



PHOTO: STAR
Cauliflower seedbeds, like this one in Munshiganj Sadar upazila, are now a common sight in flood-free agricultural lands in the district, as many farmers prepare such seedbeds for supplying saplings to local growers as well as those in other districts.

Flood damages vast aman fields in Lalmonirhat

Sapling crisis worries farmers

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Thousands of aman farmers affected by the recent flood in the district are facing uncertainty due to lack of saplings for replanting in their fields.

"I cultivated aman paddy on my four bigahs of land this year, but the recent flood destroyed all the plants. I have no saplings in my stock, I have collected low quality saplings but paying high rate from a flood free village Falimari of the upazila for re-planting

these on my affected field," said farmer Hamidul Islam of Bhitarkuti village in Aditmari upazila.

Shamsul Islam, a farmer of Kutirpar village in the upazila, said aman plants of his three bigahs of land have been damaged by the flood, but he could collect some aman saplings for replanting on only one bigha of land from a nearby flood free village.

Many flood affected farmers are searching for saplings for replanting aman in their affected fields

but they are not available, he added.

"We are selling our additional aman saplings on one decimal of land for Tk 3,000 to 3,500. Flood affected farmers are purchasing those at high rates," said Nazrul Islam, a farmer of flood-free Falimari village of Aditmari upazila.

Aman paddy was cultivated on 83,618 hectares of lands in five upazilas of the district this year, said sources of the Department of Agriculture Extension in Lalmonirhat.

The recent flood has damaged aman paddy on about 15,000 bigahs of land as the fields remained under the floodwater for 11 to 13 days.

Hamidur Rahman, Aditmari upazila agriculture officer, said, "Now replanting aman saplings will result in less output. We are suggesting farmers to prepare their affected fields for cultivating early variety wheat and mustard that will bring good yield and help recoup the loss in aman farming."



PHOTO: STAR
A farmer sees his aman plants badly affected by the recent flood at Kalmati village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

KILLING OF AL LEADER

Jubo League man among two held in Laxmipur

UNB, Laxmipur

Police arrested two people, including a Jubo League leader, from Latifpur area in Sadar upazila early yesterday in connection with the killing of Chandraganj union Awami League leader Md Omar Faruque.

The arrestees are Ismael Hossain, former joint convener of Chandraganj union unit of Jubo League and Nurul Islam.

Police Superintendent Shah Mizan Safiur

Rahman said law enforcers, acting on a tip-off, conducted a drive in the area on Tuesday night and arrested the duo.

Police detained them for interrogation in connection with the killing, the SP added.

Omar Faruque, 45, vice-president of Chandraganj union unit of AL and convener of Chandraganj Thana Satrash Nirmul Committee, was shot dead by unidentified assailants on Tuesday morning.

Quoting witnesses, police said Faruque was gossiping with locals at a tea stall beside his house at Latifpur village when masked assailants riding on a CNG-run autorickshaw swooped on him at around 9:00am.

At one stage, they dragged him out of the tea stall and fired several shots at his chest before fleeing the spot in the autorickshaw.

Faruque succumbed to his injuries while he was being taken to Noakhali

General Hospital.

Protesting the killing, locals and AL leaders and activists of the area brought out a procession demanding arrest of the attackers.

Family members of the deceased AL leader said Faruque was killed as he took a strong stance against the criminal gangs and armed cadres in his speech during the inauguration of the new complex of Chandraganj Police Station on Monday.

Teacher jailed for beating up student

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A mobile court sentenced a madrasa teacher in Sadullapur upazila of the district to three months' imprisonment for beating up a student on Tuesday.

The convict is Hafez Shamiul Islam, 24, a teacher of Dhaperhat Shah Sufi Rostum Bogdadi Cadet Madrasa.

Police said Hafez Shamiul beat up the boy with a cane and locked him in a room as the boy did not attend classes.

The boy managed to escape from the room with the help of classmates, and took shelter at a nearby madrasa.

Being informed, police rushed to the spot and rescued him.

Later, the police arrested the teacher on charge of beating the student and produced him before a mobile court led by Ahsan Habib, UNO of Sadullapur and also the executive magistrate.

After hearing, the court awarded three months jail sentence to the teacher and sent him to Gaibandha jail.

Patiya Jamaat leader held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Police arrested a Jamaat leader from Patiya upazila of Chittagong early yesterday on charge of planning sabotage.

The arrestee is Mozaffar Ahmed, 52, ameer of Patiya Municipality unit of Jamaat-e-Islami.

Acting on a tip-off, police arrested Ahmed from a mosque in the municipality area at around 1:00am, said Refayet Ullah Chowdhury, officer-in-charge (OC) of Patiya Police Station.

On August 28, police arrested nine leaders and activists of Patiya upazila unit of the party from Paikpara area in the municipality while they were holding a 'secret meeting' said the OC.

Mozaffar, who was also at the meeting, fled the scene, he added.

Child marriage bid foiled, two jailed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A mobile court sentenced two people to one month's imprisonment for arranging marriage of an underage girl at Chandanpat village in Aditmari upazila of the district on Tuesday.

The convicts are the bridegroom's uncle Abdus Samad, 39, and cousin Sirajul Islam, 19, of Goabari village under Tentulia upazila in Panchagarh district.

On information, Executive Magistrate Jahurul Islam, who led the court, rushed to Chandanpat area at night and foiled the marriage of eighth grader Sharmin Akhter Parul, 13, daughter of Amir Uddin.

They also arrested the duo from the spot, said Mintu Chandra, sub-inspector of Aditmari Police Station.

However, the bridegroom, his father and Amir Uddin managed to flee the

Criminal arrested with gun

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Detectives arrested an alleged criminal from Karbala area of Jessore district town yesterday.

The arrestee was identified as Korban Ali, 32, son of Mohammad Ali, a resident of Puratam Koshba area of the town.

Tofail Ahmed, sub-inspector of Jessore DB police, said DB man conducted a drive in the area and arrested Korban with a shutter gun and one bullet.

DINAJPUR MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL

No charge sheet in medicine theft case in 10 months

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Charge sheet in a case for stealing medicine of Dinajpur Medical College Hospital [DjMCH] has not been submitted in last 10 months.

Sumon Kumar Kundu, ward master of DjMCH, caught two hospital staff Md Sobuj and Shibli when they were stealing medicine on November 2 last year, said officials of DjMCH.

Sobuj and Shibli were handed over to police and following their information, police raided Ma Pharmacy in front of the hospital and Al Amin Clinic in Dinajpur Satellite town that day and seized two sacks of stolen medicine of the hospital worth Tk 2.5 lakh.

Police arrested Jahirul

Islam, proprietor of Ma Pharmacy, and Sohel Rana, an employee of Al Amin Clinic.

Sumon Kumar Kundu filed a case in connection with the stealing incident on November 2 night.

Ruhul Amin, superintendent of police of Dinajpur, handed over the case to Dinajpur Detective Branch (DB) of police.

As per the information from the arrestees under remand, DB men arrested Ajmanul Haque, a store officer, and his assistant Rezaul Alam Shahin from the hospital complex on November 3.

The DB also arrested Md Nurun Nabi Islam Milon, a pharmacist of DjMCH, on November 9 last year.

Nine people were arrested in connection with the medicine theft at

DjMCH.

Investigation officer (IO) of the case, sub-inspector Bazlur Rashid of Dinajpur DB, earlier said they got some vital information from the arrestees during remand.

Meanwhile, all the arrestees got bail within a month.

A hospital official seeking anonymity said the accused in the medicine stealing case are now trying to get favour of the police and politicians in exchange of bribe.

Contacted, plaintiff of the case Sumon Kumar Kundu declined to make any comments regarding the matter.

IO Bazlur Rashid said the case is still under investigation and the charge sheet will be given as early as possible.



PHOTO: STAR
A high-powered dredger of Sino Hydro Corporation started working to maintain navigability on Shimulia-Kawrakandi route in the Padma River yesterday.

BISHKHALI RIVER IN JHALAKATHI

Tides affect farming due to lack of embankment

M JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL, Jhalakathi

Thousands of farmers in Kathalia upazila under the district cannot cultivate their lands as tidal water from Bishkhali River regularly floods the area in absence of an effective embankment there.

The area also sees river erosion.

Forty kilometres of the Bishkhali River surround Kathalia upazila from Amua to Kathalia but the work under a government initiative to build an embankment there stopped after completion of ten kilometres of the protection scheme from Amua to Soujolia, said officials of Water Development Board

and local administration.

The people living near the riverbank are dependent on agriculture but they cannot grow crops due to recurrent inundation of their farmlands.

If the embankment is completed, 5,000 hectares of land in the area can be used for agriculture, said Abdullah Al Mamun, upazila agriculture officer of Kathalia.

"Before every poll, candidates make commitment to solve the problem but forget it after they are elected," said Joynal, a farmer of Amua.

Twenty villages adjacent to the river including Aura, Joykhali, Amua Hetalbunia, Marichbunia, Chingrakhali, Baro Kathalia, Kochua, Centre Hat, Soujolia, and

Raguar Char are affected due to the situation, locals said.

"We cannot grow any crop even in winter due to flooding by tidal water. River erosion is a regular affair in the area," said Hossen Ali, a farmer who lost all his farmland to the riverbed.

"Under a project for building the embankment from Amua to Kathalia, work in ten kilometres has been completed. I have written to the higher authority for fund to construct the embankment in the remaining area, under Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme," said Abul Basher Muhammad Amiruddin, upazila nirbahi officer of Kathalia.



PHOTO: STAR
Construction of a workable embankment on the Bishkhali River in Kathalia upazila under Jhalakathi district is a long time demand of the local farmers.