

Another man, stabbed on August 9 by a drug addict in Birganj upazila of the district, died at M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital yesterday.

The victim is Md Shahidul Islam, 38, son of late Madhu Mia of Purba Jagdal village in Birganj.

On August 9 early morning, Md Rabiul Islam, 30, son of Tara Mia of Purba Jagdal village in the upazila, allegedly stabbed Suruj Ali, 42, son of Md Kashem Ali, to death at the village on Dinajpur-Panchagarh highway.

Then Rabiul stabbed Shahidul and his son Ekramul Haque at Hatkhola in the upazila.

Later, locals caught Rabiul from Gorerhat village in the upazila, brought him back to Purba Jagdal village and burnt him to death.

Police arrested two women in connection with the killings.

Huge sex stimulating syrup destroyed
 OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A mobile court yesterday raided a medicine factory in Pabna BSCIC industrial area and seized a huge quantity of illegal sex stimulating syrup.

The mobile court led by Executive Magistrate Abdullah Al Mahamud along with law enforcers, raided SMG Pharmaceuticals at BSCIC gate-2 and found that they were manufacturing illegal sex stimulant.

The court seized 2,496 bottles of illegal medicine and stopped its production.

The court also fined factory owner Md Masud Rana Tk 2 lakh.

The seized bottles of the drug were destroyed later.

Khaleda too was involved

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Bangabandhu International Conference Centre marking the National Mourning Day and the 43rd anniversary of martyrdom of Bangabandhu.

Hasina said Ziaur Rahman, founder of BNP, had obstructed the investigation into the August 15 killing as he was fully involved in the killing. "Why did he obstruct the investigation if he had not been involved in the killing? Zia was fully involved."

Referring to family members of Zia, she said, "These killers carried out the August 21 grenade attack [on AL's rally in 2004] and made repeated attempts [to kill me]. So, what development will the country see and what justice will people get if they assume power [again]?"

Terming August 15 "the most stigmatised day", Hasina said Bangladesh would have been a developed and prosperous country in the world had not the day come and had the Father of the Nation been alive.

Talking about the recent student demonstration for safe roads, she said it is the government's duty to take action against those who wanted to create an unstable situation in the country by instigating students.

The PM said the government took all measures, including arrests of the bus driver and his helper, after the killing of two students in a road accident, but a group of people relentlessly instigated the students and spread rumours using social media platforms and media.

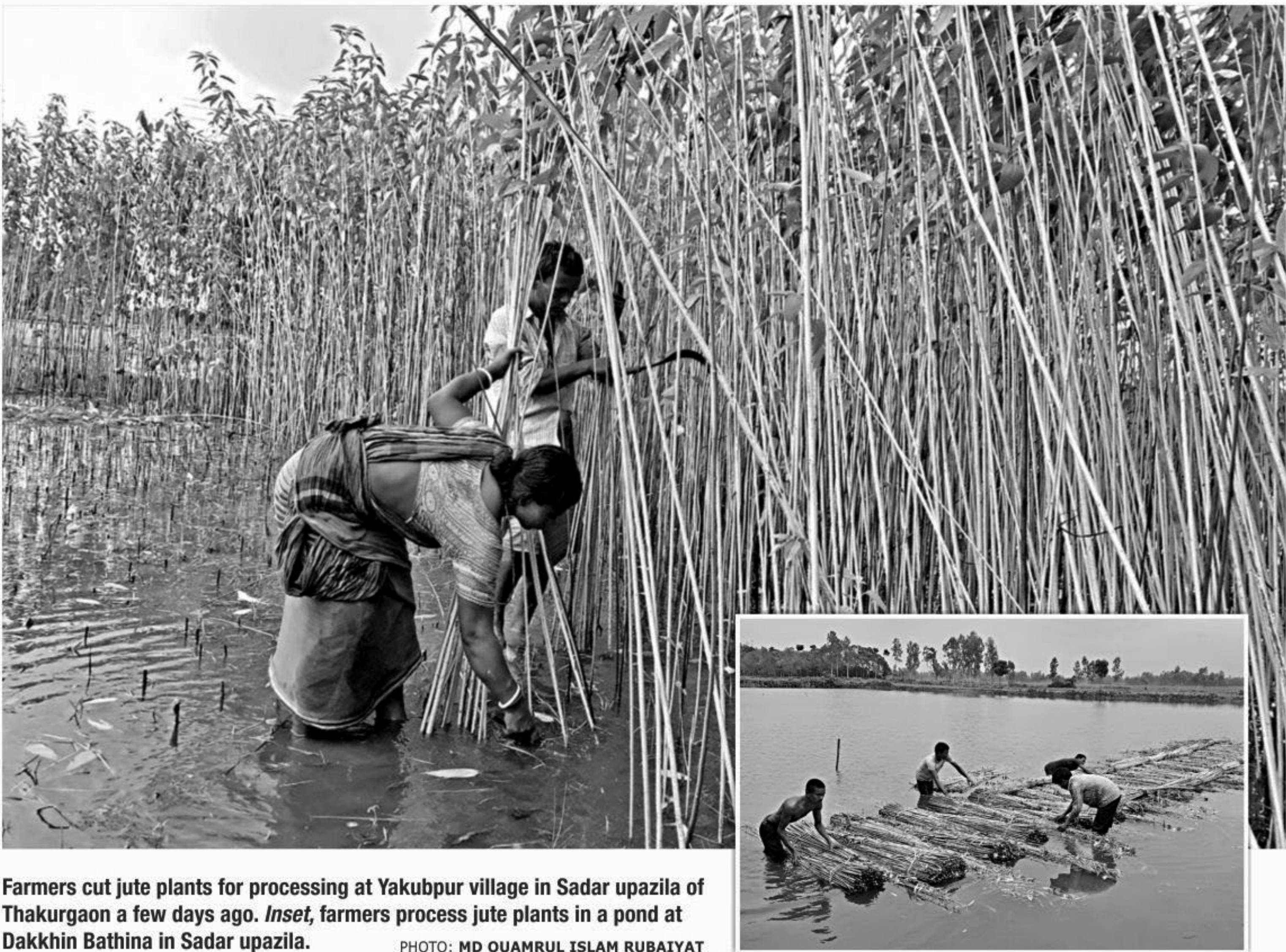
"They wanted to create an abnormal situation in the country by instigating the students relentlessly," she said.

She added that there were also very renowned, wise and intellectual persons among the instigators.

The PM said many people, including those who believe in Pakistani spirit, were involved in the instigation. "But when the government arrests them, it raises hue and cry both in the national and international arenas."

"If anyone commits an offence, instigates and uses children for achieving personal gains, it's the duty of the state to take action against him, no matter how powerful they are," she said.

She criticised those who thought they would get away committing offences just because they are famous writers, journalists and scholars.



Farmers cut jute plants for processing at Yakubpur village in Sadar upazila of Thakurgaon a few days ago. *Inset*, farmers process jute plants in a pond at Dakkhin Bathina in Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: MD QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT

Good yield of jute

Farmers in Thakurgaon and Panchagarh hopeful of fair price

MD QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, Thakurgaon

Jute farmers in Thakurgaon and Panchagarh are expecting good production of the fibre and its fair prices in the local markets this season, although they faced some problems at the initial stage of the cultivation season due to excessive untimely rain.

The rain hampered germination of seeds and proper growth of the plants. It also caused reduction of the cultivation target in the two districts this season.

The growers successfully overcame the situation by taking additional measures as per instructions of the agro-officials and experts, resulting in good yield.

Now, the jute farmers are busy cutting and processing the crop in the two northern districts as harvesting is going on in full swing.

Jute was cultivated on 5,710 hectares of land against the target of 8,910 hectares, with production target of 97,790 bales (1 bale=182 kg) in Thakurgaon, said Thakurgaon Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) Deputy Director (DD) Aftab Ahmed.

In Panchagarh, the farmers cultivated jute on 10,925 hectares of land against the target of 13,810 hectares, with production target of 1,47,313 bales, said Panchagarh DAE DD Shamsul Huq.

Tosha variety of jute covered around 80 percent of cultivated land in the districts and local variety covered around 20 percent, and the quality of the jute is good, farmers and the DAE officials said.

During a recent visit to different villages in the districts, this correspondent saw jute growers busy cutting the plants and preparing to process the produce.

Raw jute is being sold for Tk 1,700 to Tk 1,800 per maund (1 maund = 40 kg) in the markets of the two districts this season, depending on quality. The market price of jute is higher than the previous year in the harvesting season, according to market sources.

Humayun Khaled, production manager of GEM Jute Mills in Panchagarh, told this correspondent over cellphone that raw jute is purchased at their purchasing centre for Tk 1,750 per maund, but they are yet to get good

response from growers.

Dulal Chandra Barman, 38, of Dakkhin Bathina village in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila, told this correspondent that he cultivated jute on one bigha (one bigha = 0.3306 acre) of land and hoped to get 10 to 11 maunds of raw jute.

Idris Ali, 48, of Baragaon village said he cultivated jute on one bigha of land and got 10 maunds of yield.

Momtajur Rahman, a jute trader of Moidandighi Bazar, told this correspondent that raw jute is being sold for Tk 1,700 to Tk 1,800 per maund now. The price will increase as production of the crop is lower than the previous year due to less cultivation.

DD of Thakurgaon DAE said although the farmers faced adverse situation during the sowing period, they overcame it by working hard and taking instructions from agro-officials.

He said cultivation area is lower than the previous year, but production is good and farmers are getting good price.

Pabna BMA splits over new body

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Leaders of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA)'s Pabna unit have divided into two groups over formation of the new committee of the doctors' association.

Terming the new committee illegal, general doctors at a press conference in Pabna town yesterday said there is no provision of forming such committee without holding election.

The new committee of Pabna BMA was formed recently with Dr Aslam Hossain Bishwas Masud as its president and Dr Aksad Al Masud Anan as secretary, agitating doctors led by the present committee President Dr Gulzar Hossain said.

"Secretary of the incumbent committee Dr Masud secretly formed an election committee first and then formed the new committee without holding any formal election. Dr Masud is also holding the presidential post of the new committee, which is unconstitutional," Dr Golzar said.

Members of the new committee didn't follow the constitutional rule while forming the committee secretly on August 13 and submitted it to BMA central unit for approval, Dr Golzar said, adding that nine out of 23 members of the present committee managed to get a post in the newly formed illegal committee.

While talking to The Daily Star, Dr Masud, however, refuted the allegation against him and said they formed the election commission on June 28 and announced the election schedule later on.

"We were declared winner unopposed as none others submitted their nomination papers to the commission," the doctor said.

2 headmasters in a Barguna school

Teachers deprived of salaries

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Employees and teachers of a high school in Amtali upazila in Barguna have started boycotting classes demanding salaries for eight months as two headmasters are working at the school at the same time.

Twenty teachers and seven employees of Mofiz Uddin High School started class boycott on Tuesday.

The managing committee suspended headmaster Shah Alam on November 20 in 2012 on charge of financial corruption and made assistant teacher Md Delwar Hossain acting headmaster the same day.

Shah Alam filed a write petition before the High Court (HC) on May 15 in 2013, challenging the suspension order. After hearing, the HC on October 24 last year declared the suspension order illegal. Since then, two headmasters are working at the same time.

The acting headmaster had been signing the bill statement since his appointment till December last year.

After the HC order reached the school, neither Shah Alam nor Delwar has been signing the bill statement.

Delwar said he is trying his best to pay salaries.

School Managing Committee President Zakia Alich said they would get their salaries soon.

Four shops gutted in Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Four shops were gutted in a devastating fire at Pakerhat Bazar in Khansama upazila of the district yesterday.

Officials of Nilphamari Fire Station said the fire originated from a hardware shop owned by Shafiqul Islam around 12:30pm and soon engulfed three other adjacent shops at the market.

The affected shop owners claimed that the extent of loss caused by the fire could go up to Tk 30 lakh or more.

1,900 bottles of Phensidyl seized: 3 held

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Three people were arrested with 1,900 bottles of Phensidyl in Jessore and Patuakhali yesterday.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two men with 1,500 bottles of Phensidyl from Kodalia Bottala area in Jessore, reports our Benapole correspondent.

The arrestees are Yusuf Gazi, 33, son of Sainal Gazi, and Swapan Kumar Das, son of Nalin Kumar Das of Chadpara village in Chowgachha upazila.

Meanwhile, detectives arrested a man with 400 bottles of Phensidyl from Kakrabunia village in Patuakhali Sadar upazila, reports our correspondent.

The arrestee is Utpal Buddha, 35, son of late Arbindo Buddha of the village.



Brahman cows at a farm in Mollahat upazila of Bagerhat.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Artificial insemination a success

PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY with ANDREW EAGLE

With Eid-ul-Azha around the corner, more than a few thoughts are focused on cattle. In three Bagerhat upazilas, thanks to an ongoing artificial insemination programme being implemented by the livestock department, the cows are looking especially robust.

"In March last year two of my local cows participated in artificial breeding at the livestock office," says farmer Mithun Sheik from Gotapara village in Bagerhat Sadar. "They each gave birth to male calves, and those calves have grown twice as fast!"

"After artificial breeding my cow gave birth to a female calf," says Sanat Kumar, another farmer from the area. "That calf is only six months old and already weighs around 80 kilograms. We have heard that this new type of cow can produce as much as 30 litres of milk per day. We are feeding the calf carefully, with soya bean cake, straw and grass."

Since 2008 the livestock department has been introducing quality Brahman cow genes into the national herd. Its Beef Cattle Development Project, which has been rolled out across at least 48 districts, uses Brahman bull semen imported from the United States to impregnate local cows. The result is healthier livestock that grows quickly and is well-suited to superior milk and meat production.

Offered to farmers for free, the insemination service has thus far produced around 10,000 Brahman hybrid calves nationwide. "The first 120 artificially-bred Brahman hybrid cattle in Bagerhat were born in

Mollahat upazila back in 2014," says Lutfor Rahman, of the department. "That was the start of the project here."

"We go from house to house," explains Babar Ali, the artificial reproduction assistant at the district livestock office. "We try to make farmers aware of the programme and its merits. If they agree we arrange the insemination of their cows."

"The introduction of Brahman cows into the national herd is designed to meet domestic meat and milk requirements," says Bagerhat's district livestock officer Dr Saifuzzaman Khan. "By age two-and-a-half, a Brahman hybrid cow can weigh close to 600 kilograms, with a mature cow tipping the scales at over 900 kilograms."

"As the cows mature quickly, farmers are able to see a return on their investment sooner," he continues. "For this reason the programme is popular. Around 600 families in Fakirhat, Mollahat and Sadar upazilas are already raising Brahman hybrid cows."

Indeed for farmers, tangible results are far more impressive than the science behind them. "I sold a thirteen-month-old Brahman bull for Tk 90,000," says Nawshar, a farmer from Baragawla village in Mollahat, excitedly. "On my farm I have three more Brahman bulls!"

Yet the bounty anticipated from Bagerhat this Eid extends beyond cattle. "Alongside 30,000 cows, the district's more than 7,000 farms are expected to have 15,000 goats and sheep ready for sacrifice," says Dr Khan. "A further 50,000 animals are being prepared for sale in household yards."