. A bullet fired by the Pak army hit my neck and I fell down, senseless. When I got back my sense, I saw many dead bodies around. I somehow stood up and hid myself in a bamboo cluster," said Amor, describing that horrifying day.

Kala Mia and his brother Thanda Mia of Kaliganj village said they along with their father buried many dead bodies in a single grave the next morning.

"After liberation, Bangabandhu Sheikh

Mujibur Rahman sent letters to the martyrs' families, expressing his gratitude for the martyrs," said Hridoy Ranjan Roy, 60, a village doctor at Kaliganj Bangabandhu Bazar, who lost six of his close relatives during the Liberation War.

"But after that, none cared about us and we are yet to get government recognition as martyrs' families," he lamented.

Former UP chairman Moshirur Rahman, also a resident of Kaliganj village, resented that no government did anything to keep the memory of the martyrs alive for the next generation.

Even local units of prominent political parties do not observe the day, he said.

A memorial was built at the initiative of locals a few years ago and only a handful of patriotic people place floral wreaths there on this day, locals said.

**Research Associates
at IWFM, BUET**

The Institute of Water and Flood Management (IWFM) of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) announces recruitment of a total of five Research Associates under a recently initiated 5 years research project: "Disaster Prevention/Mitigation Measures against Floods and Storm Surges".

This project is being implemented jointly by IWFM, BUET and DPRI, Kyoto University, Japan with financing from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) under the Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS) programme.

The intermediate research outcomes would propose a number of sustainable preventive and mitigation measures for disaster of floods and storm surges in order to establish the resilient local society.

The key research components incorporate the following broad themes:

- 1) Flood disaster risk assessment and mitigation measures
- 2) Development of improved storm surge warning and evacuation system for Bangladesh coast
- 3) Flow/sediment management and land protection measures against erosion along the river
- 4) Flood assisted spreading of deposited toxic substances and possible mitigation measures
- 5) Disaster management strategy for resilient society

Research Fellowship

Five full-time research associates will be provided salaries starting from BDT. 20,000/- and can be increased up to BDT. 30,000/- based on performance. No other benefits are admissible.

Eligibility Criteria

An applicant must have either a four year Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering/ Water Resources Engineering/ Environmental Science/ Urban and Regional Planning/ Disaster Management or its equivalent having a minimum GPA of 3.00 out of 4.0 from any recognized institution.

In addition, all other rules and regulations of BUET regarding recruitment will be applicable.

Deadlines for Application

To apply for this position, an applicant must send hard copy of their CV (together with soft copy) along with a letter of interest and supporting documents no later than 2nd May, 2015 (Saturday) to Mr. Shaikh Shahidul Islam (Email: shahidul@jica-bd.org, Mob: 01705152011) at the project office on 4th Floor at IWFM, BUET.

Selection Procedure

Candidates will be selected on the basis of interviews. Eligible candidates (through screening) will be informed of the schedule via telephone within a week from the deadline of application.

Contact

For further details, please contact JICA project office through Professor Md. Munsur Rahman <mmrahman@iwfm.buet.ac.bd> or Dr. Mohammed Abed Hossain <abed@iwfm.buet.ac.bd>.