

Together they rebuild dam to keep flood away

Teachers, students join farmers to repair Monu river embankment at Alinagar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

People of five unions in Kulaura upazila have set a laudable example. They have joined hands and are voluntarily reconstructing a damaged embankment of the Monu river in Alinagar.

People from all walks of life are working together to reconstruct the embankment to protect the area from further flooding and to save the next Aman crop.

Teachers, students and the local elite have taken spades in hand and joined the village folk in cutting earth and rebuilding the dam. Floods washed away about 1500 feet of the Minu river embankment at Alinagar, inundating vast areas in Prithinpasa, Kadipur, Karmcha and Rauthgaon unions in Kulaura upazila and affecting about six lakh people. The floods damaged houses and crops and washed away fishes from farms and ponds.

Farmers are very busy now because it the peak hour to transplant Aman seedlings as the floodwater has receded. But they are making time to join the reconstruction work in batches. The river may rise again and their hard labour on lands may turn useless if the breached embankment is not repaired.

The initiative to reconstruct the embankment was taken by three persons--Dr Monirul Islam Suhag, Nobab Ali Noki Khan, chairman of Prithimpasa union and Abdus Shahid Babul, chairman of Karmadha union and a popular local leader. Noki Khan is the younger brother of former Jatiya Party lawmaker Nabab Ali Abbas Khan.

Dr Monirul Islam Suhag has a big fish farm, damaged by the recent flood.

The three joined hands and exchanged their idea with the local people that the damaged Alinagar embankment should be re-constructed immediately to protect the Aman crop in the area. People from all walks of life

responded to their call and the work began on July 29.

People from others unions soon join them.

The three persons are supervising the work. Those who can not do physical labour are donating money and materials for the work.

MM Shahin, an independent law-maker from the area, has also extended his helping hand. Everyday, he is supplying cooked food among the volunteers. He also supplied 6500 gunny bags.

Talking to this correspondent, Dr Suhag said reconstruction of the embankment by government is uncertain. The people have no time to wait for the Water Developments Board's (WDB) programme. So they joined hands to rebuild the embankment, he said.

People of all classes have spontaneously joined the work and it is likely to be completed within a few days, he said. This has created a spirit of self-reliance and confidence among the people of the area, he said.



PHOTO:STAR

Not waiting for government help ... People voluntary rebuilding the breached embankment of Monu river in Alinagar.

SNAPS

6 cops stabbed for resisting gambling

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Six policemen including a Sub-inspector of Akhaura railway thana were stabbed by a gang of gamblers for resisting gambling on the platform of Akhaura railway station Wednesday night.

The gang of led by notorious smuggler and gambler Md Shahjahan were gambling at a corner of the platform. On information, a team of six policemen including Sub-inspector Md. Jahangir went there and forced them to stop gambling. As a heated exchange of words ensued, some other gamblers and smugglers came, raising their number to around 30. Some of them had knives hidden.

At one stage, the gamblers attacked the policemen and stabbed them. They fled away as the policemen fired four blank shots. SI Jahangir was sent to Dhaka Orthopaedic Hospital. The five others are being treated at Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital. They are constables Abul Hussein, Jahangir Alam, Nazrul Islam, Ranjan and Ismail.

A case has been filed with Akhaura railway thana accusing 15 gamblers. But none could be arrested till yesterday. Brahmanbaria Police Superintendent ATM Tarek visited the spot.

Revenue official held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

The assistant revenue official of Panchapukur union land office in Nilphamari Sadar upazila was arrested on Thursday. He was produced before court under Section 54 on the same day. The court sent him to jail, official sources said. Nilphamari Deputy Commissioner Shafiqul Alam had gone to the land office on a scheduled visit but found it locked. The DC was told that the tahshildar (revenue official) was at his village home at Araji Manushmara in the Sadar upazila.

The DC then asked police to arrest him. Police arrested and produced him before court.

A death cheered ...

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

People of Swarupkati in Pirojpur, Banaripara in Barisal and Sadar upazila in Jhalakati districts have expressed a sigh of relief at the death of Parimal Sikder alias Khokan Master, a notorious gang leader outlaws locally known as 'Parimal Bahini'.

Parimal was wanted in at least 20 murder cases, besides scores of other crimes including extortion and rape.

As the news of his death spread, hundreds of people came to Swarupkati police station to confirm it and to see his body.

People brought out a procession at Sawrupkathi upazila headquarters Friday evening to rejoice Parimal's death.

The body was handed over to his cousin Sukesh Sikder at Dumuria village in Banaripara upazila on Wednesday night. Neither his wife nor his son came to receive the body.

The body was cremated at Dumuria village in presence of police. But none of his family members was present.

The autopsy report said Parimal died of heart attack. Parimal Sikdar, son of Hemonto Sikdar of Dumuria village in Banaripara upzila, passed the S.S.C examination in 1984 and was admitted

to Kuriana College. He then came in touch with the Sarbahara Kamrul Group. He was involved in the murder of Union Parishad chairman Somiron Biswas, Sukesh Roy and Somiron Sikder, Sukesh Gain, Ripon Talukder, businessman Shamsul Huq and many others. He was known as a 'butcher' in the party.

Akramul Islam Babul, chairman of Shohagdal Union Parishad in Swarupkati said, people became happy after the death of Parimal but are also anxious about probable revenge from his followers.

His brother Bimal Sikder and close associate Sudhir Biswas, both accused in many cases, may lead the gang now, he added.

Poor guava cultivators in the region were the main victims of Parimon's extortion. They now apprehend retaliation by his followers.

Shahjahan Sheikh, Officer-in-Charge of Swarupkati police station also admitted that the local people are afraid of retaliation.

Police have been deployed in the region to track down Bimal Sikder and other followers of Parimal, he said.

Pirojpur Police Superintendent Abdullah Al Azad Chowdhury said, on the basis of a secret information, plain-clothes police were deployed in

Swarupkati four days before he was netted.

After confirmation of Parimal's presence in Atghar Kuriana union in Swarupkati, Joint Forces under the command of ASP Saifullah and Swarupkati OC cordoned Parimal's gang at a guava garden in Kuturikati village on Tuesday.

After an exchange of about 100 shots amid a downpour, Parimal's gang retreat. Police caught Parimal, injured in the right knee, along with a pipe gun.

ASIs Md Faruk and Abu Taher and constable Habibur Rahman were also bullet-hit.

He was sent to Swarupkati upazila health complex, where he died from excessive bleeding after eight hours.

Parimal's associates Krishna Samadder alias Kala Krishna, Paritosh Mistri alias Kalinga, Moni Baral, Manotosh Shil, Udit Baral, Prodip Baral, Moni Baroi were with him but they managed escape. Police believe that some of them were injured in gunfight.



PHOOT:STAR

Thousands of people crowded outside the Swarupkathi thana on Wednesday hearing the news of the death of terrorist Parimol (inset)

2 including 'headman' killed, 3 abducted in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Two persons including a headman were killed and three others abducted in Bilaichhari upazila and Longdu upazila in two days, police said.

In the first incident on Wednesday, unknown assailants beat and chopped to death Shukurchhari mouza chief (headman)

Aung Kla Tanchangya, 50, at his Gobachhara village home in Farua union of Bilaichhari upazila.

The victim's 100-year-old mother Nattayamohi Tanchangya sustained severe injuries while protecting her son from the clutch of attackers. Now she is undergoing treatment at a local army health centre.

About 15 unidentified attackers attacked Aung Kla after blaming him as army's close associate, according to victim's family sources.

Later, they abducted three poor

bamboo vendors of the village, Dilip Kumar Chakma, 40, Boli Tanchangya, 30, and Sangram Marma, 32, before fleeing.

However, the motive behind the abduction is yet to be known.

In another incident on Thursday, a boatman was killed at Anwartila over a trifle incident in Bhaibunchhara area of Longdu upazila.

The victim is Mohammed Belal Hossain, 47.

He came under attack when he came forward to resolve a quarrel between his assistant Ilias and neighbor Sabuj over lending Tk 100 only, according to police.

Sabuj, his mother Paruli Begum and their accomplice Khalek beat Belal and left him seriously injured. Belal died on the way to local upazila health complex, family sources said.

Police arrested Khalek following filing of a murder case with Longdu

police station by Bral's wife Marzina Khatun.

Autopsy of the body was completed in the district morgue on Friday.

Girl rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

Eleven year-old girl Sabina Yasmin Helena, who was abducted on August 2, was rescued on Friday.

Police said, Helena, daughter of Bablur Rahman Babu of Godkhali village in Kalaroa and a student of class five at Kalaroa Government Primary School, was abducted allegedly by Tutul, 22, son of Nazrul Islam of Tujalpur village in the Sadar upazila while she was going to school.

Tipped-off, police recovered her from Tujalpour village but the alleged abductor escaped.

A good start for grassroots democracy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

It was a unique day for the people in Khalinagar, a remote village in Tala upazila. They had a day-long open Union Parishad 'budget session' yesterday.

It was held at the training center of a local NGO at Mobarakpur in Tala.

Khalinagar UP Chairman Pranab Ghosh Bablu presided over the function while Tala Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mostafizur Rahman was the chief guest.

Presenting the UP's budget of Tk 17,09,600 for fiscal 2004-5, Pranab Ghosh said this will be spent for infrastructure development and poverty alleviation.

Sources said about 64 per cent of a population of 28,415 in the union are ultra poor.

Tala thana Officer-in-Charge Mashur Rahman and Sathkira Chitra Editor Anisur Rahim also spoke on the occasion.

Enthusiastic people from all classes attended the meeting and asked various questions to the UP chairman on how the budget would be spent. The UP chairman replied to questions.

Sakhira ZISAS chief sent to jail for 'cheating'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

The president of Sathkira district unit of Zia Samajik and Sangkritik Sangathan (ZISAS), a front organization of the ruling BNP, was sent to jail yesterday for alleged cheating.

Nazmul Islam Khan Chowdhury surrendered before the District and Session Judge's court for bail in a case filed against him for taking Tk one lakh from advocate S M Ataur Rahman with a promise to sell land. Bu he neither gave the land nor returned the money.

Advocate Ataur Rahman had filed a case with a Magistrate's court at Sathkira.

The accused had appealed to the High Court for bail but it directed him to appear before the District and Session Judge's court. Nazmul is also a prospective ward commissioner candidate in the ensuing Sathkira pourasabha polls, party sources said.

Cop killed in road mishap

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Police Sub-inspector Md Joynal Abedin official was killed in a road accident on the Dhaka-Sylhet Highway near Chanduray yesterday.

A team of armed patrol police headed by Joynal Abedin was on duty on the highway from Shahbajpur bridge to Budumty bus station in Sadar upazila, according to police.

At one stage Joynal got down from the police pick-up van at the spot when a speeding truck heading towards Sylhet knocked him down and crushed under its wheels.

He died at Brahmanbaria hospital.

The body was sent to his native village at Chauddagram in Comilla after Namaj-e-Janaza at Brahmanbaria police line.

However, the truck driver and helper managed to escape.

'ILLEGAL' APPOINTMENT OF TEACHERS CUTA strike today

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong University Teachers' Association (CUTA) at a meeting yesterday called upon all teachers to abstain from taking classes today in protest against the university authorities' reaction to its statement made at a press conference on August 3.

However, the Jamaat-e-Islami backed White Panel of teachers urged the CUTA to postpone the work abstention decision.

The CUTA leaders at its August 3 a press conference had alleged that corruption and irregularities were going on in appointment of teachers.

The leaders had claimed that the university authorities appointed 54 teachers without any newspaper advertisement in the last two years, which is violation of Section 11 (4) of the CU Act of 1973.

They further alleged that the Vice-chancellor was trying to promote a Jamaat-backed teacher of Geography Department, violating rules.

They vowed to go to court to challenge the "irregular appointments".

A day after the press conference, the CU authorities in a statement rejected

the CUTA allegations and said that all the appointments were made lawfully. The statement also criticized the CUTA for its "false" allegations.

Meanwhile, the Chittagong University Officers and Employees Alliance Council (CUOEC) postponed its two-day strike on August 16 and 17 after a fruitful meeting with Vice Chancellor Prof AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury on Thursday.

At the meeting, the VC assured the Alliance Council leaders to examine their 11-point demand and to place it before the next Syndicate meeting on August 18 for consideration.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was also signed between the VC and the Alliance Council at the meeting.

However, talking to this correspondent, the Alliance Council leaders threatened a two-day strike on August 25 and 26 if their demands are not met.

The demands include officers and employees' representation in the Senate and Syndicate and fixation of retirement age at 65.

Security tightened at Syedpur airport

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Security has been tightened at Syedpur airport as in other air ports of the country following Tuesday's threat by an anonymous caller to blow up an Airbus at Sylhet MAG Osmani Airport.

Civil Aviation sources here said yesterday the number of passengers using the Suedpur airport has been reduced by about half following the threat.

Strict security measures have been taken at the entrance and in the airport area including the runway. Luggage, vehicles and passengers are checked with metal detectors, they said.

Ten policemen and 23 security men maintained security at the airport earlier. The numbers have been dou-

bled, they said.

The security men maintain vigil round the clock. Trespass of the runway by nearby villagers have been stopped.

The Nilphamari Police Superintendent, when asked said he is in constant touch with the airport police.

A source at Syedpur thana said police presence at the airport requires accommodation for them there, which is now absent. The matter has been brought to the notice of the civil aviation authorities, they said.



PHOTO:STAR

Former defence secretary M Idris Ali along with local Awami League leaders Abdul Karim Bepari and Jaglul Halder distributing relief among flood affected people in Tongibari. They distributed 30,000 kilograms of rice so far in Tongibari and Munshiganj upazilas with cooperation from local units of AL, Chhatra League, Sramik League and Sheekhasevak League.

Boat capsizes in Titas: One drowns

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

On person drowned and 10 others were rescued when an engine boat capsizes in the Titas river here on Thursday.

The dead victim is Hawa Mia, 65, of Ramnadi village in Palash upazila, Narsingdi.

The boat loaded with 30 passengers sailed for Karampur Kalla Sheed Mazar in Akhaura upazila, according to police and eye-witnesses. The boat capsized due to foul weather and strong current of the river. All the passengers fell down the river. One of them drowned and 10 others were rescued by fishermen and Brahmanbaria Sadar police. The boats rushed there after getting information. The body of Hawa Mia was also recovered.

Rest others swam ashore.

Some passengers were admitted to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital. The condition of Sultan Mia, 37, son of Yonus Mia of Ramnandi village, Firuz, 38, of the same area, Tanjina, 19, wife Misa Mia of Shuhilpur village in Brahmanbaria and Shahnaj Begum, 35, wife of Anwar Hussain of Ramdhani Nagur in Akhaura upazila was stated to be

6x3