# Flour for the poor sold in black market

## Allege low-income people in Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Flour meant for sale at susidised price to the low-income people is allegedly being sold in the open market in Sadar upazila.

Locals alleged that out of 78 tonnes of flour allotted to the Open Market Sale (OMS) dealers at 12 points in the district town, 50 tonnes were sold in the market in the last five weeks.

Sadar Upazila Food Controller Debashish Chakma said lowincome group people suffer when the rice price is high in the market. When they struggle to buy rice the government sells flour at fair price under OMS programme, he said.

The district food department

started the programme in the town through 12 dealers of 12 OMS centres on September 19.

In the first phase, 78 tonnes of flour was allocated for the purpose. The dealers withdrew the wheat from government silos on time. In the second phase, 203 tonnes have been allocated and 120 tonnes withdrawn.

The food controller said the government sold the flour at a subsidised price of Tk 14,000 per tonne to the dealers against the government stipulated price of Tk 29,037 per tonne. The flour that costs Tk 32 per kg in the market is being sold at OMS centres for only Tk 18 per kg. Four listed mills process the

wheat and distribute the flour among the listed dealers.

The low-income people allege that the flour is being sold in the black market at excessive price instead of being sold in the OMS centres. Buyers do not go to the OMS

centres at Bus Terminal, Samity Para, Ghonar Para, Boiddha Ghona, Tekpara, Rumaliar Chhara, Alirjahal, Nuniachhara, Kolatoli, Jhautola, Bahar Chhara and Natun Bahar Chhara areas as many of them remain closed most of the time.

Sacks of flour are smuggled out of the OMS centres almost every night, the deprived beneficiaries said, adding that false names and

thumb impressions are put in the received they will be investigated register book and a false account of sales of flour is maintained.

Although monitoring of the OMS centres in the mornings and afternoons is the rule, no government official visits the centres. They make tally of the balance in the register book every few days and put their signatures.

said sale of flour is less as the September. demand is low.

lack of monitoring, the food controller said he has learnt about some irregularities and negligence by the dealers. He said the OMS centres are being monitored now. If allegations of irregularities are

and action will be taken.

Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Md Habibul Hasan said if the dealers at OMS centres sell the subsidised flour in the market, quick action will be taken against them.

The then UNO Md Noman Hossain conducted a drive and Sanaullah, an OMS dealer, sealed two OMS centres in

It is alleged that a firm, which Asked about irregularities and has a contract with the food department, sold most of the flour in the black market instead of distributing it among the OMS dealers. The dealers alleged that the small amount of flour given to them is of poor quality.

## Newlywed woman found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A newlywed was found dead at her husband's house at Deogaon Chetnaitala village in Sadar upazila yesterday.

The deceased was Sushila Rani, 22, wife of Bipul Chandra Roy of the village.

Police and locals said Sushila, daughter of Ashar Shingh of Rajagaon Jhargaon village, married Bipul, 28, son of Shankar Chandra Roy of Deogaon Chetnaitala, over two months ago.

Sushila and Bipul went to sleep on Wednesday night after having meal.

Sushila's mother-in-law Menuka Rani found the body in the toilet in the morning.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital morgue for

It would be clear whether it was murder or natural death after getting the autopsy report, said Firoza Begum, assistant sub-inspector of Sadar Police Station.

Police detained the victim's husband for interrogation,

said the ASI.



People living in shanties in eight coastal islands of Patuakhali's Rangabali upazila remain highly vulnerable during natural disasters like storms and tidal surges in absence of cyclone shelters. The photo was taken at Char Kashem.

# No cyclone shelter in 8 coastal islands

#### 15,000 people of Rangabali living under fear of disaster

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Around 15,000 people of eight char (coastal island) areas under three unions in Rangabali upazila are living in constant fear as there is no cyclone shelter or schoolhouse to take shelter in during a natural disaster, nor are there any embankments to protect them from tidal surge.

Rangabali, covering 470 square kilometers, is one of eight upazilas in the district but it is totally isolated from the other upazilas. The upazila with five unions was formally inaugurated by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on February 25 in 2012.

There are about 50 isolated chars in all five unions, of which Char Kashem, Char Kalagachia and Char Kankuni in Rangabali union, Char Maishor, Char Najir, Char Tojammel and Char Kawkhali in Chhoto Baishdia union, and Char Lata in Chalitabunia union are without cyclone shelter, schoolhouse and embankment.

Reshma Begum, 40, of Char Kumar Ghose said there is no educational

20 years with her family of five, including two sons Hasib, 10 Rakib, 8 and daughter Sumi, 3, and her husband Delwar Hossain, 45, maintains the family by fishing.

"If there is a natural disaster, we can only cry for help as there is no cyclone shelter.

During super cyclone Sidr in 2007 we saved our lives by climbing a tree, and we are still in fear of cyclones," she added.

"We feel afraid when we see clouds in the sky from May to November as there is no shelter or embankment," she said. Hawa Begum, a housewife of Char

Kasem, said their homestead often gets flooded during high tide as there is no cyclone shelter or dyke. dyke to protect them from tidal surges. Abdur Rahim, 50, a resident of the

take shelter in during a cyclone or storm. Rangabali Upazila Project Implementation Officer (PIO) Tapon

same char, said they have no safe place to

ment approves setting up of an educational institution then they will take steps to build a school-cum-cyclone shelter where local people could take shelter during a natural disaster, he added.

Upazila Primary Education Officer (acting) Md Sagir Hossain said they have sent a proposal to the higher authorities to set up schools in those chars, but they did not get any response.

If the authorities give approval to set up a school, local children will get an opportunity to receive education, he said.

Rangabali Upazila Parishad Chairman Md Delwar Hossain said the people of those chars are still under disaster risk as there is no

"We informed the higher authorities about the matter," he added.

Md Shahjahan Siraj, executive engineer of Kalapara circle Water Development Board, said they have no funds to build an embankment dyke in the area, but a new project will be taken up to protect the people of the chars.

### College boy stabbed to death

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur** 

A college boy was stabbed to death over love affair in the town yesterday.

The deceased was Kazi Munsiratul Rahman alias Alif, 18, son of Kazi Zillur Rahman of Shibchar in Madaridpur, and a student of Government Yasin College in Faridpur town. The victim's friend Sadhan said Alif had a

love affair with a female student of Government Sarda Sundari Mohila College. He had a conflict with one Sifat Hossain over the affair.

So, Sifat called Alif to resolve the problem in Government Rajendra College area, said Sadhan.

"When I along with Alif went to the area, Sifat and some of his supporters stabbed Alif. They also attacked me," said Sadhan.

Critically injured Alif later died on the way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said Sadar police.

# Passport seekers suffer as server inactive

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Activities of Habiganj regional passport office have remained suspended for the last two days as the server machine caught fire.

Due to this, the service seekers are facing huge problem, said locals.

According to the passport office, around 1000 people take service from the office every day. Of them, 200-250 people got their passports from there. A fire broke out at the server machine on Tuesday afternoon and since

then all kind of activities remained stopped, said Md Sufiullah, deputy director (DD) of the passport office. Mizanur Rahman, a resident of Nabiganj area, said operation of all

the departments of the office has been suspended for the last two days but the passport authorities didn't inform them. Due to this, they are suffering a lot.

Many people like Mizanur were also seen returning home without getting a passport.

DD Sufiullah said all the activities are closed due to the problem of server machine. They are yet to find out the actual cause of the fire.

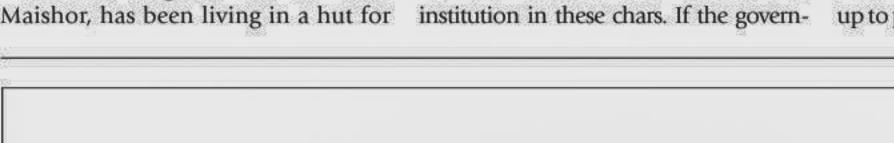
Hopefully, they will resolve all the problems in the next two or three days, said the DD.



This six-foot-long python found in a fishing net in the sea near Barguna's Taltali upazila on Wednesday noon, was released in a nearby reserve forest of Pathorghata after rescuers of the reptile informed forest officials yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

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published on or before November 24, 2018.

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· Class starts: Jan 18, 2019; Friday

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