



This recent photo taken from Pashchim Umarepar village in Barishal's Banaripara upazila shows growers are preparing floating beds for vegetable farming.

PHOTO: STAR

Vegetable farming on floating beds gets popular

Around a thousand farmers in Banaripara have prepared 5,000 floating seedbeds covering 40-hectare area this year while there were 4,800 floating beds on 38 hectares last year

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

Traditional vegetable cultivation on floating beds sees a gradual increase in Banaripara upazila of Barishal. Around a thousand vegetable farmers across Bisharkandi and Iluhar unions in Banaripara have prepared 5,000 floating seedbeds covering a total of 40-hectare area this year while there were 4800 floating beds on 38 hectares in last year, said sources at the upazila agriculture office. Vegetable seedlings grown on floating beds see an increasing demand, said

Santu Mia, member of Bisharkandi Union Parishad. Seedlings of green chilli, tomato, spinach, bottle gourd, mint, mustard, and lal shak are cultivated without any insecticides on floating beds, said Mizanur Rahman, a farmer of Bisharkandi village. Ibrahim Mia of the same village said he grew vegetable seedlings on a 160-foot by 3-foot floating bed at a cost of Tk 15,000 at an abandoned government waterbody in the village in October last year and made a profit of over Tk 20,000 by selling the produces.

“Floating bed farming, a long tradition in our area, is receiving renewed interest, especially among poor farmers,” said Mizanur Rahman, a farmer of Iluhar union of the upazila. Monowara Begum of the same area said the earning from vegetables grown on a 100 square feet floating bed came as a help for her poor family. Many landless farmers are now showing interest in making floating seedbeds, she added. Several growers said they prepared floating beds with squeezed water hyacinth

kept in bamboo enclosures in waterbodies and cultivated different vegetables there. The cost for making a 60-foot by 3-foot floating bed stands around Tk 5,000, they said, adding that such a floating bed can be used for two or three times, which enables farming with reduced cost the next time. However, regular care involving physical labour is needed for getting expected output. The Department of Agriculture Extension provides support and training for cultivation on floating beds, said Oliul Alom, agriculture officer of Banaripara upazila.

UNMANNED LEVEL CROSSING

10 mishaps occur in 2 years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A level crossing on BDR road in the town has remained without gate and gateman for long, exposing commuters and vehicles to accidents. Ten accidents occurred there in the last two years, said locals, adding that the latest mishap occurred at the unmanned level crossing on December 1. On the day, a college teacher was injured as a bus hit his motorcycle at the level crossing. Critically injured Shibendu Kumar Roy of Kulaghat village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila is now undergoing treatment at Rangpur Medical College Hospital. On October 31, rickshaw puller Mazidul Islam of Saptana village in Sadar upazila was critically injured when a train hit him. He was later admitted to Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital. Abdul Hanif, a local resident, said around ten accidents occurred at the unsafe level crossing in the last couple of years. Hanif further said it is very busy area as local people use the road randomly. The place truly turns busy

and lively on haat day. Another local resident Azim Uddin said it is a busy road but there is no gate and gateman at this level crossing, which is very pathetic. Officials of Railway Control Room in Lalmonirhat said four pairs of train ply Lalmonirhat-Burimari route every day. BDR road level crossing is unsafe as there is no gate and gateman. A staggering 209 out of 415 level crossings on 540-kilometre rail tracks in eight northern districts of Lalmonirhat Railway Division under West Zone Railway have remained without gates and gatemen for long, posing serious risks of accidents. West Zone Railway's Lalmonirhat Divisional Traffic Superintendent Snehasish Dasgupta said according to railway law, all the expenditures for setting up gates and recruiting gatemen are responsibilities of the authorities concerned who built the road. They have already informed the higher authorities about the matter but to no respond yet, he said.



A level crossing on BDR road in Lalmonirhat town has remained without gate and gateman, posing risk of fatal accidents. The photo was taken on Monday.

PHOTO: STAR



Labourers, enlisted under the government's 40-day job scheme, are engaged in constructing approach roads on either sides of a bridge over a canal, built by Panchchara Union Parishad in Naogaon's Patnitola upazila. The bridge has been lying useless for months for want of approach roads.

PHOTO: RABIULHASAN

Job seeker stabbed dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A job seeker was stabbed to death in Hakimpur upazila of the district yesterday. The deceased was identified as Mehedi Hasan Sony, 25, son of late Abul Hossain of Boaldar village in the upazila. Family members said neighbour Md Mizanur Rahman went into hiding since he took Tk 2.5 lakh from Mehedi for giving him a job in 2016. As Mizanur returned home yesterday morning, Mehedi, on information, rushed to the house and locked in an altercation with the accused over the issue. At one stage of altercation, Delwar Hossain, nephew of Mizanur, stabbed Mehedi indiscriminately. Critically injured Mehedi was then rushed to the upazila health complex where he died later.

BID TO RAPE NINTH GRADER

4 accused land in jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A court here on Tuesday sent four youths, arrested in connection with a case for trying to rape a madrasa girl on Monday, to jail after police produced them before the court. The arrestees are Sarwar Hossain, 19, Mohammad Noman, 20, Hasan Gazi, 19, and Mohammad Nazmul, 20, of Kumirmara village of the upazila. Earlier, villagers caught the four while allegedly trying to violate a Class IX student in Dawlatpur area in Kalapara upazila on Monday afternoon and handed them over to police. Later, the father of the victim girl filed a case with Kalapara Police Station in this regard the same evening. Police produced the arrestees before a court around 11:00am on Tuesday. After hearing, the court sent them to jail, police said. Quoting the victim's family members and locals, police said a gang of seven to eight youths waylaid the girl near Tilar Rasta area while she was returning home from her madrasa on Tuesday noon and tried to rape her. Hearing her cry for help, villagers rushed the spot and caught four of the culprits and handed them over to police.

ATTACK ON HINDU HOUSE

Case filed without name of 'prime accused'

A CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

In a case filed over vandalising house of a Hindu family in Paulpara village of Sonaimuri upazila on Monday, police arrested one of the accused early yesterday morning. The arrestee is Mizan, a resident of the village. However, the name of Swapon, who was accused by the family of leading Monday's attack, was not included in the case. Swapon is a member of Ward 1 in Deoti Union Parishad in the upazila and also general secretary of Awami League's unit in the ward. Geeta Rani Sutradhar, 60, who was assaulted when the vandals attacked her house, filed the case with Sonaimuri Police Station, accusing 35 individuals. Talking to The Daily Star, Gita's son Ripon Chandra Sutradhar alleged that a member of the police station, who made the draft of the case statement, deliberately dropped Swapon's name from the case. Contacted, OC of Sonaimuri PS Abdus Samad said he was not aware of dropping any name from the list of accused.

DEATH OF PSYCHIATRIC PATIENT

Rehab centre owner among 3 land in jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A court here yesterday sent the owner and two staffers of a rehabilitation centre in Mirpur upazila to jail in a case for providing wrong treatment and mercilessly beating a college student who eventually died at the centre. The accused are Abdul Matin, 54, owner of Samarpan rehabilitation centre, its supervisor Habib Uddin Malitha, 52, and staffer Mintu Hossain, 26. Senior Judicial Magistrate Delwar Hossain sent the trio to jail when police produced them before his court after the end of their remand. The deceased was identified as Kamruzzaman Imon, 19, an honours student of Rajshahi City College. He died at the centre on November 20. On November 28, police arrested the three. Imon's uncle Sahajahan Ali Swapan filed a case with Mirpur Police Station against six staffers of the rehab centre. The following day, police produced the arrestees before the court with a four-day remand prayer. On Monday, the court placed them on a one-day remand in the case.



Kamruzzaman Imon supervise the centre, said the OC.

The police official suspects that wrong treatment was the cause of Imon's death. Authorities of the rehabilitation centre claimed Imon died from cardiac arrest, but a leaked CCTV footage

showed a group indiscriminately beating Imon after tying his arms and legs the night before his death. Upazila Health Officer Selim Uddin Farazi, who examined Imon's body, said he found marks on the body which suggested that Imon was tortured before death. Imon's father Ezazul Azim said Imon had been suffering from schizophrenia. The family, at first, took Imon to Pabna Mental Hospital as his condition deteriorated. However, they did not have the required documents to admit Imon there, so they admitted him to Samarpan on November 19, he said. Meanwhile, the judicial magistrate in Kushtia ordered the exhumation of the body of Imon. Following the court order, police on Monday exhumed the body from the graveyard and sent it to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy. Contacted, the resident medical officer (RMO) of the hospital said the autopsy report has been sent to Dhaka and it will take about two weeks to get the result.