



Breach in this embankment in Kalapara upazila under Patuakhali district has led to flooding of farmlands and fish enclosures in the area with saline water from tides.

PHOTO: STAR

Rice prices soar as OMS suspended

Poor people bear the brunt in Ramadan

MD QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT,
Thakurgaon

The suspension of Open Market Sale (OMS) programme, meant for providing major food items to common people for relatively low prices, has resulted in price rise of coarse rice and flour in the district, adding to the sufferings to low-income people during the ongoing Ramadan.

The food department suspended sale of coarse rice under OMS programme on May 15 and coarse flour on June 3, office sources said.

Under the programme, the price of coarse rice was fixed at Tk 15 per kg and flour Tk 17 per kg.

Now people have to buy the same items at Tk 24-26 and Tk 30-Tk 35 from the local markets.

Usually the government starts OMS programme ahead of Ramadan to keep the rice market stable during the holy month when Muslims observe fasting.

Under the programme, the items are sold through 81 dealers six days a week, allowing each person to buy five kg of rice and five kg of flour at a time.

Each of the dealers, including 53 in as many unions, four in as many upazila headquarters and 24 in the district headquarters, was supplied 500 kg of coarse rice and 500 kg of flour, said officials of the district food department.

But the programme was suspended before Ramadan.

The price of coarse rice recently increased by Tk 2-10 per kg, depending on quality in the local retail markets, said market sources.

During a visit to different rice markets in Thakurgaon, the correspondent found that the coarse rice is selling at Tk 24 to 25 while it was Tk 22 just a day before Ramadan.

Guti variety of rice is selling at Tk 24/25 while it was Tk 20/22 before Ramadan. Sarnaguti is selling at Tk 30

while it was Tk 22 two weeks ago.

The price rise of coarse rice affected the prices of fine rice too.

Miniket and pyjam are selling at Tk 44 a kg while it was Tk 40 last week, said traders at local retail and wholesale markets in Thakurgaon.

"I earn around Tk 100 a day by helping in domestic works in people's houses. I have to buy a kg of rice at Tk 25 although it was Tk 15 from OMS dealers. Now I find it difficult to manage money for other essential things," said Khodeja Begum, 35, a resident of Munshipara in Thakurgaon municipality area.

Day labourer Sundar Ali of Khalpara in Thakurgaon municipality is also in the same boat.

District Food Controller Chowdhury Mosabber Hossain told this correspondent over cell phone that sale of coarse rice and flour under OMS programme was suspended following direction of the directorate of food.

2-year-old girl killed by father

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Chapainawabganj

A 22-month-old baby girl was killed allegedly by her father at Azaipur in the district town yesterday.

Police and locals said victim Mahiya was staying at her grandmother's room. Suddenly, her father Mahbub Hasan Babu, 26, entered the room around 5:00am and took her to his own room.

He hit her head with a brick. She died on the spot, said Sub-Inspector Aminul Islam of Sadar Police Station.

Mahbub's was recently seen behaving abnormally. He divorced his wife Yeasmin on May 28 this year and she left the girl at the husband's house, said police.

The body was sent to Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy, the SI said, adding that they arrested Babu.

Joypurhat Jamaat leader arrested in arson cases

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Dinajpur

A Jamaat leader was arrested from his residence in Panchbibi upazila of Joypurhat district yesterday morning.

The arrestee is Anwar Hossain, treasurer of Panchbibi upazila unit of Jamaat-e-Islami.

Ashrafal Alam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Panchbibi Police Station, said the Jamaat leader is an accused in arson cases filed with the police station during the country-wide blockade enforced by the BNP-led alliance in 2015.

Anwar had gone into hiding after the cases were filed against him, the OC added.

Four get life for raping two women in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A court here yesterday sentenced four people to life imprisonment in a case for raping two women after abduction in Nandigram upazila of the district in 2001.

The convicts are Solaiman Ali Mondol, son of late Osman Ali Mondol, Mohir Uddin, son of late Johir Uddin, Aynal Haque, son of late Azim Uddin Pramanik, and Mozahar Ali, son of Geda Pramanik. They hail from Namuit village in the upazila.

Judge Md Abdul Mannan of Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-1 pronounced the verdict in a crowded courtroom. The tribunal fined each of them Tk 1.25 lakh. In default, they are to suffer one year more in jail, said public prosecutor Naresh Mukharjee.

According to the prosecution, Rosy Khatun, wife of Mintu Mia of the same

village, and her sister-in-law Anjuara Begum came out of their house, responding to the call of nature at midnight on October 29, 2001. Solaiman and his accomplices abducted the two and confined them to a house in nearby Singapur area. The gang raped the two women several times.

The women were released the next evening when the gang realised that the relatives of the victims were searching for them.

Victim Rosy lodged a rape case with Nandigram Police Station on November 6, 2001, accusing the four.

Sub-Inspector Kazi Habibur Rahman of the police station was assigned to investigate the case. Later, the case was transferred to the Detective Branch (DB) police in Bogra. After investigation, Sub-inspector Motiur Rahman submitted a charge sheet to the tribunal.



PHOTO: STAR

Four life term awardees, in the case for raping two women in Nadigram upazila under Bogra district in 2001, after pronouncement of the verdict by Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-1 in Bogra yesterday.

2 held for kidnapping priest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Two people were arrested in connection with abduction of Uttam Kumar Mohanta, a priest in Rangpur's Pirganj upazila, from Rangpur and Gaibandha districts on Saturday.

The arrestees are Mohammad Shahin, 24, and Al-Amin, 23. Shahin was arrested from Kaunia upazila of Rangpur while Al-Amin from Sadullahpur upazila of Gaibandha.

On June 11, Rangpur police rescued priest Uttam, 50, a resident of Sardarpara

village in Pirganj upazila, after he was kidnapped from Gaibandha Railway Station the day before.

One of the gang members phoned Uttam's son Akash Chandra Mohanta and demanded Tk 1.5 lakh for his father's release.

Being informed, Rangpur police raided a house at Kamopur village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, tracking the kidnappers' cellphone locations and rescued Uttam from there.

Police also arrested Anwar Hossain, the house owner, in connection with the abduction.

4 jailed for arranging early marriage in Dinajpur

Body to probe two other underage marriages with forged birth certificates

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Dinajpur

Four people have been jailed for arranging marriage of a 13-year-old schoolgirl in Khansama upazila while a two-member probe body has been formed to investigate marriages of two underage girls by managing forged birth certificates in Birampur upazila of the district.

Woman electrocuted

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Dinajpur

A woman was electrocuted in Mithapukur upazila of Rangpur district yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Nurtaz Begum, 25, daughter of Nur Islam of Udaypur village under the upazila.

A mobile court yesterday sentenced four people to different terms of imprisonment for arranging marriage of seventh grader Mahmuda Akter, daughter of Habibur Rahman of Uttarpara village in Khansama upazila.

Of them, Habibur was jailed for 25 days, his brother Azizul Haque for 20 days, Dulal Rahman, father of bridegroom, for 25 days and his brother Obaidur Rahman for a month.

Locals said the minor girl was going to be married with Morshedur Rahman, 18, son of Dulal Rahman of Zamidarnagar village.

On information, Upazila Nirbahi Officer Sazebur Rahman, who led the court, rushed to the spot, foiled the marriage, arrested the four and later pronounced the verdict, said Krishna Chandra Sarker, officer-in-charge of Khansama Police Station.

In Birampur upazila, a

two-member probe body, headed by Upazila Education Officer SM Zinnah, was formed to investigate two underage marriages held with forged birth certificates at Katla village on June 3.

The body, which was formed on Friday, was asked to submit the report within seven days, UNO SM Moniruzzaman Al Masud said, adding that action will be taken after getting the report.

Locals said marriages of two schoolgirls took place at the village on June 3. They are ninth grader Suraiya Begum, daughter of Monsur Ali, and fifth grader Sathi Begum, daughter of Saidur Rahman of the area.

The parents arranged their marriages after having their birth certificates from the Katla Union Parishad (UP), which were forged. Newly elected UP Chairman Nazir Hossain said it

A palace in ruins

FROM PAGE 16

accounts about its age. Some say it was built during Chakma Queen Kalindi's reign between 1844 and 1870.

However, Regional Director of Department of Archaeology Md Amiruzzaman believes the building is much older than that.

He said a stone inscription on a nearby Buddhist temple mentions that Queen Kalindi built the temple to increase the aesthetic beauty of the palace. So, the palace is older than the temple, he added.

"The inscription provides description of the Chakma kings from King Shermosto Khan, who ruled from 1737 to 1758 and was the first king to accept subjugation to the Mughals," said Amiruzzaman.

Biraj Mohan Dewan in his book "Chakma Jatir Itibritto" mentions a legend about mid-17th century Chakma King Dhormya, who fell in love and married the daughter of a Mughal nobleman. Their son Mogollya, who became the king in 1684, named his sons Suvol Khan and Jollal alias Fotey Khan.

Shermusto Khan was Fotey Khan's son.

Since Mogollya's reign, many Chakma kings and noblemen took the title Khan, but there is no evidence they converted to Islam.

"An account says Shermosto Khan's adopted son Sukdeb established a capital in the plains of Rangunia upazila and built that palace. So, based on the historic accounts and stone inscriptions, it could be reckoned that it was built between 1737 and 1776 either by Chakma King Shermusto Khan or his son Sukdeb Roy," said Amiruzzaman.

During a recent visit, it was found that the entire building has been covered in weeds. Large cracks have developed on the three-foot-wide walls and the roof crumbled down completely. Yet the original structure of the lost glory is evident.

The rectangular east-facing building is 52 feet

long and 48 feet wide. It has 10 rooms including three on the second floor. The building, built with brick, lime and mortar, has arched doors in each room. Besides, there were flower and vine motifs on the wall that could still be seen.

But the palace is on the verge of complete destruction as no initiatives, neither by its owner nor by the government, have been taken to preserve it.

Amiruzzaman suggests that the building be preserved under the Antiquities Act, 1968. "Besides, The Department of Environment and tourism authorities could work together to make it a cultural tourism site with a museum in the area," he observed.

According to the Antiquities Act, 1968 (amended in 1976), any ancient monument (minimum 100 years old) illustrative of architecture, warfare, politics or culture can be regarded as an article of antiquity.

Department of Archaeology Chittagong region Deputy Director Lovely Yeasmin said a report was sent to Dhaka in 2013 with suggestion to declare the building as 'protected.'

More moss and weeds are on the palace walls as a result of neglect.

FROM PAGE 16

Muhammad Azhar, another police official, confirmed the incident.

It was the latest in a string of "honour" killings, which are thought to claim around 1,000 lives every year in Pakistan.

Last week a man's throat was slit by relatives of his wife who disapproved of their match -- a rare instance of a male victim.

The week before, 16 year-old Zeenat Bibi was killed in Lahore by her mother for marrying a man of her own choice -- a case that sparked condemnation throughout the country.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif vowed to eradicate the "evil" of honour killings amid publicity for the Oscar-winning film on the subject, "A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness".

As yet no fresh legislation has been tabled.



PHOTO: STAR

Government officials, teachers, social workers and journalists take oath to do their best to prevent corruption at different levels yesterday after completion of a workshop titled "Our role to expedite activities to resist corruption" at the conference room of Thakurgaon Deputy Commissioner's office.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Second Rural Transport Improvement Project (RTIP-II)
LGED Bhaban (Level-11), Agargaon, Dhaka-1207
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. LGED/PD/RTIP-2/C-34/2016/4056 Date: 19.06.16

Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)
for
Mobile Application for Field-work Inspection [National]

The Government of Bangladesh (GOB) through Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) is implementing the World Bank (IDA) assisted Second Rural Transport Improvement Project (RTIP-II) to engage key development priorities in rural transport sector in Bangladesh. In addition to the various civil works, one of the main project aims is to further enhance the institutional capacity of LGED for effective rural transport infrastructure planning, development, execution, quality assurance, maintenance and sustainability. The RTIP-II assistance in this respect is being provided via the **Institutional Development, Government Enhancement & Capacity Building** component, covering LGED action to enhance capacity, effectiveness, governance and accountability, particularly in the following field:

- Mobile Application for Field-work Inspection.

The overall objective of these services is to develop and implement web and smart device based software applications with the purpose of facilitating for LGED real-time updates of field inspection information in a consistent manner with intention to enriching and enhancing field level contract monitoring capabilities.

The expected assistance shall be a combination of Project Management services for the overall Strategy & Action Plan implementation and associated support, and in parallel, technical assistance for identification/feasibility/development action on proposed new strategic systems. Details of the assignment are as follows:

The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interests in providing the services. Interested consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services. The short listing criteria are:

- a) Registration of the firm.
- b) Age of firm (years in relevant business).
- c) Availability of key professionals.
- d) Financial resources of the consultant (turnover of last five years).
- e) Experience of the firm in similar tasks/assignments (examples of past experience-similar nature and/or complexity including cost and duration of the assignment).
- f) Experience of the firm in other works (examples of other experience including cost and duration of the assignment).
- g) Support services of the firm (office space, support staff, equipment).

Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, and, if association, should mention whether the association is in the form of "joint venture" or "sub-consultancy". It is preferable to limit the total number of firms in an association including the Lead Firm to 4 (four).

A consulting firm will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) procedures as set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers, January 2011.

Expression of interest must be delivered to the address below in sealed envelope on or before 13 July 2016 during office hours. Submission through e-mail will also be accepted provided (i) it is delivered by the deadline, and (ii) appropriate reference is made in the subject line of the email, such as "Expression of Interest for Consultancy Services of Mobile Application for Field-work Inspection".

Md. Mostafa Kamal
Project Director
Second Rural Transport Improvement Project (RTIP-II)
Local Government Engineering Department (LGED)
LGED Bhaban, Level-11, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar
Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh
Tel: +880-2-9120218, Fax: +880-2-58157511
E-mail: pdrtip2.lged@yahoo.com

GD-1307