

Teesta Barrage inoperative for fall in water level

Unilateral withdrawal of water by India blamed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Because of unilateral withdrawal of water by India, the Teesta has virtually turned into a narrow channel.

Usually India opens all gates of Gozaloba barrage at the upstream of the Teesta in the rainy season.

However, the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) did not take any initiative to excavate the rivers for smooth flow of water.

A source in the BWDB told The Daily Star, there are eight rivers in the district, according to their official list. The rivers are as follows: the Teesta, the Charalkata, the Deunai, the Buri Khora, the Buri Teesta, the Jamuneswari, the Kharkharia and the Dhajjan.

In the ongoing boro season, farmers set up shallow ponds at 5-8 feet deep from the ground level because the underground water level has gone down sharply.

Even a few years back, all the rivers flowed with violent current and had good navigability.



Boro seedbeds are seen in the riverbed of the Jamuneswari at Singdai village in Sadar upazila, Nilphamari. Most of the riverbeds in the district have dried up due to unilateral withdrawal of water by India.

Because of the phenomenon, normal production of fish is also hampered. As a result, many fish species have become extinct due to lack of breeding ground.

Many 'ferry ghats' also became

useless owing to want of water.

Now farmers cultivate paddy in the dried up riverbed. While visiting a few rivers, this correspondent found that many farmers had prepared seed beds in the riverbeds.

cultivation because of siltation.

In many places influential people of the surrounding villages illegally occupied the riverbeds, filled them with earth and made plain lands.

The riverbeds also rose due to siltation gathered for years together.

Move to resist piracy in Sundarbans

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Fishermen in the Sundarbans formed a resistance committee to stop piracy and criminal activities on December 30 last year.

Over 300 fishermen of Dublarchar also agreed to extend their cooperation to the new committee.

A 10-member resistance committee is being headed by freedom fighter Nazrul Islam of Swarankhola upazila in Bagerhat district.

Fishermen in the Sundarbans and coastal belts are provided with clubs and other logistic support to resist criminal activities, according to Nazrul Islam.

A meeting of Bagerhat district law and order committee was held on Sunday. Bagerhat Deputy Commissioner (DC) Md Moinuddin was in the chair while it was attended, among others, by Whip Ashraf Hossain and Bagerhat district BNP President MAH Selim MP.

Mongla Poursabha Chairman Molla Abdul Jalil told The Daily Star several gangs of pirates are being patronised and supported allegedly by men in the ruling party. At least five fishermen and Bawalis were killed in last three months for not paying ransom, according to Mongla Poursabha chairman.

Teenage girl killed after gangrape

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

A teenage girl was killed after being gangraped at Atiabari village in Islampur upazila, Jamalpur on Wednesday.

Police recovered her body from the bank of a pond of Abdus Sattar Master at the same village on Thursday.

The dead victim is Momena Akhter Khatun, daughter of Mokor Ali.

According to police and local people, Momena was working as a domestic help at the house of Abdus Sattar Master for a long time.

On the fateful night, Momena was allegedly abducted by a group of miscreants while she was returning home from day's work. Miscreants took her to a nearby bush and raped her one by one.

Then the rapists strangled her and left the body at the bank of Abdus Sattar's pond. On information police rushed to the spot and recovered the body fully naked.

The victim's mother filed a murder case with Islampur Police Station. None was arrested.

DAM DAMAGED DURING FLOOD

Mymensingh, Sherpur may miss boro cultivation

Repair work of Nalitabari-Nakugao road begins

JAHANGIR ALAM, back from Sherpur

NETRAKONA: Paddy farming on hundreds of acres of lands in three upazilas of Mymensingh and Sherpur is threatened as a dam in Sherpur is yet to be repaired.

The Bhogai River Erosion Protection Dam was damaged due to the erosion in last year's flood. As a result, hundreds of acres of aman crops were damaged. A vast tract of cultivable lands also turned uncultivable.

However, repair work of the Nalitabari-Nakugao Road began anew following publication of a story in The Daily Star on December 29.

The road is being repaired under a Food For Work (FFW) project at a cost of Tk 4.75 lakh.

The important road was damaged due to erosion by the Bhogai in last year's flood.

According to local people, the road repairing work would be fruitless if repair work of the river erosion protection dam is not done. 'Because the Bhogai will certainly damage the road again in the coming rainy season,' locals told this correspondent.

When contacted with local lawmaker Jahed Ali Chowdhury MP, he told The Daily Star that the Local Government Engineering

Department (LGED), Sherpur had submitted a project proposal to the higher authorities to repair the Bhogai River Erosion Protection Dam. He expects the project to be sanctioned in near future.

Mohammad Jamal Hossain, Executive Engineer of Sherpur LGED told this correspondent although a project proposal was submitted to the office of the Chief Engineer of the LGED, the proposal is yet to be approved.

Although repair work of the Nalitabari-Nakugao Road is going on it will not last unless the dam is repaired, Jamal Hossain added.

Ashraf Haque, Upazila Engineer of Nalitabari upazila told this correspondent, a project proposal of Tk 4.75 crore was submitted to the higher authorities but to no effect. He said if the dam is not repaired this year, boro and aman crops of Nalitabari upazila in Sherpur district, Fulpur and Haluaghat upazilas in Mymensingh district will be damaged by floodwaters next year.

According to Yunus Ali Chairman of Nayabil Union, the farmers of Nalitabari upazila did not get aman crops last year due to damage in the protection dam. Hundreds of farmers' families have already turned pauper.

According to local people, farm-

ers of three upazilas will incur a huge loss and cultivable lands in three upazilas will be uncultivable if the aforesaid dam remains damaged.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Dr Abdul Gafur, an eminent social worker and father of The Bangladesh Observer correspondent Md Nurul Islam died at his Dhitpur village home in Bhuluka upazila on Monday.

Hewas 85. Dr Gafur was suffering from old age complications for a long time. He was buried at his family graveyard after a 'namaz-e-janaza' held at his home on the day he left behind five sons, a daughter and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Mymensingh Press Club, Reporters' Unity, Sangbadik Samity and other associations of journalists condoled the death. Representatives of the organisations expressed their sympathy to the bereaved family members. They also prayed for peace of the departed soul.

A 'qulhwani' will be held at this village home on January 6. Relatives, friends and his well-wishers are requested to attend the 'qulhwani'.

Advertisement for 'শিক্ষা বোর্ড কম্পিউটার কেন্দ্র' (Education Board Computer Center) featuring a table with exam results and details for various centers.

Advertisement for 'SNAPS Crocodile of Khanjahan Ali's (RA) mazar injured'.

GRAINS MISAPPROPRIATION Stock-taking of Jhenidah Sadar silo yet to start

HOSSAIN SERAJ, back from Jhenidah

Five government silos remained closed for the last three days.

This is because of alleged misappropriation of foodgrains from the Sadar silo.

However, the stock-taking of the Local Supply Depot (LSD) which was supposed to begin yesterday is yet to start.

At least 50 labourers of the LSDs became jobless due to closure of the silos.

Meanwhile, a three-member probe committee formed by the District Food Controller (DFC), Jhenidah started an investigation into the alleged misappropriation, but the report is yet to be submitted.

A member of the probe body told The Daily Star, 'We shall submit the investigation report within a day or two'.

Five LSDs in Jhenidah district were sealed off as per the directive of the Zonal Food Controller following submission of a written complaint by the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Jhenidah Sadar LSD. Twenty metric tons of foodgrains were misappropriated when former OC, LSD Abu

Jahangir was in-charge of the LSD. Jahangir was transferred to Maheshpur LSD recently. He was replaced by Rafiqul Alam.

The story of alleged misappropriation came to light after the transfer of Jahangir, according to officials.

About 1,303 metric tons of rice and 155 metric tons of wheat were stored in Jhenidah LSDs.

CPA land grabbers fined Tk 25,000

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) on Wednesday obtained an amount of Tk 25,000 as fine from land grabbers.

The amount was realised following conclusion of an eviction drive led by CPA magistrate Munir Chowdhury in Gosaidanga area, about half a kilometre off the port.

About 3,000 square feet of land were recovered from land grabbers during the drive.

Many pucca and semi-pucca structures were demolished from the bank of Gosaidanga canal. Illegal land grabbers occupied CPA lands on both sides of the canal and constructed unauthorised structures resulting in reduction in navigability of the canal.

Advertisement for Eastern Refinery Limited, a subsidiary of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation, located in Chittagong.

Advertisement for 'Invitation for Tenders' for the supply of 1000 metric tons of cold rolled steel coils, issued by Eastern Refinery Limited.

Advertisement for 'রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়' (Rajshahi University) regarding the 1st anniversary of the 2008-2009 academic year.

Advertisement for 'দৈনিক/শিফট ভিত্তিতে স্ক্যানিং, এডিটিং ও সার্টিং কাজে লোক নিয়োগের বিজ্ঞপ্তি' (Daily/Shift based scanning, editing and certifying work recruitment notice).