



Beehive boxes are set at a mango orchard in Panchhari upazila under Khagrachhari district as the area sees successful commercial beekeeping based on fruit orchards.

KHAGRACHHARI

Commercial beekeeping sees success

KAFIL MAHMUD, Khagrachhari

The hill district sees successful commercial beekeeping, dispelling the wrong idea that it is possible only in areas with mustard fields.

Around twenty people are now engaged in the beekeeping in or around their fruit orchards and the production level is quite satisfactory, said sources of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE).

"After retirement from my teaching job three years ago, I started beekeeping in

my mango orchard at the backyard of my house. I bought a hive box for Tk 2,000 and collected a queen bee from the nearby jungle. Now I have 13 hive boxes," said Debal Moni Chakma, a resident of Panchari of Khagrachhari district.

Honey production in the area is higher during the spring and summer, he said.

Sudipta Chakma of Khabangpuria of the district town said he started beekeeping after taking training from a non-governmental organisation two years ago and now he

has 25 hive boxes at his back yard and relatives' houses.

"Bees rarely suffer from diseases and a good production of honey can be drawn with a little effort. This year, I sold honey at Tk 900-1000 per kg and earned about Tk 1.5 lakh. Seeing the profit, many others are getting interested in beekeeping," he said.

"After knowing that beekeeping is possible in areas with fruits plantations I procured a hive box with a queen bee for Tk 4,000 and started beekeeping. Now I have nine hive boxes," said Kochi Sona Chakma of

Khabangpujya area.

"Honey production is good this season due to the higher mango and litchi blossom. I am collecting three to four kg of honey every week from each hive box," she added.

Tarun Bhattacharya, deputy director of Khagrachhari DAE, said, "The farmers engaged in beekeeping in or around their fruit orchards are making good profits.

With proper training, they can do even better. Besides, the bees will help increase crop production by pollinating."

Pabna people hail upholding of Nizami's death penalty

FFs, families of war crime victims want early execution

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPI, Pabna

The Supreme Court's final verdict that upheld the death penalty for Jamaat-e-Islami chief Motiur Rahman Nizami for crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War has brought a sort of solace to the families of the martyrs and freedom fighters in the war criminal's home district.

"We have waited long 45 years for the justice. Now we feel happy over upholding of the death penalty for top war criminal Nizami," said Johurul Haque, a freedom fighter of Santhia upazila in Pabna, also a witness to Nizami's crimes against humanity.

"Santhia saw martyrdom of thousands of people in the hands of Pakistan occupation army and their local collaborators. And so, we do not want Nizami's burial here," he added.

Nizami, hailing from Monmothpur village of Santhia upazila, instigated the Al-Badar and Razakars, auxiliary forces of the Pakistan occupation army, to commit crimes against humanity during 1971 Liberation War.

International Crimes Tribunal-1 on October 29 in 2014 handed him the death penalty on four charges of war crimes, including involvement in killings of intellectuals, murder of 450 civilians and rape at Bausgari and Demra, killings of 52 people at Dhulaura, killings of 10 people and rape of three women at Karamja in

Pabna.

He was awarded life imprisonment on four other charges.

On January 6 this year, the apex court upheld Nizami's death sentence in three of the charges. His death warrant was issued on March 15 after the Supreme Court's full verdict was released. Later Nizami filed a review plea to the Supreme Court that finally rejected it yesterday.

"As the Supreme Court upheld death penalty for Nizami, the people are

waiting for its execution. I urge the government not to bury Nizami in the soil of Santhia," said freedom fighter Morshad Ali of Gourigram village.

Abdul Rouf Montu, son of Abul Kashem Fakir of Dhulauri village in Santhia upazila, who was killed by Razakars accompanying the Pakistan army at the village on the night on November 27, 1971, expressed happiness over the justice.

"We have waited long 45 years for the punishment of

the mastermind of Dhulauri massacre. Now we expect quick execution of the verdict," Montusaid.

Like him, Liakot Ali, Sohrab Hossain and many others who lost their family members in massacres during the Liberation War, expressed satisfaction over the verdict.

Hailing the dismissal of Nizami's review plea, Awami League brought out processions and distributed sweetmeats in Santhia upazila and Pabna town yesterday.



JOY OF GETTING JUSTICE: People entertain each other with sweets in Pabna town after hearing about yesterday's final verdict of the Supreme Court that upheld the death sentence of Jamaat-e-Islami chief Motiur Rahman Nizami for crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War.

PHOTO: STAR

Cop doped, robbed of Tk 14,000

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole, Jessore

A gang doped a policeman on a Jessore-bound passenger bus from Magura on Wednesday evening and took away Tk 14,000, mobile phone set and other belongings.

The victim, constable Mizanur Rahman, 39, of Jhenaikundu village in Chougachha upazila of Jessore, is a member of Magura Court Police.

Locals rescued Mizanur and admitted him to Jessore Medical College Hospital after the bus staff dropped him at Khajura Bus Stand in Jessore town in an unconscious state.

Trader burnt to death as 3 shops gutted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A trader in Community Bazar in Kalmegha union under Pathorghata upazila of Barguna district was burned to death early yesterday, and at least three shops were gutted in a fire at the bazar.

The victim was identified as Md Ibrahim, 22, son of Abdus Salam Sharif of Ghutabasa village under the upazila, said SM Ziaul Haque, officer-in-charge (OC) of Pathorghata Police Station.

Ibrahim owned a computer shop and also provided flexi-load services from his business establishment, locals said.

"The trader was burned to death while he was sleeping in his shop during the fire. We recovered the body from the spot and sent it to Barguna General Hospital for autopsy," the OC said.

An unnatural death (UD) case filed with the police station in this regard, he added.

Police and locals said the fire started at about 4:15am and spread rapidly to the surrounding shops. Locals informed the fire service, but at least three shops were totally gutted before firefighters reached the spot.

ATTACK ON HUMAN CHAIN ON CAMPUS 20 IU officials sued, two suspended

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

Two cases have been filed against 20 officials of Islamic University (IU) in connection with Wednesday's attack on a human chain on the campus.

Of the cases, one was filed by IU acting Registrar Abdul Latif and the other by Deputy Registrar Harunur Rashid on Wednesday night, said Shonit Kumar Gayan, officer-in-charge of Islamic University Police Station.

The university authorities also formed a body, headed by Prof Ruhul KM Saleh, to probe the incident.

The committee was asked to submit report within seven working days, said university sources.

On Wednesday morning, at least 15 teachers and officers of the university

were injured in an attack by opponents during a human chain on the campus.

Each of the university's pro-Awami League (AL) teachers and officers' organisation Bangabandhu Parishad and teachers' organization Shapla Forum are divided into two groups, campus sources said.

They have been demonstrating since April 1, one faction demanding removal of IU Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Dr Abdul Hakim Sarker and the other demanding the same for Pro-VC Prof Dr Shahinoor Rahman, alleging corruption and irregularities against the two key persons of the university, they said.

The faction belonging to the VC announced a human chain programme at the campus on Wednesday, demanding removal of the

pro-VC, apparently as counter of the other faction's similar programme demanding the VC's removal on Tuesday.

Around 11:00am, over two hundred teachers and officers, demonstrating under the banners of Bangabandhu Parishad and Shapla Forum in front of the IU's administrative building, came under attack by intruders carrying firearms, sharp weapons and bamboo sticks, witnesses said.

The attackers mercilessly beat up and hurled bricks on the demonstrating teachers and officers, leaving 15 injured.

Meanwhile, the VC yesterday suspended assistant registrars Alamgir Hossain Khan and Abdul Hannan for their involvement in the attack on the



Three farmers smile, holding the paddy they grew with the help of irrigation from solar power-driven pumps at Hardebpur village in Kaliganj upazila under Jhenidah district.

PHOTO: STAR

Solar pump brings better life to Jhenidah farmers

AZIBOR RAHMAN with ANDREW EAGLE

The paddy farmers of Hardebpur village in Jhenidah's Kaliganj upazila have reason to be upbeat. They have benefited from the installation of a solar driven irrigation system that has proved its potential to provide water to the field at low cost. Hardebpur's farmers anticipate a bumper crop with maximised profits, enough to make any farmer smile.

"I never imagined we could achieve such a good yield with a solar pump," says one farmer Alok Biswas. "The generous water supply made available by the pump means this year's Boro crop will be a good one."

"The solar system means we can grow three paddy crops, IRR, Boro and Robi,

at lower cost," says another farmer Arun Biswas. "We no longer need additional electricity and it's much cheaper than running a standard pump engine."

The innovative project funded by the Bangladesh government established Infrastructure Development Company Limited and implemented by NGO Action in Development involved the installation of two solar irrigation pumps at deep tube wells beside a local waterway, Hardebpur Garar Beel, in 2014, with a further five pumps added in December last year.

Currently 250 farmers are benefiting from the project. In the Boro season each pays irrigation fees in three instalments: Tk 1,000 at the start of the season; another Tk 1,000 before harvest;

and Tk 3,000 once harvest has been completed. For Aman and Robi crops the rates are even cheaper: Tk 1,400 for the former and only Tk 600 for the latter.

According to project coordinator Md. Hasanuzzaman Babu, the project represents the realisation of a long held dream. With the goal of establishing solar irrigation, the local farmers' association was established in 2009 and continues to work towards expanding solar irrigation availability in the area.

"The solar pumps offer low cost water in comparison to traditional irrigation methods," says Babu, "and of course being off-the-grid there's no load shedding."

Thus far the project has required inputs of 81 solar panels with work including

well boring, pump house and base construction as well as cabling. Each panel can produce 230 watts of electricity for a total of 18.5 kilowatts total for the current infrastructure. This translates into 14 lakh litres of water per day provided to farmland.

The success of the project has already attracted the attention of neighbouring areas. Abul Hossain Biswas of nearby Dudrajpur village for example told The Daily Star that efforts are on to have a solar electricity mini-grid installed in his village too.

"The solar pump is a good initiative," says Shah Akramul Haque, deputy director of Jhenidah's agriculture extension department. "It's cost effective and truly benefits our farmers."