

LALMONIRHAT

Agri loans often fraudulent, controlled by brokers

'Defaulters' include fake names, never received listed amounts

By S DILIP ROY

A good number of sharecroppers and marginal farmers in villages in 45 unions of five upazilas under the district are recorded as loan defaulters with the Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank (Rakub) authority, allegedly through forgery.

"I got loan of Tk 20 thousand only but I have been shown as a defaulter of Tk 60 thousand," says landless farm labourer Jamal Uddin, 42, of Basti Khatamari village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila's Kulaghat union. "I took the loan two years ago, when local bank broker Abul Hossain introduced me with a bank official."

Unscrupulous bank officials employ many local brokers to tempt villagers to get agricultural loans from Rakub, he added.

Sharecropper Shah Alam, 48, of the same village said he took a loan of Tk 25 thousand for cultivating crops on two acres of land but he is now shown as defaulter of a Tk 60 thousand loan. A broker and a bank official did everything to arrange the loan, he added.

"It is difficult for genuine farmers to get agriculture loans from Rakub," says farmer Nazrul Islam of Lalmonirhat Sadar's Rajpur village. "Rather, cheats are recruited as brokers by unscrupulous

officials and these people control the agriculture loans Rakub provides."

Mozahar Ali, a farmer at Barakhata village of Hatibandha upazila, says the names of a good number of farmers have been recorded as agriculture loan defaulters in the village as these loans were disbursed against fake names with fake documents.

Unscrupulous bank officials tarnish the image of

Rakub, he added.

Mohammadul Islam, Kulaghat union land officer, said Rakub officials never check the land documents submitted by loan seeking farmers and so, people can get agriculture loans with fake documents.

Rakub official sources said a total of 17,944 farmers are recorded as loan defaulters, the total amount of such 'unpaid' loan being Tk 43 crore and

27 lakh, but bank officials are finding no trace of most of the listed loan defaulters in the areas concerned.

Contacted, alleged broker Abul Hossain at Basti Khatamari village in Lalmonirhat declined to comment.

Meanwhile, Rakub Lalmonirhat Sadar Branch Manager Rati Kanta Roy says bank officials are working to trace defaulting farmers and if anyone is falsely made a

defaulter, the bank officials concerned must face departmental action.

Admitting the situation, Abdur Rouf Miah, the deputy general manager of Rakub, said departmental investigations by Rakub high officials are ongoing. Punitive action will be taken against any bank official involved in looting bank money in the name of providing agriculture loans, he says.



Sharecropper Nurul Islam and his wife Ramicha Begum of Basti Khatamari village in Kulaghat union under Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila look hapless as Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank has shown him as defaulter of Tk 30 thousand although he claims to have received Tk 7 thousand as loan from the bank three years ago.



Grandmother Halima Khatun weeps after a middle-aged woman in the guise of a patient stole her newborn granddaughter from Pabna Medical College Hospital.

Another newborn stolen, from Pabna hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Just four months since a newborn went missing from Dhaka Medical College and Hospital, a similar incident has occurred in Pabna. A middle-aged woman in the guise of a patient kidnapped a three-day-old girl from a ward in Pabna Medical College Hospital on Tuesday evening.

Hospital sources said Shely Khatun, 25, wife of Ukil Uddin of Khoyersuti village in Pabna Sadar upazila gave birth to a girl on Sunday night.

"As the baby's condition was delicate she was referred to the paediatrics ward for better treatment," says Halima Khatun, the child's

grandmother. "When I was carrying the baby to the ward at about 7:00pm, a middle-aged woman in the guise of a patient took the baby in her lap, saying she would stop the baby crying."

Within a few minutes, the woman left the ward with the baby, Halima added.

"We told the doctors and nurses in the ward but they did not take the matter seriously," she claims, blaming the hospital authority's negligence for the incident.

Dr Shamol Kumar Boshak, assistant director-in-charge rejected the allegation, saying the hospital authority informed the police and Rab immedi-

ately.

Abdulla Al Hasan, officer-in-charge of Pabna Sadar Police Station, said law enforcers raided different areas to recover the missing baby but have not yet found any clue.

The hospital authorities will form an inquiry committee to investigate the matter, Dr Boshak said.

Angry patients and visitors demanded installation of CCTV cameras so that security can be ensured in the hospital.

Ahmed Ul Haque Rana, member of the hospital management committee, said the hospital authority has taken the initiative to install CCTV cameras.

Three arrested on charge of killing Krishak Dal leader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Police attested three youths on charge of killing Krishak Dal leader Nazrul Islam at Adarshagram in Matiranga upazila of the district on Tuesday night.

The arrestees are Mohammad Sabuj, Mohammad Hasan and Mir Hossain.

Nazrul Islam, 55, senior vice president of the upazila unit of Krishak Dal, was critically injured in an attack by a gang of criminals near a bamboo cluster at the village.

Locals found him lying in an unconscious state and took him to the upazila health complex where the on-duty doctors declared him dead.

Officer-in-Charge Sahadat Hossain Titu of Matiranga Police Station said law enforcers arrested the three, raiding Adarshagram and its adjacent areas following a case filed by the victim's wife on Tuesday night.

Addressing a press conference at Khagrachhari Press Club yesterday, Wadud Bhuiyan, president of Khagrachhari district unit of

BNP and former lawmaker, blamed the ruling party men for the killing.

He demanded deployment of army to ensure free and fair election in the municipality, slated for December 30. Senior Vice-President of district BNP Prabin Chandra Chakma and general Secretary Abu Yousuf were also present at the press conference.

Contacted, Shamsul Haque, president of the upazila unit of Awami League, and mayor candidate for the post of Matiranga municipality, refuted the allegation.

Art brings success to student who cannot hear or speak

AZIBOR RAHMAN with ANDREW EAGLE

Initially Mizanur Rahman and Rekha Khatun, villagers of Jhenidah's Moheshpur upazila, weren't sure whether or not to send their son Sangram Ahmed Kabir to school. Sadly, Kabir cannot speak and is deaf, which made the parents wonder how he would manage in the classroom.

But by the time he was eight years old, Kabir had begun to show an interest in drawing, initially scratching out pictures on the ground of his home yard. He also learnt to make different toys and became adept at sewing designs on cloth. Kabir's mind and in particular his memory, is sharp.

Moreover, when inquisitive Kabir saw other children heading off to school in their uniforms, school bags in hand, he wanted to join them. On many occasions he cried from the disappointment of not accompanying the other students. So, in 2010, his parents decided to grant his wish. His mother took Kabir to Khalishpur Primary School

for admission.

Kabir and his family are fortunate to have enrolled him at Khalishpur, for the headmistress Taslima Khatun, together with an assistant teacher at the school, took Kabir under their wings.

"We made every effort to teach Kabir to read," says Khatun. "It wasn't easy since he can neither speak nor hear our instructions."

Teaching aids were brought from teacher's homes, especially simple pictures like a tiger or a mango. Through a process of matching the written word with each picture, Kabir was able to memorise how each word was spelt and thereby learn to read.

Now 14 years old and studying in class 6, he can write whatever he wishes.

The keen student has also learnt to make fishing implements, paper flowers, tops and model cars. He is an avid computer enthusiast. Yet his greatest enjoyment is undoubtedly in drawing and painting.

"When I first noticed Kabir's love of art I thought to encourage it," says

Khatun. "Specifically my object was to train him to be able to write signboards as a possible future career."

She taught him how to mix water colours and facilitated his participation in several competitions. Kabir has already completed more than 300 drawings and paintings during his school years, and when he was in class 3 one of his pictures won first prize in an upazila-level drawing contest.

Now a confident young artist who prefers to draw landscapes, it was only natural that when Khatun heard in May 2015 that the upazila office was looking for pictures from children with disabilities, Kabir came first to mind. She duly submitted one of his pictures to the Moheshpur upazila nirbahi officer, Naima Khatun.

The best pictures of scenery were to be published as Eid cards for Eid-ul-Fitr this year, cards to be signed by the Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina. The merit of Kabir's artwork ensured it was competitive.

Subsequently a letter arrived to inform Kabir his

picture had won a 1 lakh taka award from the Prime Minister's relief and welfare fund, which requested Kabir to attend the Prime Minister's office to collect his crest and cheque. His picture would become an Eid card design.

Together with his mother, in October this year he arrived in Dhaka to receive his award and crest from the Prime Minister's assignment officer Mohammad Shamim Mushfik. Unfortunately the Prime Minister was scheduled to attend another programme that day.

Nonetheless, Kabir and his parents are rightfully proud of his achievements, which stem from his love of art.

Besides, it seems as if his school's headmistress needn't have worried much about his future career because, at his yet tender age, resourceful Kabir already draws an income from selling handmade tops and model carts to other village boys. From this endeavour he has already saved over Tk 3,500 taka, with hopes to eventually buy a computer.

Youth electrocuted in Jessore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A youth died from electrocution in Bostapotti area of Jessore town early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Alim Hossain, 20 son of Jinnat Hossain of Kasba Kanthaltala area.

Mafijur Rahman, uncle of the deceased, said Alim came in contact with a live electric wire while he was pasting election posters of Awami League nominated candidate on a wall.

He was admitted to Jessore Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at about 1:15am.

Nine shops gutted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

At least nine shops were gutted in a fire at Langolbandh Bazar under Shailakupa upazila of the district early yesterday.

Fifteen auto-rickshaws were also burnt in the area during the incident, said police and locals.

The fire originated from an electric short circuit at a shop and soon engulfed the adjoining shops, they said.

On information, firefighters from Magura and Shailakupa rushed to the spot and doused the blaze.

The loss caused by the fire could go up to Tk 20 lakh, said Mostafizur Rahman, officer of Shailakupa upazila fire fighting unit.



Locals yesterday caught a rare species of vulture from a tree at Santola village in Sadullapur upazila of Gaibandha district and later handed it over to Rezaul Karim, forest officer of Animal Management and Nature Preservation Department of Rajshahi range.



Sangram Ahmed Kabir, 14, who can neither hear nor speak, has found success through his passion for art.

Man held with Yaba

UNB, Benapole

Law enforcers arrested a man along with 284 Yaba tablets from Amrakhali area here on Monday night.

The arrestee was identified as Shariful Islam, son of Sirajul Islam, a resident of Bhabher village.

Acting on a tip-off, Rab men conducted a drive in the area and arrested Shariful at around 7:30 pm.

TRADE MARK CAUTION NOTICE

It is hereby notified for information of the public in general and manufacturers, distributors, importers and retailers of Colours for drawing and Coloured Pencils in particular that our client M/s. TITI Co. Ltd. 648-23 Yoksam-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul, Korea (official local distributor in Bangladesh: Binimoy Stationery) are the manufacturers and sellers of very superior quality of Colours for drawing and Coloured Pencils and is the registered proprietor of trade mark TITI Brand with logo. The registration number of trade mark TITI Brand with logo in Bangladesh is 81322 in class 2 and the said registration has also been renewed in Bangladesh. The said trade mark is being used throughout the world including Bangladesh since long. The trade mark TITI Brand with logo are as shown below:

It has been brought to our notice that some manufacturers have since copied and imitated our client's trade mark TITI Brand with logo and commenced using and marketing different Colours for drawing and Coloured Pencils adopting identical trade mark of our client and are thus creating confusion and deception in the trade as a result of which their goods are being passed off as the goods of our client.

It may be stated here that by virtue of long usage, our clients have acquired exclusive proprietary rights over the said trade mark with the result that if any body adopts and uses any such trade mark "TITI Brand with logo" in respect of Colours for drawing and Coloured Pencils he will be liable to an action for infringement of trade mark and for passing off goods under the Trade Marks Act 1940 & 2009. As such if any one counterfeits, copies, imitates and infringes the trade mark TITI Brand with logo and sells such Colours for drawing and Coloured Pencils necessary legal steps will be taken against him under civil and criminal laws of the country.

For and on behalf of:
M/s. TITI Co. Ltd.
REMFRY & SON LIMITED
Patent and Trade Mark Attorneys, 56, New Eskaton Road (4th Floor), Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.
Phone: 9361783, 9338201, E-mail: remfry@bangla.net

C-705