

VC Exchange-cum-Cultural Program



A scene from a cultural program in a two-VC exchange visit at Kutubpur union.

Two Village Committees of Kutubpur union, Meherpur Sadar enjoyed their exchange-cum-cultural program. Hasnabad VC received a group of 15 members of Fulbaria VC on 8 February 2008 to show the guests their regular VC Meeting, a cultural program, and an on-going sanitation VC Scheme. In the cultural program, Hasnabad VC members featured Link Model in an impromptu local song. Hasnabad MD members also explained about their activities, particularly their sanitation scheme being implemented. Members of Fulbaria VC asked many questions regarding share of different activities among VC and MD members, and were impressed by the sanitation scheme being worked by the MD.

How to Cook Cheap but Healthy Food?



Joyful women folk are preparing kichuri containing various vegetables of the season.

Suvorajpur Village Committee of Meherpur Sadar arranged a 'Nutrition School' to grow awareness among village women on

'cheap but healthy cooking'. Altogether 30 women, 10 each from three neighbouring villages, joined this 'school'. Mizanur Rahman, SAAO, explained about food value and types of vitamins contained in popular food items. Trainees were suggested to eat fresh vegetables as nutritional values diminish quickly. All the participants cooked 'mutton kichuri' with various vegetables of the season and served the meal to about 150 village children. (Tanzina Akhter, RA, Meherpur Sadar)

Another New JOCV for Kalihati Joins



Ms. Eiko Sanada, tenth JOCV working in PRDP-2 sites, has joined Kalihati on 4 February. For the next two years, she will work for the people of Birbashinda Union.

With her arrival, '10 JOCVs for 10 unions' posting has been completed as had been planned at the beginning of PRDP-2, and this will be maintained until the end of the Project, viz, 6, 2 and 2 JOCVs in Kalihati, Titas and Meherpur Sadar, respectively.

Kalihati

Union	Village Committee	Total VC Members	Mohila Dall	Total MD Members	Notice Board
Balla	07	110	03	25	20
Bangra	14	235	04	43	35
Birbashinda	08	136	04	41	15
Durgapur	07	118	03	30	10
Elanga	09	156	03	38	17
Kokdahara	06	108	03	35	11
Nagbari	10	155	04	38	21
Narandia	21	338	11	87	38
Paikora	09	143	06	63	11
Shahadebpur	16	304	02	13	37
Shalla	15	264	04	36	34
Total	122	2067	47	449	249

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TV Drama "Sako" on Link Model Completed



Actress Tarin is seen in a scene of VC Committee, along with our RA.

For full four days in early February, Jagatpur Union Sadar area, Titas was totally in excitement and enthusiasm as well-known actors and actresses like Mahfuz and Tarin were there for shooting a 50-minutes TV drama of Mono Vision. A police platoon was deployed to control a large crowd of spectators, some of whom were from far away villages. The TV drama, titled "sako" (small bridge), is a sort of promotional film for PRDP Link Model, dramatized in a genteel love story. It was sponsored by JICA Bangladesh. Jagatpur was chosen as the main shooting location. Many of the Village Committee members, Mohila Dal members as well as some Union Coordination Committee members actually sat at the 'prescribed' meetings for the scene shooting. Mr. Satoshi Mashimo and Ms. Miki Sato, both JOCV Titas, were given 'debut' in the drama as a JICA and a JOCV worker, respectively. Through seeing these shooting scenes, general public may also have become more familiarized in the 'actual PRDP'.

In the evening on 6 March, the company brought the fresh-from-the-labo film to give villagers preview show at a high school ground. Villagers had the excitement and enthusiasm for the second time. (Hiroki Watanabe, Senior JOCV Program Officer, LMC)

Women Empowerment in PRDP-2

Let's Make a Beautiful Family

"Let's make a beautiful family". This was a catch phrase in PRDP-2 package training for women, covering four areas of family planning, mother and child health care, vegetable growing and poultry. It was held for 16 women at Biaroamarua primary school in Durgapur union on 11-14 February, and for 30 women at Narandia UDC (Union Development Center) on 24-27 February.

This training program was focused on newly married women, aged from 18 to 24 years old, because young married women are oftentimes deprived of being exposed to public spaces as compared with elderly women. The training contents were designed to comply with the needs of women who have just started marriage life.

Participants were encouraged to join decision making of the household along with husbands, particularly family planning. They learned about child health-care, and social services available in the union. On completing classes of vegetable growing and poultry rearing, the participants were given some vegetable seeds and one chick, so that they would practice what they learned in the classes in their daily chores.



A total 46 young wives of Durgapur and Narandia union had a four-day training on 'Let's make a beautiful family'.

Trainers were selected from among upazila-level officers, NBD union functionaries, and NGO staffs. We expect that a stronger linkage will be established between the trainees and trainers involving NBDs, NGOs and our facilitators (UDO/O). Our expectation is also due to propagation of the acquired knowledge to their neighbours through Mahila Dal activities. The 4-day training will be provided to those women of the rest of Kalihati upazila in the same package, and then extended to Titas and Meherpur Sadar in due course. (Sachiko Tanaka, JICA Expert in Training)

Titas

Women are being Activated in South Darikandi Village.

After the launch of PRDP-2, Ziarkandi Union, Titas has formed seven Village Committees (VCs), but no Mohila Dal (MD) was yet available. However, on 20 November, one MD was finally born in South Darikandi village. At the general meeting, we saw three women raised hands for the post of MD Chairperson, which showed how eager they were to do something good by themselves.



Women are seen enjoying their first-ever MD meeting in Ziarkandi Union, Titas.

Our surprise continued when the first MD meeting was conducted with 30 women attending far more than MD members. Chairperson, Ms. Nigar said, "Let us discuss any issues to identify what and how we can do to bring changes in the prevailing situation in the village through our MD meeting. Let us work together with villagers to make our future better". Following active discussion, they identified their first priority on sewing training, which has not yet been conducted in Titas. They have already prepared a list for the training participants and special meeting would be held before the next monthly MD meeting to discuss more details. They said, "we cannot waste time just waiting for the next meeting." Listening their comments, I strongly believe that no matter what they do through MD, their devotion will certainly bring good changes in their life in the near future. (Miki Sato, JOCV, Ziarkandi Union, Titas)

Meherpur Sadar

One-day Training on Vegetable Growing and Poultry Rearing

Responding to an overdue demand from a Mohila Dal, one-day training on vegetable growing and poultry rearing was given to a group of 31 MD members of Hasnabad, Borshibaria and Puraton Dorbashpur on 20 February at Meherpur Sadar BRDB Training Center. A Upazilla Agriculture Officer, an Assistant Agriculture Officer and a Livestock Officer were the trainers. The trainees obtained practical knowledge on vegetable growing, pest and disease symptoms and control, nutritional values and appropriate combination of vegetables for preventing malnutrition. They also had preliminary training in poultry rearing and disease treatment. All of them were commenting that they would surely practice what they have learned in their daily chores. (Md. Akther Hossain, RA, Meherpur Sadar)