

Two killed, one injured in road crashes

STAR REPORT

A school student was killed and another injured as a trolley collided with a motorcycle in Dakkhin Daora village area in Narsingdi's Palash upazila around 9:00am yesterday.

The deceased is Sakibur Rahman alias Sakib, a 10th-grader at the area's Parulia High School.

Md Elias, officer-in-charge of Palash police station, confirmed the matter.

"The victim's brother Rakibul Islam, 18, was also injured in the incident. After rescuing him, locals rushed the boy to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital. No one was arrested, as the trolley driver fled the scene with the trolley and just the victim's motorcycle was recovered from the spot," he added.

Akram Sheikh, Parulia Union Parishad member, said, "To secure a job in abroad, Sakib was receiving training from a local

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When there's traffic ahead, many motorbike riders have built a habit of obstructing pedestrian movement by plying their bikes on the footpaths to save time. As a result, sometimes, even the footpaths get clogged with traffic due to the two-wheelers. Such activities go on unabated, as authorities can hardly intervene amid traffic. This photo was taken in Banglamotor area yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

RUBEL MURDER CASE  
HC orders IO's suspension for 'perfunctory' probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered to suspend Manikganj Sadar Police Station Sub-inspector Masudur Rahman for conducting a "perfunctory" investigation of a murder case in Manikganj, submitting the charge sheet hurriedly, and providing false information about it before the court.

In response to a petition, the HC scrapped the investigation done by Masudur in the case filed for killing Md Rubel, a hatchery worker in September last year, and directed PBI to conduct a fresh probe into the case and submit the report to the court within two months.

A PBI officer not below the rank of superintendent of police (SP) will investigate the case, the HC said.

The PBI officer has been ordered to investigate whether SI Masudur had any involvement with any third party in conducting his probe and whether Champa Aktar alias Anjona, wife of deceased Rubel, actually filed a murder case against her brother Sohel alias Nurunabi for the killing her husband.

The SP of Manikganj has been directed to keep Masudur suspended from service till further order, for completing the probe in only 24 hours and submitting the charge sheet in 42 hours, along with recording statements of 13 witnesses in around 130 minutes from the time of the murder of Md Rubel, 22, in a hatchery at 12:10am on September 24 last year.

SI Masudur, the then investigation officer of the case, yesterday told the HC that he was at the crime scene from 10:30am to 3:00pm on September 25 for the inquest,

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'Country's poverty rate comes down to 16 percent'

Claims Hasan Mahmud

BSS, Dhaka

Information and Communication Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud yesterday said the country's poverty rate has come down to 16 percent from over 20 percent of the total population.

"Our per capita income has surpassed that of India. We are the 35th country in terms of GDP in the world and our economy has ranked 31st in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP)," he said.

However, he did not elaborate further on the timeline and sources of the data.

Dr Hasan, also Awami League (AL) joint general secretary, said this while addressing a discussion as the chief guest at Jahir Raihan Color Lab Auditorium of Bangladesh Film Development Corporation (BFDC) in the city, marking the National Film Day.

Bangladesh is now a bigger economic country than Malaysia in terms of GDP and in the next few years the country will be the 27th economy in the globe, he said.

Earlier, the information minister started the day's

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Growing medicinal plants sees bright prospects

MIRZA SHAKIL

Farmers of different hilly areas in Tangail's Madhupur and Ghatail upazilas are cultivating various types of medicinal plants like tulsi (basil) and aloe vera commercially and earning good profits.

Seeing the success of some, other farmers are also getting interested in this field. Meanwhile, the local agriculture department sees a bright prospect for commercial cultivation of medicinal plants on a large scale.

The soil of the hilly areas is favourable for such cultivation, and such plants have a great demand, both at home and abroad, they said.

Farming of medicinal plants is easy and it costs much lower than growing other crops, growers said.

But some syndicates of buyers are depriving the farmers of fair prices due to lack of marketing facilities and proper monitoring, they alleged.

TULSI

Commercial cultivation of tulsi has been gaining popularity among local farmers in different remote areas of the district, due to low cultivation cost and good market prices.

The tulsi plant is known for its many health benefits since ancient times. There was a time when one or two plants could be seen in the backyard of many families. Now, it is being cultivated on a large scale.

Farmer Mohammad Abdullah

of Fatiyamari village in Ghatail said he cultivated tulsi on two acres of land, spending Tk 35,000, as it is more profitable than rice cultivation.

Dried-up tulsi leaves are sold at a designated collection point, and each maund of leaves is sold at Tk 1,600, he said.

Abdullah also earns some

Kalmegh (green chiretta) and its wide use as an "alternative to quinine" is increasing nowadays.

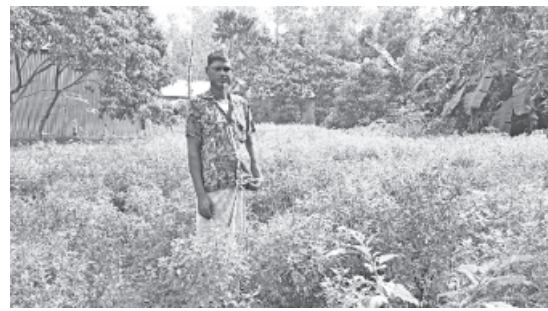
Many farmers in Madhupur and Ghatail upazilas are getting benefits from cultivating the medicinal plant.

Kalmegh, which tastes bitter, has been a common medicine in Bangladesh since ancient

secondary crop as it grows more in shaded areas, they said. At least 12 to 15 maunds of Kalmegh can be produced on each bigha land.

In the peak season, each maund of Kalmegh is being sold at Tk 18,000 to 20,000.

Wholesalers from Dhaka's Karwan Bazar come to the areas to buy Kalmegh, which is also



Farmers tend to an aloe vera and a Kalmegh field in Tangail's Madhupur upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

extra money by selling tulsi seeds at Tk 2,000 per kilo.

Local agriculture officials said tulsi plantation requires no chemical fertilisers and pesticides. The entire farming is done with organic fertilisers, and hardly any weed grows.

Ghatail Upazila Agriculture Officer Dilshad Jahan said tulsi is called the "queen" of all herbal plants.

Inspired by Abdullah's success, many farmers in the upazila are now leaning towards tulsi cultivation, she said.

KALMEGH Commercial production of

times. Due to favourable weather conditions, Kalmegh grows everywhere in the country.

Kalmegh is being cultivated commercially at Jangalia, Maguntinagar, Sholakuri, Beribaid, Phulbagchala, Mahishmara and Aushnara village in Madhupur.

Farmers Hyder Ali, Mujibur Rahman, Dulal Miah, Rustam Ali and Muslem Uddin said Kalmegh cultivation does not require any special care.

Mature seeds fall from the trees on the ground and automatically grow.

The plant can be grown as a

exported to India, they said.

If the agriculture department comes forward by providing agricultural loans and forest department by leasing out land, many will take up Kalmegh cultivation, they added.

Madhupur Upazila Agriculture Officer Al Mamun said Kalmegh farming is a good initiative and they are ready to provide all kinds of cooperation.

ALOE VERA

Farmers are cultivating aloe vera, a plant with herbal qualities, after being inspired by the agriculture department.

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ASSAULT ON UP CHAIRMAN  
Two held after filing of case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A case was filed against 46 men with Baulal police station on Saturday in connection with the attack on Abdul Motalab Howladar, chairman of Baulal Upazila Parishad and general secretary of the upazila Awami League unit.

The case was filed 14 days after the incident. Boga Union Jubo League general secretary Didarul Islam filed the case as the plaintiff.

Lawmaker ASM Feroz's nephew SM Faisal Ahmed alias Monir Hossain Mollah, who is the general secretary of the upazila Jubo League and chairman of Kalaia Union Parishad, has been made the main accused.

In the case, 16 accused have been named and 25-30 others have remained unnamed, most of whom are followers of ASM Feroz.

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100 sacks VGF rice seized in Barguna's Betagi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Local administration has seized 100 sacks or 500 kilos of VGF (vulnerable group deeding) rice from a house at Betagi in Barguna.

Upazila Fisheries Officer Samapti Saha, on the orders of the upazila nirbahi officer, seized the rice that was allotted to fishers and was being stocked in a house on Sunday night.

The rice had not been distributed to the intended recipients. However, no arrests were made at the time of seizure.

According to locals, the rice was being stored in a house by Gazi Jalal Ahmed, chairman of Mokamia Union Parishad.

Contacted, the chairman said it was stored in

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Ctg mobile court fines biscuit factory Tk 2 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A mobile court during a raid at Chattogram's Karnaphuli upazila yesterday fined a biscuit factory Tk 2 lakh for using BSTI seal on packets of unlicensed products.

The mobile court led by Karnaphuli Upazila Assistant Commissioner (Land) Pijush Kumar Chowdhury conducted the drive at Freshway Food & Beverage Limited at Charpatharghata area in Karnaphuli upazila.

During the drive, the mobile court found that bakery items were being produced in a unhygienic way, said Pijush.

He said the drive was conducted upon a number of complaints received.

Besides, there is evidence of the company not having BSTI licence and manufacturing products under different brand names illegally, he added.

No hike in fertiliser price in coming yrs  
Says agriculture minister

UNB, Dhaka

The government has no plan to raise the prices of fertilisers in the coming years, said Agriculture Minister Dr Muhammad Abdur Razzaque on Sunday.

"The prices of fertilisers will not increase further and the government will ensure that farmers get enough fertilisers," he said, while talking to reporters after attending the meeting of "National Coordination and Advisory Committee on Fertiliser" at the Secretariat.

"We will not allow for a crisis to occur over fertiliser for the continuation of food production and the government will take measures so that the farmers don't face any harassment in this regard. If they face any harassment, we will see poor crop production," he said.

"There is a demand for 27 lakh tonnes of urea fertiliser. Meanwhile, the demand for DAP fertiliser is 5-6 lakh tonnes in the 2023-24 fiscal. However, the government has now fixed it to 16 lakh tonnes," he said.

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Protesting the recent arrest of journalists and the case filed against Prothom Alo Editor Matiur Rahman under the Digital Security Act, Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists held a rally in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN