

JOYPURHAT WAREHOUSE

6,000 tonnes of urea under open sky for 3 months

Exposed to sun and rain, the fertiliser loses quality and weight

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

Around 6,000 tonnes of urea have been left under the open sky for the last three months due to shortage of space in Joypurhat warehouse.

Bangladesh Fertiliser Association (BFA) and Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) in the district are struggling to protect the fertilisers from damage caused by sunlight and rainwater.

During a recent visit to the warehouse, this correspondent saw a huge pile of 1.2 lakh bags containing 6,000 tonnes of urea at the BFA complex covered with polythene.

The 2,000 tonne warehouse was

built before the Liberation War in 1971. No warehouse has been built since then, though the demand for urea has gone up many times, officials said.

The district's BFA officials said they got allotment of 10,000 tonnes of urea for the aman season, of which 4,000 tonnes have been crammed in the existing warehouse, and the rest 6,000 tonnes have been left under the open sky for the last three months.

Farmers said if urea is kept in the open, it loses quality and weight. "We will not get the optimum result if the urea is exposed to sunlight and rainwater," said Sobhan Ali, a farmer of Atapara village under Panchbibi upazila of

Joypurhat.

"If you purchase a 50 kg bag of urea, you will get at least two kg less," he added.

Officials of BFA, BCIC and Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) of Joypurhat rejected the allegation.

Mizanur Rahman, warehouse-in-charge of Joypurhat BFA warehouse, said they covered the urea with polythene to ensure proper quality and weight.

According to DAE officials of Joypurhat, 580mm of rainfall was recorded since July 9, and it is quite difficult to protect such a huge pile from the rain.

Abdul Alim a farmer of Belgari village under Kethlal upazila, said

when he opened a bag of urea he saw that its colour had changed due to rainwater and sunlight. If the colour changes then it loses its effectiveness, he added.

Moshiul Alam Mollah, general secretary of Joypurhat BFA, admitted that quality and weight are lost if urea is kept in the open. The Joypurhat BFA committee requested the authorities concerned several times to build a new warehouse, but have not received any response, he added.

Taherul Islam, deputy director (acting) of DAE in Joypurhat, said they are trying to distribute the exposed urea as soon as possible. A warehouse needs to be built urgently, he added.



PHOTO: STAR

Huge quantities of urea kept on the premises of Joypurhat warehouse gradually lose quality and weight as the accommodation capacity is too inadequate for the requirement. *Inset*, workers stack fertiliser on the warehouse premises to save it from rain and sun.



Commuters suffer as fallen bridge not rebuilt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pirojpur*

Thousands of commuters travelling by bus and other vehicles are facing problem as an iron bridge that collapsed at Mathbaria upazila in the district last month has not been rebuilt.

As a result, vehicles carrying passengers and goods from different parts of the country, including Dhaka, cannot cross the area.

The bridge over Gudighata canal on Pirojpur-Mathbaria road collapsed on June 15 when two stone-laden trucks got on the bridge at the same time. The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) has removed the iron body of

the bridge.

Under an alternative arrangement, now the vehicles have to go via Gudighata Bazar, which is six kilometres from Mathbaria upazila headquarters.

Visiting the spot yesterday, this correspondent saw a large number of buses and other vehicles coming from different parts of the country parked on the roadside. "Now we have to face troubles to move the buses," said Babul Sheikh, a bus driver.

"Before the bridge collapsed, we could get on a bus from Mathbaria to go to Khulna, Barisal, Pirojpur or Bhandaria. But now we have to go six kilometres

using another vehicle to get on a bus," said Shafikul Islam, a passenger.

Passengers coming from the opposite side, including Pirojpur, have to get down at Gudighata Bazar and get on another vehicle to go to Mathbaria, paying much more fare.

"As no boats ply on the canal, we will make a culvert there," said Md Fazle Rabbi, executive engineer of Pirojpur RHD office.

Locals alleged that although the bridge was risky, RHD never put up any signboard marking with warning message.

It was done after the bridge collapsed, they added.



PHOTO: STAR

A portion of Pirojpur-Mathbaria road in Mathbaria upazila under Pirojpur district remains unusable for vehicles as the iron bridge over Gudighata canal collapsed under the pressure of two loaded trucks a month ago. *Right*, buses are kept waiting in line at Gudighata Bazar under an alternative arrangement as the vehicles cannot cross the canal at the bridge collapse spot.

Bangla Bhai's close aide held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Rajshahi*

Police arrested a member of banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) from Sakoa village in Bagmara upazila of the district early yesterday.

The arrestee is Abdus Sattar, a teacher of Jatragachhi Madrasa in the area, and a close aide of executed JMB leader Siddiqur Rahman alias Bangla Bhai.

On secret information, a police team conducted a drive at his village home and arrested Sattar, locally known as Sattar Bsc, said Abul Kalam Azad, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Bagmara Police Station.

He was accused in five extortion cases. The arrestee was later produced before a court that sent him to jail.

JMB chief Abdur Rahman, its operations commander Bangla Bhai and four other top leaders were executed in 2007 for killing two judges in Jhalakathi in a suicide bomb attack on November 14, 2005.

UPDF leader arrested

A CORRESPONDENT, *Khagrachhari*

Police arrested a leader of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) from A p a r n a c h a r a n Chowdhurypara area in Khagrachhari Sadar upazila early yesterday.

The arrestee, Mithun Chakma, an organiser of UPDF, is also a former president of Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP).

Locals said, a team of the law enforcers, acting on a tip-off, raided Mithun's house in the area early yesterday and arrested him from there.

Officer-in-Charge Masud Alam Chowdhury of Sadar Police station said Mithun is accused in at least 10 cases filed with the police station.

The arrestee was produced before a court yesterday afternoon that sent him to the jail, the OC added.

SNIPPETS

Housewife killed for dowry

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gaibandha*

A housewife was beaten to death allegedly by her husband for dowry at Khamar Dasalia village in Sadullapur upazila of the district. The deceased is Monira Akhter Moyna, 30, daughter of Mofizul Huq of Subarnadaha village in Sunderganj upazila. Family members alleged that after 13 years of their marriage, Lutfar Rahman of Khamar Dasalia village often tortured Moyna for dowry. On Monday, Lutfar beat up Moyna mercilessly, leaving her dead on the spot following an altercation over the issue. The body was later dumped in a nearby pond. On information, police recovered the body the following day and sent it to Gaibandha Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy. Lutfar and his family members went into hiding soon after the incident. They are investigating the matter, said Emrul Kayes, officer-in-charge of Sadullapur Police Station.

Teenager found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

An unidentified teenage girl, aged about 18, was found dead in the Naya Bhanguli River in Mollar Bazar area under Muladi upazila of the district yesterday. Informed by locals, police recovered the body from the river at noon, said Matiur Rahaman, officer-in-charge of Muladi Police Station.

3 drug traders jailed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Tangail*

A mobile court sentenced three illegal drug traders to two years' imprisonment in Gopalpur upazila of the district yesterday. The convicts are Shamsul Haque, 55, of Nandanpur Beparipara village, Nazrul Islam, 45, of Bhengula village, and Moiful Begum, 55, of Uttar Gopalpur village. Abdul Jalil, officer-in-charge of Gopalpur Police Station, said a police team along with Inspector Abdullah Al Mamun of Narcotics Control Department in Tangail arrested the trio with 10 kilograms of marijuana from different areas on Monday night. The following day, the arrestees were produced before the court, led by Executive Magistrate Masumur Rahman, which punished them.

Woman 'commits suicide'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

A woman allegedly committed suicide in Mithapukur upazila of Rangpur on Monday. The deceased is Kakoli Begum, 30, wife of Akkas Ali of Balarhat village. Locals said Kakoli took poison following an altercation with her husband over family matter in the afternoon. She was rushed to the upazila health complex where she died in the evening. The body was sent to Rangpur Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy, said Humayun Kabir, officer-in-charge of Mithapukur Police Station.

49 Indian cows seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Benapole*

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) seized 49 Indian cows worth about Tk 31 lakh from Daulatpur border area in Jessore yesterday. Lt Col Jahangir Hossain, commanding officer of BGB-26 Battalion, said being informed that a number of cows were being smuggled from India through the border area, the border guards raided the area and seized the cattle. However, the smugglers managed to flee the scene, sensing the presence of the BGB men. A case was filed in this connection.

Man stabbed by daughter-in-law

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Benapole*

A man was stabbed allegedly by his daughter-in-law at Chopdarpara in Jessore town yesterday.

Critically injured Hasan Ali, 60, of the area, was admitted to Jessore Medical College Hospital.

The victim's wife Reba Begum alleged that Rikta Begum attacked his husband with a sharp weapon following a family feud around 11:00am.

Hearing screams, locals rushed to the spot, caught Rikta and handed him over to police.

During primary interrogation, Rikta confessed to stabbing her father-in-law, said Sub-Inspector Mosaddek Hossain of Jessore Kotwali Police Station.

10 docs get show cause notice

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jhalakathi*

Ten doctors of Jhalakathi Sadar Hospital on Sunday received show cause notice for absence from their working place.

After Eid vacation, it was the first day of office but most of the doctors were absent at the hospital.

Due to this, some patients had to leave the hospital without treatment.

Action will be taken against them after getting their replies, said Dr Abdur Rahim, civil surgeon of Jhalakathi.

11 more infected with anthrax in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pabna*

Eleven more people have been infected with anthrax in Shahzadpur upazila of Sirajganj within the last 24 hours.

The affected people, Sanwar Sheikh, 25, Rabiul Islam, 20, Firoz Hossain, 22, Raju, 11, Helena, 35, Miraj, 15, Belal, 25, Mamun, 18, Nazmul, 14, Harun, 12, and Ajida, 4, hail from Moshipur Uttarpara village in the upazila.

They were given primary treatment at the upazila health complex.

Although the district administration took initiatives and issued orders to stop slaughter of sick cattle, such act did not stop.

The upazila health department has sent several medical teams in the anthrax affected village in the upazila to tackle the ongoing outbreak of infection and identify the fresh



PHOTO: STAR

Sores on the body of an anthrax infected patient.

infected people, said Dr Jafarul Islam, Shahzadpur upazila health and family planning officer.

Quoting the victims, Dr Jafarul said one Jahir Ali Sheikh of the village slaughtered a sick cow on July 3 and distributed its meat

among the villagers. Those who took part in the meat processing are being infected with anthrax, he added.

With the latest 11, the disease has affected a total of 61 people in the upazila since May this year.

'Imams can build awareness against militancy'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Thakurgaon*

A meeting of the District Terrorism and Destruction Prevention Committee (Zila Santrash O Nashakata Protirodh Committee) yesterday emphasised the involvement of imams of mosques in campaigning and building awareness among the people against terrorism and militant acts.

Deputy Commissioner Mukesh Chandra Biswas presided over the meeting held at the conference room of his office, while Superintendent of Police Farhad Ahmed, and Administrator of Thakurgaon Zila

Parishad and also General Secretary of the district unit of Awami League Sadek Kurishi, among others, attended the meeting.

The speakers said everybody should play an important role so that the militant groups could not use innocent, pious people by misinterpreting Islam and the Holy Quran.

The civil administration and police should keep watch on the mosques and madrasas so that militant groups cannot use those institutions to mislead innocent people using religious fervour, the speakers said.