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Lists of farmers raise questions

Genuine farmers, sharecroppers left out of govt lists in the North; many non-farmers, influentials, political people on the lists

PINAKI ROY, ANWAR ALI HIMU *and* MOSTAFA SHABUJ

Two government lists of farmers as Boro paddy suppliers are not what they look like.

Many of them are anything but farmers. They include shopkeepers, a contractor and even a former city councillor engaged in a profession other than paddy cultivation.

The Daily Star found this in a random field survey based on the lists of Rajshahi Sadar and Bogura Sadar upazilas.

The lists prepared as part of the government initiative to procure 1.5 lakh tonnes of paddy at a fair price directly from marginalised farmers left out sharecroppers.

But many farmers, who have cultivated Boro but do not have surplus paddy to sell, made it to the lists. They said nobody talked to them before listing their names.

One of the lists includes someone who left paddy farming 27 years ago and does not have a farmer's card.

Nur Mohammed Mollah, a former councillor of ward 26 under Rajshahi City corporation, is on the Rajshahi Sadar upazila's list of 48 people.

"For the last four years, we are not cultivating paddy. Now we are doing fish farming," said Mollah, a resident of Meherchandi area.

He used to lease out his land to sharecroppers to grow paddy and that was a few years back. No official contacted him before making this list, he said recently.

Shamimul Islam, metropolitan agriculture officer of

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West Indies fast bowler Andre Russell (L) jumps in celebration with teammate Darren Bravo (R) after taking the wicket of Pakistan's Haris Sohail during their ICC World Cup group stage match at Trent Bridge yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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মজবুত হোক আপনার বাড়ির ভবিষ্যৎ

West Indies steamroll Pakistan

AFP, *Nottingham*

West Indies crushed Pakistan by seven wickets in a one-sided World Cup match at Trent Bridge yesterday, with the two-time champions showing they are a resurgent force in the one-day game.

Fast bowler Oshane Thomas took four wickets as Pakistan were bundled out for their second-lowest World Cup total of 105 in just 21.4 overs on the second day of the competition in England and Wales.

West Indies cruised to victory in just 13.4 overs, Chris Gayle top-scoring with 50. He reached his half-century off 33 balls with three sixes and six fours before he was dismissed off the next ball he faced.

During his innings Gayle, who calls himself the "Universe Boss", broke the record for the most sixes hit in World Cup history.

He now has 40 maximums, three more than retired South African batsman AB de Villiers.

Nicolas Pooran smashed paceman Wahab Riaz for a huge six over the square-leg boundary to give the 1975 and 1979 world champions an ideal start to their campaign.

"It was a good game. I think the bowlers were outstanding today," said Holder. "We kept our foot on the accelerator. We've eased off in the past but it was good to see the killer instinct today.

"We wanted to be aggressive. It's the nature of our cricket with bat, ball and in the field.

"We've definitely come to win this World Cup but I just want us to enjoy our cricket, play fearless cricket and make the fans back home proud."

The only positive for Pakistan was three wickets for paceman Mohammad Amir on his World Cup debut after he missed the 2011 and 2015 tournaments due to a spot-fixing ban of 2010.

Amir had Shai Hope (11), Darren Bravo (0) and Gayle caught in an incisive six-over spell, but the batsmen had not put enough runs on the board to give the bowlers a chance.

Pakistan's sloppy and vulnerable batting was cruelly exposed by some short-pitched bowling by the West Indies pacemen on a Trent Bridge pitch famous for big totals.

Opener Fakhar Zaman and Babar Azam were the joint top-scorers with 22 each in an abysmal display of batting.

The only other batsmen to reach double figures were Riaz, who scored 18, and Mohammad Hafeez (16).

Holder took three wickets and Andre Russell chipped in with two.

Pakistan's lowest World Cup score was 74, made against England at Adelaide on the way to their only World Cup title in 1992.

Pakistan captain Sarfaraz Ahmed, said: "Very disappointed at the batting. I was very confident before the match, batting was a key point but we didn't apply it to the short ball.

"Credit to the West Indian bowlers, they bowled really well.

We have to take time if the bowlers are bowling like that. We lose so many wickets and that's why we lost the match."

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SEE 4-PAGE WORLD CUP SPECIAL INSIDE

Tigers faced with last-minute test

SAKEB SUBHAN *from London*

The Bangladesh squad are now faced with a test at the eleventh hour before they open their World Cup campaign with a high-pressure match against South Africa at The Oval in London tomorrow. The test is a stern one as it involves perhaps the most important player in their batting line-up -- opener Tamim Iqbal. During practice at The Oval yesterday, Tamim sustained a painful blow to his left wrist while batting in the nets, but fortunately for the Tigers, an X-Ray later yesterday revealed no fracture.

Despite Tamim leaving the nets immediately to be assessed by physio Thihan Chandramohan, team manager Khaled Mahmud said within the hour that Tamim was feeling okay and that he did not think an X-Ray was needed. The team management however did send the left-hander for an X-Ray as a precautionary measure. The left-hander will be assessed further by the physio today, after which it will be decided whether he would need to go for further scans to determine his availability for tomorrow's match.

There were other injuries too -- skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza has been struggling with his hamstring since the warm-up match against India on Tuesday, but it is expected that the hardy Narail Express will play through the pain. Mohammad

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'GUNFIGHT' WITH COPS

Yaba godfather killed hours after arrest

STAR REPORT

Saiful Karim, a listed yaba kingpin, was shot and killed when police exchanged fire with his associates in Cox's Bazar yesterday, police said.

Teknaf Police Station Officer-in-charge Pradip Kumar Das said they arrested him from the Marine Drive in the tourist town around 10:00pm on Thursday.

However, multiple police sources said Saiful, wanted in seven cases, was picked up by law enforcers from Dhaka airport on May 25 on his arrival from Myanmar. He had fled there after the government declared a war on drug in May last year.

Pradip said that during interrogation Saiful revealed a big consignment of yaba was being smuggled into Bangladesh from Myanmar through the Naf river. Police then took Saiful along to raid the area around 4:00am yesterday to seize the pills.

"Sensing police presence, the yaba kingpin's associates opened fire, prompting police to fire back, triggering a gunfight," said Pradip.

Caught in the line of fire, Saiful as well as four policemen were injured, and were taken to Teknaf Upazila Health Complex, said the OC.

Saiful was later shifted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital where doctors declared him dead. Police recovered nine firearms, 42 bullets and 1,00,000 yaba pills from the spot, he added.

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PM in Saudi Arabia to attend OIC summit

UNB, *Jeddah*

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina arrived in Saudi Arabia, the second destination of her tri-nation tour, yesterday afternoon after wrapping up her four-day visit to Japan.

A special flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines carrying the PM and her entourage landed at King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah at 5:15pm (local time).

Prince Badr Bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz, deputy governor of Makkah region, accorded a red carpet reception to the PM.

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and Bangladesh Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Golam Moshi were present. Later, the PM left the airport for the place of residence, the Makkah Palace.

The flight carrying her departed Haneda International Airport in Tokyo at 9:45am (local time) where Japanese State Minister for Foreign Affairs

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Holidaymakers throng Sadarghat Launch Terminal in the capital to catch launches to their village homes yesterday. Thousands of people have left the city in the last two days to celebrate the Eid-ul-Fitr, likely to be celebrated on June 5, with their near and dear ones.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Trains late for up to 7 hours

Rail minister says 'sorry' as Eid holidaymakers suffer; less hassle in road trips

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shumi Akhtar, a student of Jagannath University, reached the capital's Kamalapur Railway Station around 8:30am yesterday. She was supposed to catch a train in half an hour to go to her home in Gaibandha to celebrate Eid with her loved ones.

However, the train -- Rangpur Express -- did not arrive till 1:30pm when this correspondent talked to her at the station.

"I've already waited for five hours. I don't know when I will get home," said an anxious Shumi, adding, "It takes eight hours to reach the Gaibandha station. It will be quite late and that's why I told my father to wait for me there."

Although the railways authorities said the departure time was rescheduled at 2:10pm, the train finally arrived at 4:00pm and left half an hour later, Shumi told this correspondent over phone later.

Like her, thousands of Eid holidaymakers had to suffer this way at the country's premier railway station as at least half a dozen trains -- particularly those running to the northern districts -- were delayed by one to seven hours.

Fortunately, bus services from the capital were relatively better yesterday. There was no major tailback either at the city's exit points or on the highways.

SUFFERING AT KAMALAPUR

People, who bought advance train tickets standing in queues for hours a few weeks ago, started arriving at Kamalapur since morning.

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Shab-e-Qadr tonight

BSS, *Dhaka*

Muslims across the country are set to observe the holy Shab-e-Qadr or Lailatul Qadr tonight.

The night marks the revelation of the first verses of the holy Quran to Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH).

Special prayers will be held at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque and other mosques across the country. The Islamic Foundation will hold a waz mahfil (sermon session) at Baitul Mukarram after the Zohr prayers.

"The sessions will focus on the importance and significance of the holy Shab-e-Qadr," Assistant Director of the foundation Muhammad Nizam Uddin told BSS.

Sunday will be a public holiday.

According to the holy Quran, Lailatul Qadr or the Night of Decree is better than a 1,000 night as the angels and the spirits descend therein with the permission of Almighty Allah.

Muslims traditionally observe the occasion through nightlong prayers, milad

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