

NOR'WESTER HITS HABIGANJ, BOGURA

# 100 houses damaged

Paddy on 8,000 hectares also damaged

STAR COUNTRY DESK

A number of houses and vast tracts of croplands were damaged as nor'wester lashed Habiganj and Bogura on Wednesday.

The storm hit Madhabpur upazila in Habiganj on Wednesday night, leaving 100 houses damaged, reports our Moulvibazar correspondent.

The storm accompanied by hail and rain also damaged Boro paddy and uprooted a good number of trees and electric poles in the affected areas, said Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mukhlesur Rahman.

Palli Bidyut Samity reinstalled the electric poles and restored power supply in the upazila yesterday noon.

Meanwhile, a storm accompanied by hail and rain lashed Nandigram upazila in Bogura around 5:00pm, damaging a vast tract of paddy land, reports our correspondent.

Paddy on at least 8,000 hectares of land was damaged during the storm, said Upazila Agriculture Officer Md Mosidul Huq.

The storm also uprooted at least 100 big trees and a number of electric poles, said local people.

Banks and different government offices remained in dark due to power outage in the area, said Rezaul Karim, assistant general manager of Nandigram Palli Bidyut office.

At least 50 employees were working to fix the line as of filing of this report around 6:00pm yesterday, he said.

Farmer Anamul Islam of Koigram village in the upazila said paddy on his two bighas of land was damaged during the nor'wester.



A nor'wester hits Bogura's Nandigram upazila on Wednesday, damaging a vast tract of paddy land.

PHOTO: STAR

## Pangolin trapped in garden

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A pangolin, rescued from a vegetable garden at Isobpur village near Lawacherra forest in Sreemangal upazila under the district yesterday morning, is undergoing treatment at Bangladesh Wildlife Service Foundation in the upazila.

"The pangolin got trapped in a net when it came to the vegetable garden. Then locals beat it. Later, local resident Shimul Deb rescued it and informed us. We took it here and started giving treatment. But it has not taken any food yet," Swapan Deb Sojol, director of the foundation, said in the afternoon.

"The pangolin would be four to five years old. After treatment we will release it in Lawacherra forest," he said.

Animesh Ghose Ayon, wildlife

biologist at Creative Conservation Alliance, said the animal is listed as critically endangered in International Nature and Natural Resources Conservation Association.

"In Asia region, the female pangolin gives birth to one to three babies within 120 to 150 days of conceiving. They weigh 80 to 450 grams at birth and become mature in two years. Then the fibres of the body become too strong.

"It grows 30 to 100 centimetres long, weighing two to 10 kg. They live for around two decades.

"Most of wild animals come out from the jungle at night for food. Sometimes callous people attack them, especially near habitats," he said.

Dr M Monirul H Khan, profes-

sor of zoology at Jahangirnagar University, said, "Pangolin is a nocturnal animal. During the night, they roam around in forests. They dig the soil from one to one and a half metres with their sharp nails and eat poisonous insects, aphids and ants. Ants are its favourite food."

Meanwhile, the only government-run wildlife treatment centre in the region, Lawacherra Wildlife Rescue Centre is running without any veterinary surgeon, nurses and adequate equipment.

Mihir Kumar Doe, former divisional forest officer of Wildlife Management and Nature Conservation Department, said he had informed the higher authorities to appoint required manpower at the rescue centre on an urgent basis.



The rescued pangolin on the premises of Bangladesh Wildlife Service Foundation in Sreemangal upazila of Moulvibazar.

PHOTO: STAR

## 19 return after serving in Indian jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Eighteen Bangladeshi women and a child returned home through Benapole check post yesterday after serving three years in an Indian jail.

Indian police handed them over to Benapole check post immigration police.

Tarikul Islam, office-in-charge of Benapole Police Immigration, said they illegally went to India in search of good jobs over three years ago without valid documents.

Later, Indian police arrested them from Mumbai. A court sentenced them to three years' imprisonment each for illegally crossing the border.

The Indian government returned them following exchange of letters between the home ministries of both countries. Benapole Port Police said they handed over the returnees to their respective families.

## Black cumin farming on trial basis

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Black cumin seed (kalijira) is being cultivated for the first time on trial basis in Atrai upazila of Naogaon this year.

Upazila Agriculture Officer (UAO) SM Golam Sarwar said only 10 decimals of land have been brought under black cumin seed farming at Chowkmoon village for the first time.

Farmer Md Liton of the village agreed to cultivate the spice.

Liton told this correspondent that he agreed to cultivate black cumin as it has many uses. "It is not only a spice, but is also used for medicinal purposes," he said. Demand for oil from black cumin seed is increasing in the country, said the elderly Liton, a successful farmer in the area.

Local DAE is giving him support, said Liton.

"I became bored producing the traditional crops. I tried growing black cumin seed as it is a new crop here and I wanted to do something different," he said, adding that he is expecting good profit.

He cultivated the black cumin seed on 10 decimals in mid-December last year and harvesting is likely to start in a week. "The seed is becoming mature," he said.

Farmers can harvest it around four months after plantation, the UAO said.

He said black cumin seed is grown on a

very small area in Bangladesh, although consumption is high.

The first ever test farming of this important crop in the area has created enthusiasm among other farmers as Liton is likely to get a good harvest, the UAO said.

Agriculture officials are hopeful that more farmers in the upazila will take up farming black cumin seed.

Md Liton of Naogaon says he started black cumin seed farming as he was bored producing traditional crops.

Black cumin seed farming is not costly, and the weather and soil are suitable for this crop, the UAO said.

Farmers need only Tk 3,000 to Tk 4,000 for cultivating the crop on 33 decimals, and can get yield of up to 120 kg per 33 decimals of land.

Black cumin seed is available at Tk 250 per kg in the local markets.

## Elderly monk hacked to death in Bandarban

Nainda Bhikkhu was found dead in Buddhist temple kitchen

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

An elderly monk was hacked to death at a Buddhist temple in Bandarban Sadar upazila yesterday.

Being informed, police recovered the body of 80-year-old Nainda Bhikkhu from the kitchen of Bakichhara Majerpara Buddhist Temple in the morning and sent it to Sadar Hospital for autopsy, Officer-in-Charge of Sadar Police Station Golam Sarwar said.

Police detained Chobida Sramon, 40, a novice at the temple, suspecting his involvement in the killing, the OC said, adding that during primary interrogation the arrestee confessed to his involvement in the killing.

Based on the arrestee's confession, police recovered the machete used in the murder from the temple, the OC said.

Head of the temple U Panditha Bhikkhu said Chobida had been suffering from mental disorder since he attempted to kill his mother two years ago.

## ISLAMIC HISTORY EXAMINATIONS

# Second paper questions instead of first paper

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Wrong question papers were distributed among the ongoing Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examination candidates at a centre in Ashuganj upazila yesterday.

The unwanted incident took place at Ashuganj Sar Karkhana School and College centre. Later, the college authorities changed the question paper and tried to hide the matter, but in vain.

Students said question paper of Islamic

History and Culture second paper, which is scheduled to be held on Saturday (April 28), was distributed instead of the first paper scheduled for yesterday.

Chairman of Cumilla Education Board Prof Ruhul Amin said they have informed the higher authorities of the matter.

Action will be taken in this regard after investigation, he said.

Mentionable, the HSC and equivalent examinations are being held under all the 10 education boards with the same questions papers this year.

## Mother, daughter burnt to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A woman and her daughter were burnt to death and her son sustained burn injuries when their house caught fire in Bujbal village under Rajnagar upazila early yesterday.

The deceased were Rokeya Begum, 55, and her daughter Shahina Begum, 24, a 4th year honours student at Moulvibazar Government College, while the injured is Munna Aziz, 27.

Moulvibazar Police Station Assistant Sub-Inspector Billal Hossain told this correspondent that the fire broke out from an electrical short-circuit at around 2:00am while Rokeya and her children were asleep in their tinshed house.

Hearing their screams, locals rushed to the house and doused the fire with the help of a fire fighting unit from Moulvibazar.

Later, they recovered the charred body of Shahina and rescued severely burned Rokeya and Munna, he added.

Rokeya succumbed to her injuries after they were admitted to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, while Munna has been taken to the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital Resident Medical Officer Polash Roy told this correspondent.

## Fish poisoned to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A huge quantity of fish fry floated dead as alleged extortionists poured pesticide into a pond at Nekir Bhita village in Gaibandha Sadar upazila early yesterday.

Shoyeb Hakkani a fish farmer of the village recently released fry of local shing (stinging fish) variety in his 12-decimal pond and those grew six inches long, said family members and locals.

They saw dead fish fry floating on the water yesterday morning.

"A local criminal group demanded Tk 50 thousand from me. As I declined, they flew into a rage. Sometime on Wednesday night or early Thursday, the extortionists poured pesticide into the pond, causing death of all the fry," said Shoyeb.



Black cumin seed is being grown for the first time in Chowkmoon village under Atrai upazila of Naogaon.

PHOTO: COLLECTED