

All BWDB efforts to check erosion in Gaibandha fail

REZAUL HAQUE, Gaibandha

Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) has constructed many small embankments to protect the Brahmaputra flood control embankment in Gaibandha spending crores of taka during last 30 years.

But erosion of the mighty Brahmaputra could not be stopped by any means.

In the meantime, the original Brahmaputra flood control embankment along the western bank of the river disappeared. At present existence of the embankment can not be traced due to widespread erosion. Moreover, many erosion victims have taken shelter in this area.

It is worth mentioning that during 1962-63 a devastating flood occurred here. The government sought help of the United Nations (UN) to halt recurring floods. In response to the request of the government UN sent a team of international river experts to conduct survey on controlling flood of the River Brahmaputra as well as erosion.

The river experts suggested to construct a 176-mile long flood control embankment along the western bank of the River Brahmaputra stretching from Bherakola under Kurigram district up to Trimohoni of Pabna district.

In 1965 construction work of the embankment started from Kamnia of Rangpur district to Bera of Pabna district. Work on the 135-mile long embankment ended in 1968. Main objective of construction of the embankment had been to stop overflowing of floodwaters and development

of irrigation and pisciculture. But all in vain as the embankment could neither control flood nor help boost irrigation and pisciculture.

The embankment had been constructed half-a-mile off the western bank of the Brahmaputra. But within 10 years a large portion of the embankment had been eroded by the surging water at its different points.

The erosion affected areas are Talaka, Karibari, Mailabari, Enayetpur, Pakulla, Sariakandi, Kazipur, Mathurapur, Chandanbaisha, Jomshedpur, Malipara, Gobindi, Shaghata, Fultchhari, Rasoolpur, Chirakuthi, Dhufichora, Tambulpur and Farapur.

During the rainy season erosion usually takes serious turn due to onrush of water from the upper catchment. Till now two lakh families have been rendered shelterless. Erosion victims have taken shelter on different embankments.

Meanwhile, erosion of the River Brahmaputra along the western bank is still continuing.

According to a survey conducted by some Non-government Organisations (NGOs) there are about 148 families in each mile area. They have erected thatched huts occupying major portion of the embankment. Many of international organisations have expressed over the erosion victims.

According to an assessment over one lakh 75 thousand families have taken shelter along 135 miles area of the embankment. Virtually they have become destitutes.

Each and every year BWDB takes up programme during the dry season. Fresh areas of embankment are being eroded away every year by the surging water.

In 1993 erosion by the River Brahmaputra had taken alarming turn along 10 kilometres areas. During the period the river changed its course towards five kilometres west of its original location. Day by day the river is coming closer to Gaibandha town which is now only 4.5 kilometres off the river.

Since 1962 the course of the River Brahmaputra have been shifted ten to 20 kilometres away along its western bank.

If the devastation of the Brahmaputra continues unabated then the river will soon devour the entire Gaibandha district.

UNB from Naogaon reports: A town protection embankment is being built in Naogaon at a cost of over Tk 50 crore to save the district town from the flood of Chhoto Jamuna river.

Commerce Minister M Abdul Jalil inaugurated the project recently.

Water Development Board will construct the five-km long dam stretching from Napitpara crossing of southern part of town to Degree College crossing of northern end.

Works on the project have already begun and it is expected to be completed within three years.

The project works include construction of main dam, regulators, drains, sluice-gates and pontoons, and riverbank protection. WDB officials said.

Sherpur farmers expect bumper Boro this season

UNB, Sherpur

Farmers in Sherpur district are expecting bumper crop in the current boro season.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), boro paddy was cultivated on 65,500 hectares of land here while the target was 64,000 hectares.

The production target has been fixed at 2,46,200 metric tons.

Initiative of the DAE, farmers' growing awareness, use of HYV seeds, easy availability of pesticides and fertilisers and favourable climate are the reasons behind the sound production.

Good production during last two

seasons encouraged the growers to cultivate boro paddy.

DAE source said light rain during mid-March and April is considered as the blessing of nature for production boost. "The farmers would certainly have bumper crop if natural disaster does not occur," said an official.

DAE has set up 250 demonstration blocks, 15 IPM (integrated pest management) field schools, six IPM clubs and 70 crop museums for ensuring good production.

Besides, 400 mts of compost fertilisers, adequate seeds and agrinputs were supplied while bank loans were disbursed among the farmers here in the current season.

Step to supply HYV paddy seeds to Bandarban farmers

UNB, Bandarban

Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) has taken up a massive programme to preserve and supply High Yielding Variety (HYV) paddy seeds to farmers in Bandarban district.

Under the programme, 73 selected cultivators of Sadar, Lama and Alikadam upazilas received some 300 kg of BIR-32 paddy seeds for setting up 30 demonstration plots of HYV seeds.

DAE also distributed plastic drums of 50kg-capacity among the farmers to preserve seeds for the next season.

At present the government is able to meet only five per cent demand of seeds and the rest is managed by the

farmers at their own initiatives, DAE sources said.

DAE is expecting three metric tons of rice from per 10-kg seeds supplied to the farmers. Of which, one metric ton will be preserved as seed for the next season.

Farmers under the DAE programme can also sell seeds to other farmers after meeting their demand.

Officials said selected farmers are being trained up at upazila level for successful implementation of the programme.

DAE sources said some 95,000 hectares of land in seven upazilas here have been lying uncultivated due to lack of various agricultural facilities.

NEWS SNAPS

17 shops gutted

UNB, Narsingdi

Seventeen shops, including a schoolroom, were gutted in a fire at a bazaar in Palash upazila in Narsingdi, on Saturday.

Fire Brigade sources said the fire originated from an electric short circuit. Firefighters put out the flame after two hours of hectic efforts. The extent of damage was said to be Tk 50 lakh.

Advocacy meet on safe water

UNB, Jhalakathi

A daylong advocacy meeting on safe water and sanitation was held in Jhalakathi Friday.

Chaired by Shah Alam, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Civil Surgeon Dr Shahadat Hossain, UNO Goutam Kumar Ghosh, UNICEF Representative Sushil Kumar Das and Senior Coordinator of NGO Forum Joseph Halder. Some 40 people, including NGO activists, tube-well mechanics, journalists, traders and contractors, attended the meeting at the auditorium of Youth Training Centre.

Eight posts of magistrate vacant

UNB, Jhalakathi

Eight posts of magistrate have been lying vacant in four upazilas of Jhalakathi district hampering judicial and administrative activities.

Sources said only two magistrates one first class and one second class are now working in the district against 10 posts: seven first class and three second class. The two magistrates have to dispose of a large number of cases as well as perform administrative activities. One first class magistrate is discharging the duties of NDC and RDC.

Rivals' clash leaves 50 injured

UNB, Habiganj

At least 50 people were injured in a clash between two rival groups at Montol village in Lakhai upazila of Habiganj district on last week. Police said the trouble erupted at about noon when the two sides locked into the clash over land dispute. Some 50 people, including two policemen, were injured in the clash. Two police constables were injured when they were trying to bring the situation under control. Police lobbed several teargas shells to disperse the agitated people. One of the injured identified as Tahir Ma. 50, was admitted to Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital while 13 other injured persons to Habiganj Sadar Hospital.



Many roadside trees along Gaibandha-Sadullahpur Road have been dried following frequent cutting of branches, but the authorities concerned are yet to take any remedial step.

Pabna Jubo Dal leader arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Police arrested Pabna district Jubo Dal leader Ruhul Amin Mostofa alias Mostu, 27, in Shibrapur mosque area in Pabna Friday evening.

The reason of the arrest could not be known.

Girl suffers burn injuries

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

A girl suffered acid burns as a young man allegedly threw acid on her when she was sleeping in her sister's house at Collegepara in Magura town at around 10pm on Saturday.

The victim was identified as Nila Khatun, 17, daughter of Ebadot Hossain of village Turipara in Sreepur upazila of the district.

Two revolvers recovered in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Two foreign-made revolvers were recovered in Pachgong border area under Kalmakanda upazila in Netrakona district on Saturday.

On suspicion border force BDR challenged two tribal youths coming from India. But the youths managed to flee leaving a bag they were carrying. BDR personnel later found the two firearms inside it.

Body found in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Body of young man was found from a cropland at village Badpukria under Sadar upazila in Jhenidah district on Saturday.

The dead was identified as Ehsauidin, 30, a day labourer of village Nijputia in the same upazila.

Police quoting the family sources said the victim was living at village Alamdanga under Shailakupa upazila at his father-in-law's house. No mark of torture was reportedly found on the body.

Chittagong Export Processing Zone Tender Notice No. 27/2000-2001. Sealed tenders are invited from contractors as per eligibility for the undermentioned works at Chittagong EPZ. Includes a table with 5 columns: SI No, Name of work, Estimated cost, Eligibility of contractor, Prescribed time for completion of work, Price of tender document (non-refundable).

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Department of Supply and Inspection Invitation of Tender. The following tenders are invited by the Department of Supply and Inspection. Includes a table with 5 columns: SL No, Tender No & Nature, Short description of stores, Value of tender set (non-refundable), Last date & time for submission of tender.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer Narayanganj PWD Division, Narayanganj Tender Notice No-48/2000-2001 Eng. Includes a table with 6 columns: SI No, Name of work, Estimated cost, Earnest money, Eligibility contractor/firms, Time allowed for completion of work.

Bangladesh Power Development Board Tender Notice. Name of Work: Supply of materials (stores purchase) for use in transformer repair work. Eligibility of contractor: Sealed tenders are invited from Power Development Board's 2000-2001 enlisted A, B and C class contractors/bonafide supplier firms/their nominated representatives.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer Narsingdi PWD Division, Narsingdi Notice Inviting Tender. Includes a list of 13 items detailing tender specifications, estimated costs, and submission procedures.