



Farmer Saidur Rahman of Kaley village under Belgachha union in Kurigram Sadar upazila sprays pesticide on his pointed gourd field.

PHOTO: ABDUL WAHED

Vegetable growers in flood free areas all smiles

ABDUL WAHED, Kurigram

Fair price has brought smile to vegetable farmers in flood free areas of Sadar, Nageshwar, Bhurungamari and Rajarhat upazilas.

They grow different types of vegetables like pointed gourd, pumpkin, aubergine and bottle gourd in Kharif-1 (March-July) season, said Bimal Kumar De, sub-assistant agricultural officer of Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Kurigram.

Nine upazilas in the district have been affected by flood early this month and the floodwater started receding from the areas in the last couple of days.

But the growers in eight unions of the four upazilas still continued harvesting the vegetables as floodwater could not enter their fields situated in highland areas.

The agricultural officer said around 4,038 hectares of land in the district have been

brought under vegetable cultivation this year.

As the flood has affected 3,739 hectares out of 4,038 hectares of fields, vegetable prices have shot up, he said.

Saidur Rahman of Kaley village in Belgachha union of Sadar upazila said "I have been cultivating vegetable in Kharif-1 season for the last four years and earning good profit."

He has cultivated pointed gourd on 12 decimals of land spending Tk 6,000 this year, said the farmer.

"I've already sold pointed gourds at Tk 10,000," said Saidur, adding that he is expecting to earn Tk 16,000 more from sale of the vegetable.

Grover Rezaul Islam of Sanwashi village in Halokhana union under Sadar upazila said he cultivated aubergine on 10 decimals of land and pointed gourd on 22 decimals of land this season.

"I have already sold the vegetables at Tk

31,000. I'm also expecting to earn Tk 43,000 more in the next two months," said Rezaul.

They are getting good profits from the vegetable farming this season every year, he said.

Another farmer Akbar Ali of Chhinay Haat village in Chhinay Haat union of Rajarhat upazila said he cultivated aubergine on 40 decimals of land and pumpkin on 16 decimals of land spending Tk 19,000 in May this year.

"I'm expecting to earn Tk 42,000 from sale of the vegetables in the next two months," he said.

Kurigram DAE Additional Deputy Director (Plant Protection) Sasty Chandra Roy said there are many vegetable growers in Rajarhat and Sadar upazilas and they are known as adapted farmers, who cultivate different types of vegetables during this period of the year, and get a good profit.

In the rainy season, extra care is needed for pollination, he said.

Stalker arrested, placed on remand

He stabbed a teenage girl on way to her school

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A Mymensingh court yesterday placed a man on two days' remand after police produced him before it in a case filed for allegedly stalking and stabbing a 14-year-old girl in Gouripur upazila on Thursday.

Police arrested Johirul Islam, 35, son of late Shamsul Islam from Achintapur village in the upazila, around 2:30pm on Saturday in Sadarghat area of Chattogram.

Kamrul Islam Mia, officer-in-charge (OC) of Gouripur Police Station, said the court granted a two-day remand against their seven-day prayer for Johirul.

The injured teen girl, student of ninth grade at a local school, was released from Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) on Saturday after undergoing treatment at the hospital since Thursday.

Citing the case statement, the OC said Johirul, father of two children and known as a drug addict in his area, had been stalking the girl for a long time. On

Thursday morning, he along with another unidentified man kept harassing the girl on way to her school.

After the girl protested their harassment, Johirul became furious and severely injured her by stabbing her in the abdomen.

Hearing her cry for help, locals came to her rescue and sent her to Gouripur Upazila Health Complex. Later that day, she was taken to MMCH.

The girl's father filed the case with the police station the same day, accusing Johirul and the other unidentified man, the OC said, adding that they were conducting raids to arrest the other accused.

The headteacher of the school, attended by the girl, said Johirul's family was informed on various occasions, but he did not stop stalking or harassing the student of his school.

Meanwhile, locals as well as teachers and students of the school staged several demonstrations in the area, demanding arrest of the stalkers.

Man 'kills self after killing wife'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

An elderly man allegedly killed himself after strangling his wife dead at Porapara village in Meherpur's Gangni upazila on Saturday.

The deceased were identified as Daud Hossain, 60, a rickshaw puller, and his wife Shaida Khatun, 55, of the village.

Villagers spotted Daud's body at Garadoba field around 5:30pm on Saturday and informed the police, Officer in Charge (OC) of Gangni Police Station Obaidur Rahman said.

Being informed, police went to the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Meherpur General Hospital for autopsy.

While recovering the body, police came to know that neighbours at the same time found Daud's wife Shaida's body hanging from the ceiling fan of her room, the OC said, adding that, hearing the news, they later went to Daud's house, recovered Shaida's hanging body and sent it to the hospital for autopsy.

Quoting neighbours, police said the poor couple, who took loan from different NGOs, had an altercation over repaying the debt on Saturday noon.

After primary investigation, police suspect that Daud might have strangled his wife first and then killed himself by taking poison, the OC said.

Locals said although the couple have a son and a daughter, their son did not maintain relations with his parents while their daughter lives in Meherpur town with her husband.

X-ray machine lies idle for two decades

No technician appointed since its installation in 1995

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

The lone X-ray machine at Moulvibazar's Kulaura Health Complex has not once been used since the time it was purchased 24 years ago.

Patients at the 50-bed health complex are being deprived of a vital service for the lack of an operator.

According to the authorities, the X-ray machine was installed next to the emergency department on the ground floor of the complex on February 7, 1995. However, the authorities concerned at the time did not appoint a technician to run it. As a result, it was never switched on.

Over the years, the room was being used as a store room to keep medicine and hospital supplies.

Recently, the new appointed Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Md Nurul Haque cleared out the room.

On a recent visit to the health complex, this correspondent saw that the room was locked up. When officials later opened the room, the correspondent saw various X-ray

In response, the upazila health

equipment stacked in one place.

Just next door, the emergency doctor advised Mizanur Rahman, a resident of Hazipur village who fell and injured his right foot, to get an X-ray.

"The duty doctor asked me to go to a private diagnostic centre as there is no X-ray facility here. I am a farmer from a haor area. How will I manage the money to get an X-ray from outside?" he asked.

An X-ray that would he would have to pay Tk 50 to Tk 150 for here, may run from Tk 200 to Tk 5,000 in a private clinic, depending on the size and quality of the film.

A local senior journalist Mosabbir Ali said low and middle-income families from 13 unions and one municipality are getting treatment from this health complex, which is about 35 kilometres from Moulvibazar Sadar.

Athikur Rahman Akhoni, joint secretary of Kulaura Bebsahi Kaylan Samitee, alleged that the authorities of the upazila health complexes intentionally refer patients to private laboratories for diagnosis in exchange for commissions.

Civil Surgeon Shahjahan Kabir Chowdhury of Moulvibazar said not only here, it is a similar situation in seven other upazilas. "I submitted a petition to our senior authorities over the issue."

In response, the upazila health

and family planning officer said it is not true that doctors refer patients to private laboratories in exchange for commission.

On the posting of the X-ray technician, Haque said the higher authorities have been informed time and again.

"As the machine was never operated, I cannot say whether it is functional. But as it has remained unused, it may become dysfunctional by now."

The hospital sees about 300-400 patients a day on average, out of which 50-60 patients need X-rays and 30-40 patients need emergency X-rays, he said.

"We refer patients to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital or private laboratories in such situations."

When asked, he said an X-ray machine operator would typically need a technical diploma from a nursing school to get the job.

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After several incidents of deaths in mob beatings triggered by rumours of child abductions across the country, police along with local administrations have started conducting awareness campaigns against such crimes. In this photo taken in Dinajpur's Khansama upazila yesterday, a police vehicle is seen using loudspeakers to convey awareness messages.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

5 bodies recovered in 4 dists

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Police recovered bodies of five people from different places of Netrakona, Pabna, Lammonirhat and Faridpur districts in last two days.

Police recovered the body of a tenth grader from a haor in Netrakona on Saturday evening reports our Mymensingh Correspondent.

Ridoy Mia, 14, son of Farid Mia of Moujebali village in Netrakona Sadar upazila, went to Uchitpur Haor in Madan upazila along with his friends on Friday noon and he drowned there.

Ridoy was a Class X student at local Abbasia High School.

Informed by locals, police recovered the body, said Md Romizul Haque, OC of Madan Police Station.

The body of Ali Ahmed, 55, a night guard of Kankati Beel, a water body in Khalijury upazila of Netrakona, was recovered on Saturday evening, said ATM Mahmudul Haque, OC of Khalijury Police Station.

Our Pabna Correspondent reports: Police recovered beheaded body of a young girl from the Fuljore river at Dhangora in Raiganj upazila of Sirajganj yesterday morning.

"Seeing the body floating, locals informed police who sent it to Sirajganj General Hospital morgue for autopsy. Police are trying to recover the head of the victim to identify her," said Pabitra Talukder, sub-inspector of Raiganj Police Station.

Our Lalmonirhat Correspondent reports: Body of a youth was found in a room of a private-owned male dormitory at Puran Bazar in Lalmonirhat town yesterday noon.

The Lalmonirhat Correspondent reports:

Two killed as train hits motorbike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Two people were killed when a Parbotipur-bound commuter train hit their motorbike while they were crossing the rail track near Nayaniburuj Railway Station in Panchagarh Sadar upazila on Saturday.

The deceased are Hamidur Rahman, 52, headmaster of Barabatia Government Primary School and a resident of Pachmohina village in Sadar upazila, and Sirajul Islam, 45, of Telipara village in the upazila.

A Parbotipur-bound commuter train from Panchagarh hit their motorbike while they were crossing the rail track near Nayaniburuj Railway Station around 6:30pm, leaving Sirajul dead on the spot and Hamidur injured.

Local rescued injured Hamidur and took him to Panchagarh Sadar Hospital where the doctors declared him dead. Stationmaster at Nayaniburuj Station Mohammad Mosharaf Hossain said.



The lone X-ray machine at Kulaura Upazila Health Complex in Moulvibazar.

PHOTO: STAR