



A flooded village in Rajbari's Kalikapur union under Kalukhali upazila. Inset, the makeshift footbridge that locals made over the damaged part of Fulpukuria-Baneshwar road in Dhuturabari area under Gobindaganj upazila of Gaibandha.



PHOTO: STAR

PADMA RIVER FLOODS

# Thousands marooned in Rajbari, Faridpur

Char people in both the districts started to move out to safety at different school buildings and embankments

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

At least 10,000 people in four out of five upazilas in Rajbari and one in Faridpur were affected by floods as the Padma river started flowing over danger level at Goalando river port point.

The four affected upazilas in Rajbari are Sadar, Pangsha, Kalukhali and Goalando. In Faridpur, 30 hectares of croplands in 15 villages under Sadar upazila have so far been flooded.

In Rajbari alone, floodwaters have affected no less than 8,000 people and submerged nearly 400 hectares of croplands.

Many inhabitants of char areas in both the districts started to move out to safety at different school buildings and embankments.

Rajbari Deputy Commissioner Dilsad Begum said, "4,000 families in four upazilas of Rajbari were affected by the flood. We distributed 33.7 metric tonnes of rice and 59 packets of dry food among the affected people."

Fazlul Rahman, deputy



director of Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Rajbari, said around 370 hectares of croplands and char areas that are outside the coverage area of the embankment were affected by the flood.

The DAE in the district is now preparing a list of affected farmers, he also said.

"At least 100 families in my union were affected by flood that inundated 1,000 bighas of croplands," said Abdus Salam, chairman of Borat Union Parishad in Rajbari Sadar upazila.

Acting chairman Abdul Goni Mia of Daulatdia Union Parishad in Goalando upazila said, "Some 2,000 people were affected by the flood in our union and they have taken

shelter in safer places."

Bilal Hossain, a member of Kalikapur Union Parishad in Kalukhali upazila, said, "At least 6,000 people in two unions of our upazila were affected by flood. Some people residing outside the embankment of the river took shelter at their relatives' houses."

Contacted, Rajbari Water Development Board Executive Engineer Sultan Mahmud said, "The water level in the Padma has been rising since September 11 due to heavy rain upstream."

He also said water in the Padma was flowing 13 centimetres above the danger level on Wednesday afternoon and the water level would continue to rise until October 5.

In Faridpur Sadar upazila, North Channel Union Parishad Chairman Mohammad Mostakuzzaman said, "People in 15 villages are affected by the flood. Especially farmers suffered heavy damages as their crops went under the flood water. Four concrete roads also went under water."

DAE Deputy Director in Faridpur Kartik Chandra Chakrabarty said different char areas in Sadar upazila were flooded due to sudden rise in the water level of the Padma.

At least 30 hectares of croplands went under water in the upazila, he confirmed.

FLASH FLOODS IN GAIBANDHA

Flash floods caused by five days' incessant rain in Gobindaganj upazila of Gaibandha washed away a 15-foot stretch of Fulpukuria-Baneshwar road in Dhuturabari area, reports our Gaibandha correspondent.

Locals in the meantime have built a makeshift bamboo footbridge over the damaged section of the road that connects thousands with the upazila headquarters.

Abdul Latif, engineer for Local Government Engineering Department in Gobindaganj upazila, said repair work of the damaged road will start after fall in water level in the area.

RIEAT MURDER

## Eight fugitives' wealth to be confiscated

Barguna court fixed October 16 for the next hearing of the case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A Barguna court yesterday asked police to confiscate movable wealth of eight fugitive accused in a case for killing Rifat Sharif in front of his wife in broad daylight on June 26 this year.

They are Mohaiminul Islam Sifat, Md Musa, Abu Abdullah Rayhan, Md Nayeem, Rakibul Hasan Neyamot, Sayed Maruf Billah alias Mohibbullah, Prince Mollah and Rifat Hawlader. Of them, Rayhan, Nayeem, Rakibul, Mohibbullah, Prince and Rifat are juveniles.

The court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Mohammad Sirajul Islam Gazi also rejected bail prayers of two accused--Rakibul Hasan alias Rifat Farajee and Md Rezwan Ali Khan alias Tiktok Hridoy--said defence lawyer advocate Golam Mostafa Qader.

The court fixed October 16 for the next hearing of the case, he said.

Seven arrested accused were produced before the court while Aysha Siddika Minni and Arian Hossain, who

are now on bail, were also present at the court.

After the case proceeding, the court ordered law enforcers to send the accused to the district jail.

Rifat Sharif, who used to provide internet services, was hacked to death in broad daylight in front of his wife Aysha Siddika Minni on June 26. A video clip of the incident went viral on social media. In the footage, Minni was seen trying to save her husband from the attackers.

Later, the victim's father filed a murder case with Barguna Police Station against 12 people.

On September 1, police pressed charges against Minni and 23 others for their alleged involvement in the murder.

Police pressed the charge sheet dividing into two segments -- one for 14 juvenile accused, and the other for 10 adults. Minni's name figured seventh on the list of adult accused.

Sabbir Hossain Nayan alias Nayan Bond, the prime accused in the case, was killed in a "gunfight" with police on July 2.

WIFE, MOTHER-IN-LAW MURDER

## Man gives confessional statement

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A man confessed to killing his wife and mother-in-law in Habiganj.

Vegetable vendor Selu Mia, son of Noor Mia of Umednagar area in Habiganj town, made the confessional statement before the court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Touhidul Islam on Wednesday.

Deceased Fulbaron Nesha of Tarasai village in Baniachang upazila was the second wife of Selu, said Superintendent of Police (SP) Mohammad Ullah.

Selu, father of two children, married Fulbaron two years ago.

Fulbaron recently developed an extramarital affair with a man. The couple often engaged in altercations over the issue.

Later, Selu and his first wife's father and brother made a plan to kill Fulbaron and her mother, said the SP.

On September 5, Fulbaron and her mother were beaten and hacked to death, said the police official.

Later, Selu and his first wife's father and brother dumped the bodies into the Khowai river.

Informed by locals, police later recovered the bodies from the river, said the SP.

## One killed in elephant attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

A man was trampled to death during an attack by a herd of wild elephant inside a forest in Bandarban's Sualok area on Wednesday.

The deceased, Abdur Rahman, 45, along with his family came to Bangladesh from Myanmar around 20 years ago, said Abdur Shukkur, a ward member of Chattogram's Bajalia union adjacent to Bandarban.

A herd of wild elephant attacked Rahman when he went to the forest, Sukkur said.

During this time every year, wild elephants came down to Bhagyakul, Goyalmara, Kadukhola, Alinagar and Tonkaboti area under Sualok union in search of food, according to Bandarban forest officials.



Members of Bangladesh Small Tea Growers Association formed a human chain at Sher-e-Bangla Park in the town yesterday, to press home their six-point demand, including ensuring fair price of raw tea leaves.

PHOTO: STAR



Young entrepreneur Sumon looks after his papaya trees at his mixed fruit orchard at Gaira village in Tangail's Madhupur upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

## Sumon shines in fruit cultivation

The 35-year-old planted lemon, papaya, mango and banana trees in his 40 bigha orchard and makes Tk 20 lakh profit a year

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Four thousand lemon trees, 1,000 papaya trees, 500 mango trees and 300 banana trees in one orchard -- this is what the creation of a youth in Tangail looks like.

Suman Kamaker of Gaira neighbourhood in Madhupur upazila had loved plants and gardening since his childhood.

The 35-year-old was helping his father, a goldsmith, until he tried his luck in 'mixed crop cultivation' in 2007.

First, he took eight bigha land on lease from local farmers and planted mango, litchi and plum trees but could not make much profit.

The mangoes came out full of spots, cracks were there on litchis while the plums were not big enough in size. So, Suman included pineapple and banana in his orchard in 2011.

"I made some profit but not in desirable rate. The cultivation costs were high," said Suman.

This did not stop Suman who again in 2014 took 33 bighas on lease and

planted 'elachi' and 'pati' varieties of lemon, 'red lady' variety of papaya alongside pineapple, banana and mango.

He got yields from papaya trees within six months and within two years from lemon plants.

"Cultivation of lemon and papaya are more profitable than other fruits as they are available round the year. Their cultivation costs are less than other fruits like pineapple, mango or banana," said Suman.

Now there are about 4000 lemon trees, 1,000 papaya trees, 500 mango and 300 banana trees in Suman's orchard covering 40 bighas of land. He removed 70,000 pineapple trees last year after getting yields.

The youth now makes Tk 20 lakh profit each year. He spends on fertilisers like urea, TSP and potash, pesticides and hires day labourers sometimes. He has employed one permanent manager as well.

Abdus Sattar, a local wholesaler, buys fruits and vegetables from local orchard owners and sells them at Rasulpur market in Madhupur.

"I prefer Suman's orchard because it is nearby the Tangail-Mymensingh Highway and Rasulpur market. This helps curb the transportation cost," he said.

Mixed crop orchards are found at different places across the country but the land of three hilly upazilas of Tangail -- Madhupur, Ghatail and Sakhipur -- are very fertile and suitable for cultivation in such setups, according to Abdur Razzak, deputy director of Tangail Department of Agricultural Extension.

"Pineapple grows in plenty in Madhupur. At one stage, local farmers started growing papaya on pineapple fields as associate crops. Gradually over the last few years, they started cultivating other fruits like banana, lemon, mango and spices like ginger, turmeric and green chillies as associate crops," said the officer.

"More and more farmers are becoming interested in mixed crop cultivation to make more profit and the local agriculture department is providing them with necessary support," he added.