

A huge crater created during extraction of sand from an agricultural land at Daragaon village in Chunarughat upazila of Habigani. The photo was taken last week.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

Rampant destruction of environment by sand lifters goes on

30 sand quarries under threat in four upazilas of Habiganj

MINTU DESHWARA, back from Habiganj

Bangladesh Environmental Lawvers Association (BELA) recently served legal notices on 20 different officials of the government, urging them to save the environment by putting a stop to illegal extraction of sand in four upazilas of Habiganj.

It has been at least two weeks since the notices were served. But so far, the authorities concerned did not take any action against the illegal act, neither did they respond to the notice, BELA officials said.

Issued on December 9 by Supreme Court lawyer Sayed Ahmed Kabir, BELA in the notice urged the respondents to protect the environment by removing 30 sand quarries -- 23 silica and seven ordinary -- from the official list of lessees in Sadar, Bahubal, Chunarughat and Madhabpur upazilas in Habiganj.

If the respondents, including secretaries of three ministries, fail to take action against unplanned villager, Rafiq Mia. and illegal extraction of sand from the areas, including hilly creeks and channels, BELA would take legal action against them, the notice also stated.

correspondent during This recent visit in Daragaon village of Chunarughat upazila witnessed unabated destruction of the environment by illegal sand extractors.

Large craters were seen in agricultural land in different areas of the village where various types of equipment were set up to extract

Village resident Saddam Mia said the dredgers and other equipment were set up with the blessings of influential locals for extracting sand from agricultural land and creeks in

Agricultural land as well as hillocks around the extraction sites are now at risk as the craters are dug

Advocate Shah Shaheda Akhtar, BELA's coordinator for Sylhet division, said, BELA served the notices after finding evidence of environmental destruction of agricultural land and even tea gardens and rubber gardens by sand extractors in the four upazilas.

She also said the respondents include the secretaries of land, forests and environment, and mineral resources ministries; the director general of the Bureau of Mineral Resources Development (BMRD); the deputy commissioner (DC) and the superintendent of police in Habiganj; the director of Department of Environment (DoE) in Sylhet division; and upazila nirbahi officers, assistant commissioners of land and officersn-charge of police stations in the four upazilas.

Destruction of the environment in the long run will affect the as deep as 30 to 35 feet, said another livelihoods of locals as the

destruction will not only change the classification of their land, but it will ultimately damage roads, bridges, culverts, utility lines and other essential infrastructures in the area, said Tofazzal Sohel, a member of the central executive committee of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolan (Bapa) and general secretary of Bapa in Habiganj.

The change in the topography of the area will also lead to an increased risk of natural catastrophes in the region, he added.

Rashid, Mamunur deputy director of BMRD, said 'Mining and Mineral Resources (Control and Development) Act, 1992' and other applicable laws prohibit the extraction of silica and sand in an uncontrolled and illegal manner.

DoE Director (Sylhet Division) Emran Hossain said the issue raised by BELA in the notice, which he is yet to receive, does not concern DoE as it is within the purview of the DC and the mineral resources ministry.

Boro cultivation on amidst foggy weather

Our Correspondent, Pirojpur

Farmers in different upazilas of the district are passing busy time in planting Boro saplings amid the ongoing cold and foggy weather across the region.

Growers said they have started Boro cultivation around two weeks ago and it will continue for further four weeks but the ongoing cold spell is hampering their plantation process. Farmer Mizanur Rahmanof Baghajhora

village in Nazipur upazila though all the farmers in his locality are passing busy time in sowing Boro saplings, the severe cold is hampering their work as they cannot go to their fields in early morning. Many farmers said as most of the

lands under Nazipur and some parts of Nesarabad and Pirojpur Sadar upazilas are marshland, they cannot grow Aman, which is the main crop of the region, there.

Usually they wait for this time of the year when the water level decreases there

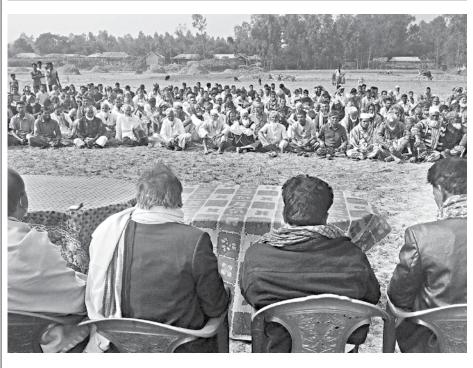
and they can go for Boro cultivation in those marshlands, they said.

"Boro is our main crop as most of the areas here remain submerged in most times of the year except the winter," farmer Sayed Daria from Malikhali village in Nazirpur said, adding that this year no land will remain uncultivated as the price of paddy is much higher than the previous year.

"Last year we couldn't even sell one maund of paddy at Tk 600, but this year per maund of paddy is being sold for over Tk 1100," Sayed said, adding that, they get 40 maunds of paddy from each bigha of land spending Tk 20,000.

According Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Pirojpur the department have a target to bring 23,500 hectares of land under Boro cultivation this year.

Last year, about 22,915 hectares of land was brought under Boro cultivation. Besides, among the seven upazilas of the district Nazirpur is the highest Boro producing upazila.



Hundreds of people, living in different char areas along the Jamuna river in Tangail's Bhuapur upazila, stage a sit-in programme at Rulipara yesterday, demanding immediate step to stop the 'unplanned' dredging of the Jamuna river and protect their homestead and vast croplands from erosion. PHOTO: STAR

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD Road Division, Brahmanbaria Phone: 0851-59632

eebra@rhd.gov.bd e-Tender Notice No. 11/2020-2021

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Pankaj Bhowmil ID No. 602209 Executive Engineer (c.c), RHD Road Division, Brahmanbaria GD-2077



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রাজস্ব খাত (GOB)

১৮/০১/২০২১খ্রিঃ

রেঞ্জ ডিআইজি অফিস, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, সি

46484-0505.540,00.840,0008.40.88

১৯/০১/২০২১খ্রিঃ ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।

২৪/০১/২০২১খ্রিঃ সকাল ১১:০০ ঘটিক

লয়, আলমপুর, সিলেট

রেঞ্জ ডিআইজি'র কার্যালয়, আলমপুর, সিলেট

১৯/০১/২০২১খ্রিঃ, ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা।

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(১) রেঞ্চ ডিআইজি'র কার্যালয়, আলমপুর, সিলেট (২) পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, সিলেট, (৩) কমাভ্যান্ট (পুলিশ সুপার) এর কার্যালয়, আরআরএফ, সিলেট

রেঞ্চ ভিআইজি'র কার্যালয়, আলমপুর, সিলেট

পুলিশ সুপার (এডমিন এন্ড ফিন্যান্স), পক্ষে ডিআইজি, সিলেট রেঞ্চ।

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সনদ ৫। অন্যান্য যোগ্যতা যা টেভার ভকুমেন্ট/সিভিউ**লে** উল্লেখ আছে

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The Corona unit at Pabna General Hospital PHOTO: STAR

PABNA GENERAL HOSPITAL

Covid-19 treatment facilities scanty

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

The second wave of Covid 19 hits the country but there is no progress in dealing with coronavirus patients at the hospital in the district.

No Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) lab has been installed in the district in the last ten months. Even no step has been taken to install central oxygen supply system in 250-bed Pabna General Hospital, which is dedicated to treat Covid-19 patients.

According to sources at the district health department, 1,444 infections were recorded in the last ten months. A total of 23,693 samples were tested during the period. Ten people have died from coronavirus in the district while a number of people have died after showing Covid-19 symptoms during this time.

First Covid-19 patient was identified in the district on April 16. After this, the number of patients has been increasing till July. But the number of patients has been declining since August. The number of patients has been increasing again from November and the running month.

Ten coronavirus patients were identified in April, 21 in May, 411 in June, 322 in July, 140 in August, 125 in September, 78 in October and 165 in November while 172 have been infected with the virus.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in Dhaka allotted a high flow nasal canola machine to treat Covid-19 patients in Pabna General Hospital a few months ago but it has remained inoperative due to the lack of central oxygen supply system at the hospital, said the sources. The intensive care unit (ICU) is also lying inoperative, it added.

"Due to lack of the technical support, we are treating those patients who have mild symptoms," said Dr Saleh Mohammad Ali, consultant of Covid-19 unit at Pabna General Hospital.

He added that a total of 138 suspected coronavirus patients were admitted to Covid-19 unit of the hospital in the last 10 months. Of them, 30 were infected with the virus. All the patients took treatment here as they had mild symptoms. There is no scope for handling critical patients at the hospital.

Pabna Civil Surgeon Dr KM Abu Jafar said despite repeated pleas, the authorities concerned are yet to take any steps to install PCR lab in the district.

"We are now trying to install central oxygen supply system in Pabna General Hospital to improve treatment facility for Covid-19 patients," he said.

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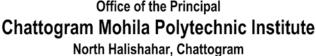
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GD-2078

Principal