

# 2 beaten dead

STAR COUNTRY DESK

An elderly man was beaten dead over family dispute in Chatmohar upazila of Pabna on Friday night, while a youth was killed yesterday for having an illicit relationship with a woman in Tangail Sadar upazila.

In Pabna, the victim was Md Abdus Sattar, 65.

Chatmohar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Shariful Islam said Sattar's daughter Ratna Khatun married Iman Hossain, son of Dalil Uddin of the same village, two years ago. Since their marriage, both families became involved in a family dispute.

Recently, Ratna went to her father's home and did not return to her in-laws' house, which made Iman angry. Iman and his relatives went to Ratna's house, where the two families had an altercation.

At one stage, they beat up Sattar, leaving him dead on the spot, the OC said.

Police arrested Iman and his father. A case was filed with Chatmohar Police Station.

Meanwhile, in Tangail, a handloom worker was beaten to death in Sadar upazila yesterday for having an illicit affair with a woman.

The deceased was Mazedul Islam, 35, of Pashchim Laodanga village in Ulipur upazila of Kurigram. He worked at a handloom factory in Rabna Bypass area in Tangail Sadar upazila.

Quoting locals, Tangail Model Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Saidur Rahman said Mazedul was involved in an affair with a woman, who had been left by her husband.

When Mazedul went to a house adjacent to the handloom factory to meet the woman in the early hours yesterday, her family members and locals beat him up, the OC said.

Locals took Mazedul to Tangail General Hospital where doctors declared him dead, he added.

Police detained Siddik Hossain and Sajjad Hossain of the area in connection with the incident, the OC said.

Our correspondents in Pabna and Tangail contributed to this report.

# Haor worried

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in some other areas might be damaged if those were not harvested soon, he added.

Abu Bakar Siddik Bhuiyan, executive engineer of WDB, said farmers should harvest their boro crop at the earliest as heavy rain may cause flash floods.

He, however, claimed all the WDB-constructed dykes in the haor areas were safe.

Meanwhile, Khasrul Alam, treasure of the Tangar Haor Co-management Committee, filed a case with Tahirpur Police Station on Thursday night, accusing eight named and about 90 unnamed local fishermen over cutting the dyke.

Police on Thursday picked up Anwar Hossain, a fisherman from Hukumpur village in Tahirpur. One of the named accused in the case, Anwar was sent to jail as ordered by a Sunamganj court on Friday, said Nandan Kanti Dhar, officer-in-charge of Tahirpur Police Station.

According to officials of the Department of Agricultural Extension, about 2.22 lakh hectares came under boro cultivation in Sunamganj this year. Farmers harvested around 30 percent crop till last week.



A wholesale tomato market at Gabura village in Dinajpur Sadar upazila. The photo was taken a few days ago.

PHOTO KONGKON KARMAKER

# Price fall worries tomato farmers

Many Dinajpur growers leave the summer vegetable on fields and markets to avoid further loss

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

Summer tomato growers in the district are incurring heavy loss as prices of the vegetable have fallen alarmingly at the local wholesale markets.

Growers and traders at the wholesale markets said ample production, absence of storage facilities and traffic congestion on the highways are among the reasons for the low prices.

District Department of Agriculture Extension Deputy Director Touhidul Iqbal said summer tomato was cultivated on 2,550 hectares of land with a target of 55,000 tonnes production this year. Almost half of the crop has been harvested, he added.

Harvesting started in early April and will continue till mid-May, farmers said.

Wholesale trading of tomato has started at Gabura, Panchbari, Janatamor and Kawgaon villages in Sadar upazila. Traders from different districts, including Dhaka, Chattogram, Sylhet and Barishal regions, come to the wholesale markets to buy the vegetable. Trading starts early in the morning every day and continues till noon, traders said.

Tomato was trading between Tk 180 to Tk 200 per maund (one maund = 40kg) at the markets on April 23, depending on the size and quality. Growers said they had expected the price to be around Tk 480 a maund.

Md Al Amin of Gabura village in Sadar upazila, said he cultivated summer tomato

on two bighas of land, spending Tk 70,000, this year and got around 520 maunds. He got Tk 1.04 lakh by selling it at Tk 4 per kg.

"I have hardly any profit considering the harvesting and transportation cost," he added.

This is the story of most of the growers in the district.

Matiar Rahman of Chuniapara in Sadar upazila said he left his tomatoes on the field to avoid further loss due to the price fall in the markets.

"Building a storage facility here would be helpful to the farmers as they can store their tomatoes there if there is price fall in the markets," he said.

The tomato growers in the district have

long been demanding that the government set up a cold storage plant, said farmers' leader Azizul Islam. They also urged the government to monitor the markets.

This correspondent on April 23 found that the farmers have left their unsold tomatoes at the markets to avoid further loss.

"What will we do by taking back this highly perishable vegetable home? Besides, we will need to spend more money to transport them back home," said Md Mominul Islam of Janatamor market in Sadar upazila.

Dinajpur Krishak Samiti President Badiuzzaman Badal urged the government to build a storage facility in Dinajpur so that the farmers can store their tomatoes there. "It will help the growers," he added.



Married women, accompanied by their husbands, buy different items at traditional 'Jamai Mela' at Basirannessa High School ground in Tangail Sadar upazila.

# Fair for sons-in-law

Three-day traditional 'Jamai Mela' ends

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The traditional 'Jamai Mela' (fair for sons-in-law) concluded in Sadar upazila on Friday.

People of Rasulpur village arrange the three-day-long fair on the 11th day of the Bangla month of Baishakh at Basirannessa High School premises every year.

According to the tradition, the married women of Rasulpur and other adjacent villages with their husbands and children visit their paternal house on the occasion and enjoy their time in many ways.

Like the previous years, a large number of people, especially the sons-in-law of Rasulpur and adjacent 30 villages, gathered at the venue.

Besides, many hawkers and vendors from different places across the country also came to the fair to sell their goods.

Poet Rashed Rahman, a resident of Rasulpur village, said people in the area do not know how long ago the fair started at the village.

So far as he knows, the fair has been held for decades and it is celebrated like great festivals, such as Eid and Puja, he said.

Seventy-year-old Idris Ali of the village said he has been witnessing the fair every Baishakh since his boyhood.

"My only daughter with her husband and children came to visit my house on the occasion," he added.

One of the elderly sons-in-law Jamal Hossain said he married at Rasulpur village before the country's independence and ever since he has joined the fair every year.

While visiting the fair one would see there are many makeshift stalls offering people necessary goods, household items and sweet items like jilepi, chinir saj, chamcham, rosgolla, panta, amitti, curd and puffed rice.

# Stalker hacks 2 over protest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

An stalker hacked two people as they protested his stalking in Balar Mour area in Phulpur upazila on Friday night.

The victims are Sumon Mia, 20, and his uncle Rafiqul Islam, 40, of Deo village.

AKM Mahbub Alam, officer-in-charge of Phulpur Police Station, said trader Sohel Mia, 30, of the same locality used to stalk a sixth grader madrasa girl on her way to the institution for long.

Sumon along with local people protested the stalking on various occasions. As Sohel stalked the girl again, village people assaulted him on April 12.

As Sohel sought pardon for his act, the villagers let him go, warning him not to do it again in future, said the OC.

Angered by the incident, Sohel allegedly attacked Sumon, a cousin of the girl, with a sharp weapon when he was returning home from a local bazar around 9:00pm on Friday.

When Rafiqul rushed to the spot to save Sumon, the attacker also hacked him and fled the scene, said the police official.

# Teesta char onion growers all smiles

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Farmers in the Teesta char areas are happy following good production of onion this year.

The onion produced in char (landmass emerging from the riverbed) areas is smaller in size but is of better quality than the hybrid variety and even the onion imported from India, traders said.

The farmers said there is high demand of onion produced in the Teesta char areas in the local market.

Farmer Mohsin Ali, 38, of char Islalpur in Kaliganj upazila, said he got 580kg of onion from around two bighas of land at a cost of Tk 2,000 this year. "I have already sold 300kg of onion at Tk 24 per kg in the local market," Mohsin said, adding that he got 480kg from the same land last year.

"We use compost fertiliser, not chemical fertiliser or pesticide in the fields and irrigate the land two times during farming onion," said Mohsin's wife Aklima Begum, 32.

Azizul Islam, 52, said around 65 farmers in the char cultivated onion on around 200 bighas of land this year and happy after

getting expected production. "Many vegetable traders also pay us in advance for onions produced in the char lands," he said, adding that he got 800kg of onion from around three bighas of land against 700kg last year.

Fazlul Haque, 58, of Narsingh in Aditmari upazila, said he cultivated onion and garlic on around five bighas of land this year and got good production of onion. "We need to spend less for farming onion, but we have to care for it properly," he added.

Mozahar Ali, 44, a vegetable trader at Aditmari upazila's Bhadai kitchen market, told this correspondent that most buyers like to purchase onions from char areas as it is of better quality than the hybrid ones or imported from India. "We sell char area onion at Tk 32 to Tk 35 per kg while hybrid and imported onions sell at Tk 28 to Tk 30 in the local market," he said.

District Department of Agriculture Extension Deputy Director Bidhubhushon Roy said vast areas of char land are used for farming spices, especially onion and garlic. "Farmers in the char areas got good production of onion due to good seeds and favourable weather this year," he said.



A farmer and his wife collecting onion at their field in Teesta river char of Islalpur village under Kaliganj upazila of Lalmonirhat. The picture was taken a few days ago.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

# Stalker stabs

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to jail yesterday, said KM Ajmiruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Chunarughat Police Station.

Jewel Mia, 25, of the same area had been pestering 19-year-old Mousumi Akhter for about a year, said her brother Jalal Uddin. He added they had complained to his family several times and also warned him in vain.

On Friday evening, Jewel allegedly stalked the girl on her way back home at Gulgaon village from Chunarughat town. She rejected the proposal.

Around 8:00pm, a gang led by Jewel allegedly entered the house and attacked her with sharp weapons when her family members were outside, police and locals said.

The victim was rushed to Habiganj Sadar Hospital.

Amin Uddin Master, father of the victim, has demanded the exemplary punishment of the stalker.

The main culprit fled the village soon after the incident, said the OC.