

## Woes mount as copiers of deed on strike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Service receivers suffer a lot as an indefinite strike, enforced by extra-muharrirs (copiers) at sub-registry office, still continues.

"We refrained from serving people since the copiers of deed across the country called the strike on December 4, demanding their inclusion in the national pay-scale," said Md Shahidul Islam, president of Bangladesh Extra-Muharrirs' (Nakal Nabish) Association, Patuakhali unit.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared their job nationalised but the announcement is yet to be implemented, he said.

Abdul Hakim of Galachipa said he fell in a great trouble over purchasing a land as he could not manage certified copy of a deed due to the strike.

## Jamalpur, Tangail taste freedom today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Freedom fighters entered Tangail town and freed the district from the occupation of Pakistan Army on this day in 1971.

The occupation forces entered Tangail on April 3, breaking the blockades to the district town in Mirzapur.

The freedom fighters hoisted the national flag in the town on December 11 after the occupation forces moved back to Dhaka when about 2,000 members of the allied forces landed near Tangail town the day before.

Our Jamalpur correspondent reports, on December 11, freedom fighter Faizur Rahman formally declared Jamalpur free from the Pakistani forces and hoisted the national flag atop of local WAPDA rest house.



Once flowing Dakatia river in Raipur upazila of Laxmipur gives the look of a stagnant water body, following its segmentation by some local influential people who are using the water body for commercial fish cultivation.

PHOTO: STAR

# Dakatia dying

The river in Laxmipur is off limits to watercrafts as barriers put for fish farming

MD NURUL AMIN, Noakhali

The Dakatia River in Raipur upazila of Laxmipur is dying as some local influential people are setting bamboo fences, large net and other barriers by dividing the water body into segments for commercial fish cultivation.

Plying of all kinds of water transport has stopped due to the situation.

Earlier thousands of people lived by catching natural fish in the river but now large areas from Hajimara area in Dakkhin Charbanshi union of Raipur upazila to Laxmipur Sadar are under the grip of commercial fish farmers.

Locals said Shahjahan Mollah, ward unit president of Awami League in Dakkhin Charbanshi union, also member of union parishad, Jahangir Hossain Mollah, son of union AL president Abdur Rashid Molla, Mohammad Ali Mollah, former secretary of union Jubo Dal, and several other influential people are engaged in the business.

Shahjahan and Jahangir said they are cultivating fish in the river as transport in the

water body has stopped and its regular flow got blocked due to creation of a barrier at Hajimara.

During recent visits, this correspondent saw that bamboo fences and large fishing nets were set at different places of the river in Dakkhin Charbangshi union, virtually blocking the river flow.

Ordinary fishermen in the area, deprived of the opportunity of fishing due to monopolisation of the work by some influential people, are passing days amid hardship.

Locals recently took an initiative to save the river but goons let loose by the perpetrators foiled the move, it is alleged.

Several fishermen in Mollarhat area said they are looking for other sources of income as they can no longer engage in the paternal trade due to the illegal fish cultivation.

Gazi Yar Ali, executive engineer of Noakhali Water Development Board, said, "Hajimara regulator under Chandpur Irrigation Project impedes flow of the river. I am trying to take a positive initiative by contacting the authorities concerned."

Silpi Rani Roy, Raipur upazila nirbahi

## TORTURE ON WOMAN Two arrested in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Police have arrested two people on charge of brutally torturing housewife Amena Bibi at Kamarchhoto village of the district's Gabtoli upazila on November 30, following a case filed on Wednesday.

The arrestees are the victim's daughter-in-law Rumpa Begum, 19, and Rumpa's father Rafiqul Islam, 47.

Two other accused of the case, local UP member Abdul Latif Latim, 42, and Baki Mia, 50, of the same area went into hiding, said Shaheed Mahmud Khan, OC of Gabtoli Model Police Station.

The case was filed with the help of local human rights activist Kamal Pasha following Wednesday's Daily Star report titled 'Inhuman torture on Bogra woman', informing about the torture on Amena Bibi, 50, wife of

## Early variety potato boon to farmers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Early variety of potatoes has started to appear in local markets and proved a boon to Lalmonirhat farmers as they are selling their produces at higher prices.

Now one kilogram of newly harvested potato is selling for Tk 45 to 50 in local markets.

Farmer said it was sold for Tk 60 to 70 per kilogram when it first appeared in the local markets two weeks ago.

Growers and traders said harvest of the early variety potato has started in different upazilas of the district about two weeks ago.

Farmers in the region said sowing of potato seeds will continue till the first week of February next year.

According to Lalmonirhat Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) 6,500 hectares of land were brought under potato cultivation in five upazilas this year.

Of the land, growers have cultivated early variety of potato on 250 hectares of land.

DAE officials said farmers have already started harvesting their produce as they cultivated the early variety potato following the harvest of short duration aman paddy.

"I have earned Tk 85 thousand by selling early variety potatoes on my two bighas of land," said farmer Shafiqul Islam of Bhadai village in Aditmari upazila.

Deputy Director Bidubhushan Roy of Lalmonirhat DAE said the agriculture departments, seed dealers and a few non-governmental organisations (NGOs) provided quality potato seeds and fertilisers to the farmers to make potato farming successful.

## Pro-AL panel sweeps PSTU teachers' polls

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Pro-Awami League 'blue panel' swept the election to Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) Teachers' Association on Friday.

Professor Dr Swadesh Samonto of the panel was elected president of the association.

Professor Zehad Parvez and Dr Purnendu Biswas of the same panel became general secretary and vice president respectively.

Voting started at the university campus at 8:00am and ended at 4:00pm.

Among others, Dr Gopal Saha was elected treasurer, ABM Mahbub Morshed Khan joint secretary, Md Roman Akand organizing secretary, Dr Milton Talukder publication secretary and Nasrin Sultana office secretary.

# Peak time for brick kilns

Bad weather delays brick making for 2 weeks

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Workers at different brick kilns in the district are passing busy time making bricks after a delay of two weeks due to bad weather.

"We came here around one month back and started producing bricks two weeks ago after preparing the fields," said Masum Billah, a worker of a brick kiln at Chandipur village under Zianagar upazila.

Most workers of brick kilns are from Jessore and Satkhira, and they stay at different brick kilns during brick producing season, he added.

Saiful Islam, another worker, said they worked on contract basis.

Workers said they get Tk 160 for making 1,000 raw bricks, and a worker can make around 4,000 bricks a day.

Hafizur Rahman, leader of the workers of a brick kiln, said five to nine lakh bricks are produced at a time in a brick kiln, depending on its size.

"A maximum of 70 lakh bricks can be produced in a year from a brick kiln," said Hafizur, adding that bricks can be burnt around six to seven times in six months.

The production cost of brick has increased with the increase in price of coal and other materials and labour costs, he added.

"We have to invest Tk 6 to Tk 7 to produce one brick. The production cost increases if the bricks get damaged due to rain before burning," said Bellal Hossain, owner of Niaz Bricks in Zianagar upazila.

There are 22 authorised brick kilns in seven upazilas of the district. But bricks are also produced in unauthorised brick kilns that burn wood instead of coal.



Workers at a brick field at Chandipur village in Zianagar upazila of Pirojpur.

PHOTO: STAR

## Road to century old temple demanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Local Hindu people at a human chain in Chirirbandar upazila yesterday demanded a pitch road to Chibuka temple, a 100-year-old Temple, at Majhina village.

The hour-long human chain was formed on both sides of 1.3km earthen road around 11:00am.

Dulal Chandra Roy, president of the temple managing committee, said woes of devotees are mounting day by day due to the muddy road.

During monsoon, they suffer a lot as they have to walk through knee-deep water to



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