



A paddy field affected by bacterial leaf blight at Rajampur village in Dinajpur Sadar upazila. PHOTO: STAR

Leaf blight worries aman farmers of Dinajpur

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur
Bacterial leaf blight has appeared in aman fields of Chirirbandar and Sadar upazilas under the district, much to the worry of farmers before the yielding period this season.

field level agriculture office but to no effect," said Imtiaz Hossain of Boltail village in Dinajpur Sadar upazila. High officials of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) visited the affected areas a few days ago and primarily detected the disease as bacterial leaf blight, which was caused due to shortage of potassium in the soil, said Ali Akbar, a field level agriculture official in

Dinajpur. DAE officials suggested applying potassium and magnesium sulphate as remedy but several farmers said they are not getting any result after applying the medicines. Rifatul Hossain, deputy director of DAE in Dinajpur region, said, "Bacterial leaf blight affected some paddy fields in Dinajpur. Farmers should use medicines in proper doses to get result." The affected areas in

Chirirbandar and Dinajpur Sadar upazilas might be up to 300 hectares, said a source of DAE. According to the DAE in Dinajpur region, 4.85 lakh hectares of land has been brought under aman cultivation in Dinajpur, Thakurgaon and Panchagarh districts this year, against the target of 4.76 lakh hectares. The production target was 14.44 lakh tonnes of rice.

College girl found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon
Police recovered the body of a college girl, who went missing 15 days ago, from a ditch at Khalishakuri village in Sadar upazila of the district yesterday. The victim is Rikta Akhter, 17, a first year HSC student of Boda Pathraj Degree College in Boda upazila, and daughter of Jamal Uddin of the village. On September 22, Rikta went to sleep after having meal and went missing that night, said police. Later, family members filed a general diary with Sadar Police Station in this connection. Yesterday morning, locals found the body in the ditch and informed the police.

BCL infighting leaves 10 injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar
At least 10 people were injured in a clash between two rival groups of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) Rajnagar upazila unit in the district on Tuesday evening. Police and locals said the BCL upazila unit is divided into two factions. One is led by Johirul Islam while the other by Abdul Kadir. Both factions are trying to establish their supremacy at the upazila headquarters. At around 6:30pm on Tuesday, the supporters of the two groups equipped with iron rods, hockey and bamboo sticks, and other sharp weapons swooped on each other in front of Rajnagar Degree College, leaving at least 10 people from both sides injured. Being informed, police rushed to the spot and dispersed the clashing groups.

Thousands suffer as bridge lies without repair for 9 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali
Thousands of people, including a good number of students, have to cross the Dumki Varani canal on small boats as the iron bridge over the canal, which collapsed last week, lies without repair. A section in the middle of the 150-metre-long iron bridge collapsed suddenly on the night of September 29 as it had become weakened due to lack of maintenance. Thousands of people, including over 800 students of the Lebukhali Government Primary school and Lebukhali Habibullah High School, have to suffer greatly as the

bridge was the only means of communication between the two sides of the canal. Fahim Ahmed, a student of Class IX of Habibullah High School, said "We have to cross the canal by boat daily, risking our lives, to go to the school." Mohsina, a female student of the same class and school, said "We suffer more than boys to go to school regularly." They demanded immediate steps for reconstruction of the bridge. Md Atiqul Islam, headmaster of Lebukhali Habibullah High School, said over 1,500 students and local people use the bridge to cross the canal daily. Students have to walk an extra 3-kms to come to the school avoiding the boat. "We informed the local union parishad and the upazila and district administrations of the matter and urged them to take immediate steps to reconstruct the bridge as soon as possible, but in vain," the headmaster added. Abdul Jabbar Sikder, chairman of Lebukhali Union Parishad, said the bridge has great importance for people of both sides. "We hope to start reconstruction as soon as possible," he added. Md Shahjahan Sikder, chairman of Dumki Upazila Parishad, said the bridge has to be rebuilt immediately, considering the interest of the local people as well as the students. "We are taking steps over the matter," he added.



The iron bridge over Bharani canal in Dumki upazila under Patuakhali district collapsed on September 29, hampering communication in the area. Inset, school children cross the canal on a boat amid risk as the bridge is yet to be repaired. PHOTO: STAR

SNIPPETS

Myanmar national held with Yaba

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar
Members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) arrested a Myanmar national with 1.5 lakh Yaba tablets in No 1 Sluice Gate area of the Naf River in Teknaf upazila under the district on Tuesday. The arrestee is Md Rahamat Ullah, 20, son of Ameer Ahmed of Dailpara village under Mongdu Police Station in Akyab district of Myanmar. On secret information, the border guards raided the area, searched a boat and arrested Rahamat Ullah with the Yaba. The arrestee was later handed over to Teknaf Police Station, said Major Md Jafarul Haque, acting commander of BGB-42 Battalion.

Youth arrested with acid

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj
Police arrested a youth with 1000 litres of acid from a shop in Shahibag area of the district town yesterday. The arrestee is Johrul Islam, 25, son of Hazrat Ali of Shehela Colony in the town. Khairul Islam, sub-inspector of Sadar Police Station, said a police team, acting on a tip-off, raided Saba Enterprise and arrested its employee Johrul with the acid stored in the shop illegally. However, owners of the shop Abdul Awal and Torikul Islam Jewel managed to flee the scene, sensing the presence of the law enforcers.

Drug peddler jailed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali
A mobile court here on Tuesday sentenced a man to two years' imprisonment for possessing 75,000 litres of wine. The convict is Md Jasim Uddin, 40, of Puran Bazar area in the district town. The court also fined him Tk 5,000. Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in a drive arrested Jasim with the wine at a shop in the area at night. He was later produced before the court, led by Executive Magistrate Alamgir Hossain, which punished him, said Rab-8 sources.

Indian sarees seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole, Jessore
Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) seized 2,400 Indian sarees worth about Tk 2 crore at Benapole border in Jessore district on Tuesday. The sarees were being smuggled from India through the border, said Lt Col Jahangir Hossain, commanding officer of BGB-26 Battalion. None was arrested in this connection, said the CO.

Robbers loot house

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail
Robbers looted a house at Delduar upazila of the district early yesterday. Police quoted family sources as saying that a gang of robbers entered the house of Ahsan Dewan of Gachh Kumuli village, breaking open the door at around 1:00am. They beat up the family members and confined them to a room at gunpoint. The robbers then took away 20 tolas of gold ornaments, Tk 3 lakh and other valuables from the house. Being informed, Delduar Upazila Parishad Chairman SM Ferdous and officer-in-charge of Delduar Police Station Mosharraf Hossain visited the house in the morning.

2 missing as trawler with bridal party sinks in Meghna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
Two people went missing after a trawler carrying a bridal party capsized in the Meghna River at Matiala under Hizla upazila of the district yesterday. They are Idris Majhi, 80, grandfather, and Mahinur Begum, 31, maternal aunt of the bridegroom. Golam Sarwar, officer-in-charge of Hizla Police Station, said around 40 people were going to the marriage ceremony of Saiful Majhi, 22, son of Ramij Majhi, from the upazila's Shangarpasha to Kakuria, home of the bride. The trawler was caught in a storm at Matiala area around 3:00pm and sank into the Meghna, said Abdul Malek, one of the trawler passengers. Local people and fishermen rescued all the passengers of the trawler except the missing two, police said. Police and divers have been sent to the spot to search for the missing people, the OC said.

No clue yet to Pabna ASI killing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna
Police have not yet found any clue to the killing of ASI Sujaul Islam of Pakshey Police Camp, even three days after the incident. An unidentified gang strangled Sujaul early Monday and his body was found in a turmeric field near Pakshey rail station. SI Rejaul Islam of Pakshey Police Camp filed a case with Ishwardi Police Station on Tuesday, accusing unnamed criminals. None was arrested in connection with the murder as of yesterday. "Police are trying to identify the callers who called the victim from his residence," said Biman Kumar Das, officer-in-charge (OC) of Ishwardi Police Station. A team of police, headed by additional superintendent of police, is investigating the murder and has already quizzed several people in the area. "The investigation team raided different places but the criminals went into hiding after the incident," the OC said, adding that the killers would be booked as early as possible. Sujaul did not compromise with drug peddlers and muggers in the area. He often took steps alone against them, said Sub-inspector Md Rezaul Islam, also in-charge of Pakshey Police Camp. He might have been killed by them, Rezaul added. "Although we have not unearthed any clue, we suspect that the drug peddlers and muggers might be involved in the killing," Md Abu Obayed, investigation officer of Ishwardi Police Station, said. Meanwhile, family members of the victim demanded exemplary punishment of the killers. "My son loved being a policeman. In his 12 years service, he performed with honesty, and was killed on duty," said Md Abul Kashem, father of the victim, demanding punishment of the killers.

MURDER OF GOBINDAGANJ MAYOR'S SON

Human chain demands arrest, capital punishment of killers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha
Several thousand people formed a human chain along the road in front of Gaibandha deputy commissioner's office yesterday, demanding capital punishment of the killers of Ashekur Rahman Samya, only son of Gobindaganj municipality mayor. Organised by the leaders of 'Samya manch,' protesters from Gobindaganj reached Gaibandha town by bus and truck with banners and placards. They took out a procession in the district town and later joined the human chain. The protesters also handed over a memoran-

dum to the prime minister through the deputy commissioner, Gaibandha, seeking capital punishment of the killers. Former lawmaker Monowar Hossain Chowdhury, 'Samya manch' convener former lawmaker Lutfar Rahman Chowdhury, victim's father Mayor Ataur Rahman Sarker, Abdul Matin Mollah, convener of Gobindaganj Nagorik committee, and Sanowar Hossain, general secretary of the AL, spoke at the programme. The speakers said tougher agitation will be launched to bring the upazila to a standstill if the killers are

not arrested immediately. "I am seeking the prime minister's intervention to bring the killers of my son to book, and to ensure capital punishment for them," said Mayor Ataur Rahman Sarker. On Tuesday afternoon, a large number of people joined a protest meeting at 'Samya manch,' set up as a symbol of agitation in Gobindaganj Sadar upazila headquarters. It was presided over by former lawmaker of Jatiya Party Lutfar Rahman Chowdhury. Police recovered the body of Ashekur Rahman Samya, a Class IX student of Gobindaganj High School, from behind Gobindaganj

community centre on Eid Day, 14 hours after he was called out from their house by his three classmates. Locals found the body stuffed in a sack in the morning and informed the police. Mayor Ataur Rahman filed a case with the Gobindaganj Police Station the following day, accusing Councillor Jainal Abidin, of the murder. In the case statement, Mayor Ataur stated that Samya's classmates Shariar Hridoy, Jakir and Sajib called his son out of his house at Ghoshpara under the municipality and later killed him with the help of other accused.



A large number of people join a procession in Gaibandha town yesterday demanding arrest and punishment of the killers of Class IX student Ashekur Rahman Samya, son of Gaibandha Mayor and municipality unit Awami League President Ataur Rahman Sarker. PHOTO: STAR