Defying ban, running into risk Kushtia Govt College

Unfit launches illegally ply Meghna estuary routes in season of storm

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Defying a government restriction, a section of owners are plying ramshackle small launches without route permit in risky routes in the Meghna estuary in the current season of

Plying of such launches in the routes including the 18-mile Bhola-Laxmipur route is not allowed from March 15 to October 15 to avoid disaster because the estuary remains very rough during the period. Only approved BIWTA sea trucks are allowed to ply the routes during the

But the launch owners also obstruct plying of comparatively safer sea trucks, passengers and BIWTA sources alleged.

Most of the vessels defving the ban are owned by influential people.

Two such launches-- MV Sagor Kannaya-2 and MV Upadwip -owned by State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharraf Hossain Shajahan are illegally ply the most risky Bhola-Laxminur route (from Ilisha in Bhola to Maiu Chowdhurir Hat in Laxmipur) Shaiahan hails from Bhola, MV Siddik Khan, also plying the route, is owned by an influential leader of the Launch Owners Association.

Both the MV Sagor Kannaya-2 and the MV Upadwip sank earlier. Passengers perished but the

pressed into service again.

The MV Upadwip was previously named MV Dwipkannaya. After salvage, it was named MV Upadwip,

The 18-mile non-stop journey from Ilisha in Bhola to Maju Chowdhurir Hat in Laxmipur through the Meghna estuary is very risky because the area remains very rough with high waves and strong winds even in normal weather.

In the last four years, several hundred people drowned in at least six major disasters during March-October. Five to eight hundred passengers use this route every day, the sources said. Allegations have it that the launch

operators and their musclemen often forcibly anchor their unauthorised launches at BIWTA terminals reserved for sea trucks and compel passengers to board their launches. Amir Hossain, Master of Sagor Kannaya-2, while talking to this

correspondent, admitted that the

vessel is plying illegally. "We have

nothing to do against the will of the owner", he said. BIWTA sources at Barisal port also admitted that small and unfit launches are plying the Ilisha-Maju Chowdhurir Hat route defying the

Seeking anonymity, they said they



Sagor Kannaya-2, owned by a state minister, is ready at Ilisha BIWTA terminal for a risky journey to Laxmipur, a route

sent letters to Bhola and Laxmipur district administrations, police, aunch owners associations and the DG Sea Transport to take action against the violators, but to no effect.

Md Azizul Huq Akkas, who leased BIWTC sea truck Khizi-8 said, he is incurring loss every day due to illegal Bhola-laxmipur route. He can not

even earn the lease money of Tk

tense after 5 teachers beaten by JCD

Case against 21 JCD activists, none held: Police deployed on campus

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A tense situation was prevailing at Chuadanga Government College vesterday after Tuesday's attack on teachers by Jatyitabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists on the campus in which five teachers including its vice-principal were injured.

Leaders of Chuadanga district BNP proposed a meeting with the college authorities yesterday to

The college authorities declined to sit with them before arrest of culprits, some teachers said when contacted over phone.

Police have been deployed on the campus. The Officer-in-Charge of Chuadanga Sadar thana, when contacted, said they could not attest any of the attackers but were trying.

Meanwhile, Chuadanga Awami

League President Solaiman Hog Joardar, Chhatra League President Reiaul Karim and General Secretary Obaidur Rahman in separate statements demanded immediate arrest of

atmosphere at the college. Three of the five injured teachers · Vice-principal Enamul Haq, Sahin Uddin and Mamunur Rashid -- were admitted to Chuadanga Sadar hospital. Two others-- Akidul Islam

the culprits to restore academic

Mafizur Rahman were given first

Sources said that on Monday. Physics teacher Sahin Uddin asked his student Nurul Islam, a JCD activist, to give attention to class. The student took it as an insult. He and some other students allegedly belonging to JCD left the class

Next day, some teachers took

the initiative for a rapprochement but it failed as the JCD activists demanded transfer of Sahin Uddin.

After some time, a group of JCD activists led by its Sadar upazila joint secretary Jony Sheikh alias Tapos swooped on the teachers room at the college and beat Sahin Uddin and Viceprinciple Enamul Haq.

Some teachers including Akidu Islam of English department, Mafizur Rahman of Philosophy and Mamunur Rashid of Management were taking their two injured colleagues to hospital. As they reached the college gate, some JCD activists attacked and injured them.

Police rushed to the spot but remained inactive, teachers later

The college principle, Abdul Jalil. filed a case accusing 21 JCD activists. "It is a very unfortunate incident", he told The Daily Star.

SNAPS

Women carriers of Phensidyl held

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

Police arrested three women from Barisal launch terminal on Tuesday and recovered 82 bottles of Phensidyl strapped with their bodies.

They are Parul Begum, 35, Rabeya Begum, 30 and Dhukhi Begum, 29.

They told police that they were given Tk 200 each for carrying Phensidyl bottles to Barisal from Jessore in a bus. They are residents of Jayrampur Railway Colony slum in Damurhuda upazila in Chauadanga district. They had gone to the terminal area to hand over the bottles

Fotwa is legal, says Amini

Our Correspondent, Patuakhali Islami Oikkya Jote Chairman and lawmaker Maulana Fazlul Hag Amini has said fotwa (unofficial decree by a religious leader) is legal in Islamic

murtad" (infidel) he said at a conference of Muslim clerics, organised in the town by his party Monday evening

Central leaders of the Party including Moulana Azhar Uddin, Sheikh Muiibur Rahman and Abdul Latif Nijam addressed the conference with Hafez Abdur Rahman in the chair.

2 killed in Satkhira road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira Two motorcycle riders were killed in a road accident at Taliala on the Khulna-Satkhira Road on Tuesday morning.

The victims were identified as

Jehangir Hossain, 34, son of Janat Ali Gazi of Chandipur village in Debhata upazila and Manirul Islam, 30, son of Ansar Ali of Rajapur village in Kaligani upazila. Quoting local people police said a pick-up knocked the victims from behind causing Jahangir's death on the spot and Manirul's death on way to

However, the driver managed to escape with his vehicle.

Prime accused in Babu murder case arrested

The prime accused of Police Informer Babu Murder Case and Jatiyatabadi Chatra Dal (JCD) leader Akhtar Hossain Bipu was arrested here on Tuesday.

Khulna thana police arrested him along with his two armed associates from the railway police station area on charge of assaulting and giving death threat to a Public Works Department (PWD) contractor for not paying them their demanded toll

amounting to 50,000 taka. At that time PWD contractor Rabiul Islam was supervising the renovation work of the railway police station building, police sources told this correspondent. A mason who was working there informed police about the incident over phone from

a nearby shop AC Anisur Rahman rushed there

Pollution from across the border

Toxic water allegedly from Agartola turns 3000 hectares barren, spreads diseases in bordering Akhaura: DC to take up issue with Tripura admin

MD. SHAHIDUL ISLAM, B'baria

Toxic water from across the border flowing through Kalondi canal is polluting lands and waterbodies in 30 villages in bordering Akaura

thousands of people, affecting farming and causing incurable diseases. locals and Brahmanbaria district administration officials said.

Once called C&B Kata Khal and a source of sweet water, local people now call the canal Kala Nodi

turned almost black due to pollution. At least 3000 hectares of land have turned barren in the bordering areas as those are often inundated by the canal water, villagers said.

Brahmanbari Deputy Commissioner (DC) Md Younusur sample of the black water has been sent to Mohakkhali in Dhaka for chemical test. He will raise the issue at a meeting with Tipura district administration, expected soon. At a recent immunisation review

meeting, Civil Surgeon Muhammad Ishak said Brahmabaria is a vulnerable area for Polio as neighbouring India is not free from the disease. Polio germ is carried by the canal water, the meeting was told.

Akhaura upazila officials suggest construction of a sluice gate on the Indian part of the canal to stop flow of the highly toxic water into

Bangladesh. The canal enters Bangladesh near the Akaura check post, flows through Akaura pourasava area and falls into the Jarisor and Ttias rivers.

The canal was once a source of irrigation for farmers in the 30 villages. Its water is now highly polluted and toxic as it carries industrial. waste from Agartola town across the border The pollution began some years

the Tripura canal with the Kalindi canal for disposal of sewage and industrial waste from Agartola town and adjoining areas, sources said. Besides numerous small indus-

back when Indian authorities joined

tries, two tanneries, a good number of Phensidyl factories, soap factories, battery plants, washing plants and two big hospitals release their highly toxic waste into the canal they said. These factories use acid, Potash Alum, Sodium Carbonate, Calcium Carbonate and other harmful chemicals The worst affected areas are

Kalikapur, Sunarbadi, Bongerchar, Rahimpur, Anandapur Sahebnagar, Kendai, Anwarpur, Hirapur, Rajendrapur, Narayanpur Noorpur, Taragaon and Debogram villages and Akhawra pourasava During a recent visit to bordering

Sunarbadi village, some farmers told this correspondent that paddy fields turn yellowish if the canal water is used. They can not work in fields along the canal as its water emits very bad smell. Many people in the village are suffering from asthma and skin

disease as they came in contact with the water while irrigating their paddy fields, they said. Md. Jalal Mia, 45, of the same village said sores develop on the

skin after contact with the water. Akhaura South Union Parsihad Chairman Md. Shah Nawas Khan said thousands of acres of land are losing fertility due to use of the canal water. Many in the area are suffering

from asthma and skin diseases, he

Over the years, fish resources in the canal have disappeared due to pollution, the villagers said.



Tale of a run-down weather centre

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

All the four ground floor rooms at Patuakhali Meteorological Office were found locked at about 2 pm. Two journalists including this correspondent waited outside

At about 3 pm. Abdul Halim, the official responsible for running the office, came and unlocked his ground floor office room. Halim's official designation is Officer-in-Charge.

Weather monitoring is a roundthe-clock job. So the OC's official residence is on the first floor. But Abdul Halim stays outside the com-

"Do not blame me", he said in an apologetic tone. "We can not function properly

because of shortage of manpower and apparatus", he said. The two journalists went to the

office on April 20 after failing to get any body there over telephone. Halim said all three posts of

data on weather from other apparatus. This is the job of an expert but done by a clerk now, he said. The Weight Bulb, fixed on the lawn reads humidity of air. Nearby there is the Rain Compiler. The

Baloon Maker are vacant for long

The job of a Baloon Maker is to take

Sunshine Recorder which records temperature, and the Wind Indicator are fixed on the rooftop. Abdul Halim said weather report is sent to Dhaka Meteorological Office daily, which prepares reports for radio and television. Correct weather

report can not be prepared always

because of shortage of expert man-

power, Halim said. Patuakhali meteorological office was set up in 1970. Since then it was not renovated.

Rain water trickles through cracks in the roof, often spoiling essential

papers, Halim said.

wife, mother-in-law **OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari** became pregnant. Local people compelled Karimul to marry Amina. Five months after their marriage A five-month-old baby, her mother and grand mother sustained serious Amina gave birth to a girl child. But acid burn injuries as her father threw after their marriage the relationship

Toxic water flowing through the Kalondi canal. The photo was taken last week.

acid to them at a remote village here on Monday night.

Local people and victims' family sources told this correspondent that the baby's mother Amina Begum, 25, daughter of poor Atiar Rahman of Holholia village in Jorabari union of Domar upazila had a love affair with a teenage boy Karimul, 17, for a long

time. At one stage of their affair Amina

between the families of Amena and Karimul became strained. Karimul also could not accept their uneven marriage. He decided to get rid of the unbearable situation by throwing acid

On the fateful night Amina was staying in her father's house. She and her baby slept with her old mother on the same bed where Karimul sprayed

Just after the incident local people rushed the victims to a local BRAC clinic, but shifted them to Dhaka on Tuesday evening as their condition deteriorated. All of them sustained serious burn injuries on the faces, legs and hands.

A case was registered with Domar police. Karimul was not arrested as ne remained absconding till filing of the report on Wednesday morning.

Acid attack on daughter, 3 expelled from BNP in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Two leaders and a member of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) here were expelled from the party for violating its rules in the upcoming pourasabha (municipality) election The expelled are Dhanut Pourasabha unit of BNP president

Abdul Khaleque Mondol, Nandigram thana BNP secretary Abdur Rahman and a member of Bogra district BNP Sharajul Islam. Bogra district BNP office secretary Julfikir Ali circulated the decision through a

press release on Monday night. Abdur Rahman and Sharajul Islam submitted nominations against Four-party Alliance candidate BNP leader Kamrul Hasan Siddique Jewel to vie for chairmanship of Nandigram Pourasabha Abdul Khaleque Mondol has been contesting for chairmanship against Four-party Alliance candidate BNP leader Akhter Alam Selim.

Meanwhile, the party has decided to withdraw the expulsion order against the district BNP's former youth affairs secretary M R Islam Sadhin Previously he was expelled along with four BNP leaders from the party for their alleged involvement in managing a 13 crore taka Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) tender last year.

Three abducted 3 cops among fishermen rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Three fishermen who were abducted from Rusho canal in the Sundarbans last Wednesday were rescued after five days of the incident on Monday.

Police told this correspondent pirates abducted the fishermen named Akkaj Ali, Rashidul Islam and Abul Kalam of Kaikhali village in Shyamnagar upazila demanding ransom amounting to two lakh taka. After the incident police launched a drive to rescue the abducted fishermen and acting on a tip-off police raided Chunkari canal area and rescued them while the pirates fled away.

Assassuni UNO's removal demanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

All Union Parishad (UP) chairmen in Assassuni upazila have demanded removal of 'corrupt' Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Utpal Kumar Das as he helped escape miscreants who assaulted and snatched the motorcycle of Shornali UP chairman Jalaluddin Gazi recently.

The demand was made at a meeting held at the Assassuni Upazila National Union Parishad Forum office on Tuesday. UP chairman Rafigul Islam was in the chair.

12 hurt in Bhaluka clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

At least 12 persons including three policemen were injured in a clash over land between two rival groups at Labankata village in Bhaluka upazila on Tuesday morning.

Bhaluka thana police told this correspondent the clash ensued over ownership of a piece of land. Both the groups used sharp weapons during the clash.

On information a contingent of Bhaluka thana police lead by subinspector Sayeruddin rushed there to quell the situation. At that time 12 persons were injured. They include police sub-inspector Sayeruddin,35, and police constables Ahmed Ali,48, and Uzzal,30. The three policemen were admitted to Bhaluka Upazila Health Complex while Salaluddin Sarker Sabuj, 35, and Murad Hossain Biplob, 32, were taken to Dhaka.

Phensidyl recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

A total of 3,571 bottles of Indian Phensidyl were recovered from different parts of the district in last

While conducting an antismuggling drive, the Detective Brach (DB) of police here recovered the contraband.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

with his team consisting of over 100 policemen and caught Bipu, Billal and Kala Yunus

No service rule for PSTU teachers, VC says OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali Abdul Hanna Bhuiyan opened two

The Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) is opening two new departments--Tourism and Agro-Based Industrial Science -- this year.

This was stated by Acting Vice-

chancellor Prof Dr Abdul Latif Masum

while exchanging views with newsmen on Thursday. He however said acute teachers' shortage it the main problem. Fifty-

nine posts of teachers out of 100 are vacant for long, he said. The university is running without any service rule for teachers, which is

hampering administrative and academic activities, he said He said former VC Prof Dr. AKM

departments-- BBA and Computer-but did not recruit teachers for those. Bhuiyan was removed on March 8 in the face of agitation by teachers, students and local people for alleged

rregularities in staff recruitment. Students also face accommodation problem at hostels. Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Hall, the lone hostel for male students, now accommodates 600 students against 396 seats. About 140 female students stay at the 90-seat Chand Sultana

Many students stay outside the campus, but the university can not provide transport for them



Universal Primary Education', held at BD Hall, Jessore, on Saturday. It was organised by the Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) to mark EFA Global Action Week-2004. Sitting from left are Jessore MM College Principal Yusuf Ali, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Education & Development) Belayet Hossain, DAM Deputy Executive Director M Ehsanur Rahman, Professor Nargis Islam and Director of Research division of DAM Professor Dr Ahmedullah Mia.