

Land-grabbing goes on unchecked in Magura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Influential people in the district have been raising unauthorised structures on both sides of the highways under the very nose of the authorities concerned.

According to an estimate, about two hundred acres of land stretching from Alomkhali to Rajdharpur have already been occupied. Besides, a section of the locals are allegedly in bid to grab more lands along the Magura-Jhenidah and Magura-Faridpur highways allegedly in connivance with officials of the local Tahashil office.

A reliable source with the land-office here said departmental tangles and pressure from local stalwarts always stand and hinges on way to taking any move against them.

The source added that some of such illegal land-grabbers were also using signboards of the Muktiyoddha Sangsad and other socio-cultural organisations as protection against any punitive action.

Public lands in Alomkhali Bazar, Issakhada Bazar, Police Line, stadium area, Bhaina Square, Primary Training Institute, Dhaka Bus Stand, Kuchcha bazar area, Parnandual Baparipara area, Parnandual High School area, Ramnagarbazar and WAPDA Square have already been occupied. Many illegal structures are also being built on these lands.

"It's an open secret that land-office officials are party to the encroachment, as the authorities concerned often seem nonchalant about these illegal structures on government lands," said Kham Mazharul Huq Lipu, a social worker in the town.

"I pay a certain amount of money to these officials every month for my illegal structure on public land," said a shop owner near the vocational institute here on condition of anonymity.

Another occupant at Magura Stadium area, who preferred anonymity, said, "I started my business here as per prior contacts with the officials concerned. If they ask me to quit the place, I shall remove my shop from here," he added.



Picture shows unauthorised structures at Dhaka Road Bus Stand in Magura. These days the district has been witnessing the sprouting of such structures on both sides of the roads and highways.

When contacted, the executive engineer of the Magura Roads and Highways Department, admitted building of structure on public lands by illegal occupants. However, he expressed his ignorance about the alleged verbal contact regarding building of structures on public lands.

The engineer said he had already visited the illegal construction sites and promised to demolish these within a very short time.

Talking to this correspondent, a renowned businessman in the town expressed his surprise how illegal building of such structures was going on in full swing amid hectic government programmes to demolish these in the country.

When contacted, M Akbar Ali, the Superintendent of Police (SP), said, "I cannot take any step against anyone unless I receive specific charges."

Child labour on rise in Gopalganj

ALI MUZZAMAN MIAH, Gopalganj

At least 20,000 child labourers are engaged in various types of works in five upazilas of the district as their number has been on an alarming rise these days, according to an

unofficial estimate. Children aged between 7 and 14 are working as rickshaw pullers, day-labourers in agricultural fields, hotels and restaurants, tea stalls, engaged in brick breaking and working as polythene bag sellers

and salesmen. There is however no record in the district government offices on the actual number of child-labourers, though roughly it is estimated at twenty thousand.

though child labour is banned world-wide as per the United Nations declaration, it is rising everyday in the district and these children are mostly from underprivileged families.

Delowar Hossain (10), son of Chand Mia, a poor freedom fighter of village Manikdha in Gopalganj Sadar upazila is engaged in pulling a rickshaw van on the Gopalganj-Manikdha road. His father, who has always been in severe financial crisis, could not provide education to his children.

After a year at school, Delowar was forced to quit it and was given the van to earn money for the family's survival. He earns Tk 30 to 40 per day and hands over the same to his father. Delowar told this correspondent that no members of their family ever went to school.

District statistics officer Habibur Rahman informed that 57 per cent of the children aged between 6 to 10 are going to schools in the district. But according to Abdur Rahman, District Primary Education Officer (DPEO), 94 per cent of them actually go to school.

District Social Welfare Office sources say that there is only one distressed child rehabilitation centre, where some 120 children are being taken care of.

Kamal Sheikh, another 11-year-old boy of village Taguria under Gopalganj Sadar upazila, has been working as a tea boy at a stall adjacent to Modhumati Bazar on the Gopalganj-Mollorhat road. He earns an amount of Tk 250 per month for his service, which starts at 8 in the morning and continues till 11 at night.

His father Rahman Sheikh, who is a farmer and not the least aware of the UN declaration for children, could not send his three sons to school due to abject poverty. As a result, Kamal has been engaged in child labour from his very boyhood.

When contacted, Rahman Sheikh said that he was not in a position to provide education to his seven children. Finding no other alternatives, he sent his son to work.

2 unnatural deaths

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Two unnatural deaths were reported on Friday in Shahjapur upazila in Sirajganj district.

Shawkat, 18, son of Maimuddin, was electrocuted at Narina village. Villagers said the victim died at a paddy field when he came in touch of live wire which was snapped during a storm.

In another incident, Kuti Sheikh, 15, son of Anwar Sheikh, drowned in a pond while swimming at Mospur village.

Two held in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Two criminals have been arrested in Chittagong city. Police arrested Soban, 22, with a revolver from Muradpur intersection area on Thursday. In another raid, Patenga police arrested Md Maududdin, 40, a listed terrorist, from North Potengon Wednesday.

Repression on women

Cases pile up as accused skip hearing

UNB, Sylhet

The number of pending cases relating to women repression is amassing in Sylhet as the accused avoid appearing before the court despite repeated reminders.

In one such case, Haricharan Das Badal, accused of torturing his young wife, Shampa Rani Das, to extract dowry has secured bail and never reappeared before the court. He is reported to have married again without the consent of his first wife, Shampa, who is now living in utter distress.

Shampa was married with Badal, a postman, in 1992. After only a few months, Badal and his mother Madhabi Balshnabi, started pressing Shampa to bring cash in the form of dowry from her widowed mother and brothers. When she failed to meet their demands, she was subjected to inhuman physical torture.

Shampa conceived four times, but because of physical torture she had to go for abortion on every occasion on doctor's advice to save her own life.

Despite the tortures, Shampa tried her best to continue living with the husband. She sought intervention of the Postal Inspector of Sylhet, UP chairman and local MP Syeda Zebunnessa Haq. But all her efforts went in vain.

Shampa alleged that on March 11 last year Badal and some of his accomplices came to her mother's rented house at Loharpara in the town. They beat her mercilessly and stabbed on several parts of her body. As she fell unconscious, the brutes left thinking her to be dead.

Shampa filed a case with the court on March 13. Police arrested Badal and the court sent him to jail. After 11 months, he came out of jail on bail and pressed Shampa to withdraw the case, threatening to kill her.

Pursuing an independent investigation, this correspondent visited the Badal's residence at Lamapara in Jaintapur. Badal and his mother, Madhabi Balshnabi, were not found in the house.

They said Madhabi is the main maid of Lamapara Baishnav Akhra (hermitage). Under her care, the hermitage provided the attendants with hemp, alcohol, heroin and scope for anti-social activities with women since long.

Meanwhile, Haricharan Das Badal, who abandoned his wife Shampa, giving a damn to the court order, married Nivaran Das, daughter of Putul Das of village Protappur. Sources in the district women and child repression tribunal said a large number of cases have been lying pending.

Bumper Boro likely in Sherpur

BSS, Sherpur

Bumper production of Boro paddy is expected in Sherpur this year. The harvesting is likely to begin soon.

Weather this year was favourable, farmers said.

Farmers used high yielding variety of Boro, applied balanced fertiliser and supplied water timely on the croplands, agriculture officials said.

According to Department of Agriculture Extension DAE, 65,500 hectares of lands were brought under cultivation in the district and the production target is estimated about 2,46,200 tons.

Another report from Chuadanga says: The prospect of Boro production in the district is very bright this year.

Favourable weather condition and timely application of fertiliser and irrigation have been attributed to the good prospect. The harvesting is likely to begin in the next two to three weeks time.

According to official source, 32,325 hectares of lands were brought under the cultivation in the

district during the current season. Of the total lands, 6,320 hectares were brought under the cultivation in Sadar 10,000 hectares in Alamdaha, 9,000 hectares in Damurdaha and 7,000 in Jhambagar upazilas.

It is expected that over 1.50 lakh tons of Boro paddy will be produced in the district during this season. Another report from Narsingdi says: The prospect of sweet potato cultivation is bright in Raipura upazila of the district. A vast area of sandy land across the river bank and shoal areas is suitable for sweet potato cultivation.

A large number of farmers of the upazila have involved themselves in sweet potato cultivation in the recent time.

According to DAE, farmers of Raipura have cultivated the crop on 1250 hectares lands in the current season.

5,000 tons of sweet potato have been expected this season. Last year sweet potato was cultivated in Raipura upazila on 1028 hectares and the yield was 4100 ton.

NEWS SNAPS

3 die in road accidents

UNB, Sunamganj

Three people, including a minor, were killed in separate road accidents on Sylhet-Sunamganj road last week.

The victims were identified as Samju Ali, 65, Arju Mia, 5, and Sumon, 18. Samju Ali was run over by a minibus at Neagon at about 8.30 am while Arju was crushed under the wheels of another coaster at Shantiganj bazar. Meanwhile, motorcyclist Sumon was injured when his bike collided with a tempo at Janigan at about 10.30 am. He later succumbed to his injuries at Sadar Hospital.

Farmer chopped to death

UNB, Sherpur

A farmer was chopped to death by rivals while guarding his paddy field at village Chhatrakhona in Nakla upazila in Sherpur Sunday night.

The dead was identified as Hamed Ali, 45. Police said the assailants stabbed Hamed Ali indiscriminately while he was guarding his paddy field adjacent to his home at about 2.30 am. He died on the spot. Hamed Ali's wife filed a murder case with local police against 14 people naming one Abdul Matin on the top.

Teenage boy drowns

BSS, Narayanganj

A teenage boy drowned in the river Shitalakhya Wednesday morning as he fell from the rooftop of a passenger launch, police and Inland Water Transport Authorities (IWTA) sources said.

The boy was identified as Shahin, 16, who along with five other workers including his father came to the river port from Munshiganj. Police said Shahin drowned in the river as the launch hit the terminal while it was anchoring.

Robbery committed

BSS, Naogaon

A robbery and three thefts were committed in one night at Nazipur municipality area of Palnola upazila in Naogaon recently.

The robbers armed with sharp weapons entered the house of Azeet Shah and looted cash, ornaments and valuables. Three thefts were also committed in the houses of Shireen Akhter, Akhtaruzzaman Manoo of Chandpur village and Nazrul of Mammothpur village. Thieves stole bicycle, cloths, cash and valuables.

Man electrocuted

UNB, Satkhira

A man was electrocuted when he came in touch of live wire in Old Satkhira area in the district Wednesday.

Family sources said Khokon, 25, met the tragic end of his life when he was repairing a hairdryer in the morning.

Non-iodised salt on sale

UNB, Shariatpur

Non-iodised salt is being sold in various bazaars of district defying government ban.

Poor people prefer buying the non-iodised salt because of its cheaper rate. A large number of people in seven upazilas of the district are suffering from goitre and other physical and mental problems caused by iodine deficiency.

New HYV chili

UNB, Gazipur

Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI) has invented a new high yielding variety (HYV) of chili.

The new variety of chili was released at a press conference in Gazipur Wednesday where Director of Horticulture Research Centre of BARI Dr SM Munwar Hussain described the qualities of the chili. He said this new chili, which has tolerable pungent, can be cultivated throughout the year. It was invented after a marathon research for six years on a Sri Lankan variety. The production of the chili is expected to be three times higher than that of local variety.

Orientation course

UNB, Comilla

An orientation course for the headmasters of primary schools in Sadar Upazila in Comilla was held here Monday aiming to properly implement the TLM programme.

Chairman of Public Administration Reform Committee ATM Shamsul Haq attended the course organised by the district administration.

Advertisement for Biman Poultry Complex, GANAKBARI, SAVAR, DHAKA-1344. Includes contact information and details about the facility.

Advertisement for 'মাইক্রোবাস ক্রয়ের পুণঃ টেন্ডার বিজ্ঞপ্তি' (Microbus purchase tender notice). Details the terms and conditions for purchasing microbuses.

Advertisement for Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) regarding career opportunities. Lists requirements for Deputy Director positions and provides application details.

Election Priority notice from the Election Commission Secretariat regarding the strengthening of the Electoral Process Project in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.

Tender Notice for Sealed tenders (2 envelope system) for the supply of photocopier machines and related accessories.

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