

5 JMB suspects arrested in Satkhira, Narail

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Three JMB suspects have been arrested yesterday and the night before, two of them in Bhomra land port and the other in Khulna.

Our Satkhira Correspondent reports:

Police yesterday arrested two suspected members of JMB (Jama'atul Mujahidin, Bangladesh) while they were fleeing to India through Bhomra land port by using fake passports and visas.

They are mamun, 26, of Madhabpur village in Enayetpur

upazila in Sirajgonj district and Elias, 30, of South Dhobapara in Narayanganj Sadar upazila.

Police said, their fake passports and visas were detected when Bhomra immigration officials checked those on suspicion. They were handed over to police, who are interrogating them.

On contact, Satkhira Sadar thana Officer-in-Charge (OC) Shahjahan confirmed the incident and said the arrested persons may members of JMB. They were fleeing the country to avoid arrest, he said. A case was filed.

Our Staff Correspondent reports from Khulna

Police arrested Mohammed Nawsher Shaikh, 65, Saturday night from a house in Bashvita village under Narail Sadar upazila. The arrestee is a JMB cadre, police claimed. Nawsher hails from Araji Selimpur village in Bagharpara upazila in Jessore district, police said.

Nawsher Shaikh was staying in the house of one Mongol Malakar in the guise of a Hindu priest since Friday night.

When suspected, police being tipped off raided the house and arrested him.

He is being interrogated by police, said OC Ishaque of Narail Sadar thana.

In another incident, police arrested two JMB suspects from Bagerhat town on Saturday night. They are Mamun Sarder and his father Ashraf Sarder.

Ashraf Sarder is organising secretary of Bagerhat district unit of Ahle Hadith Andolan while his son Mamun is a leader of its youth front, police said.

Police said they got concrete information that the two were involved in militancy, particularly giving training to recruits on how to detonate bombs.



PHOTO: STAR

JMB suspects Mamun and Elias arrested at Bhomra land port yesterday.

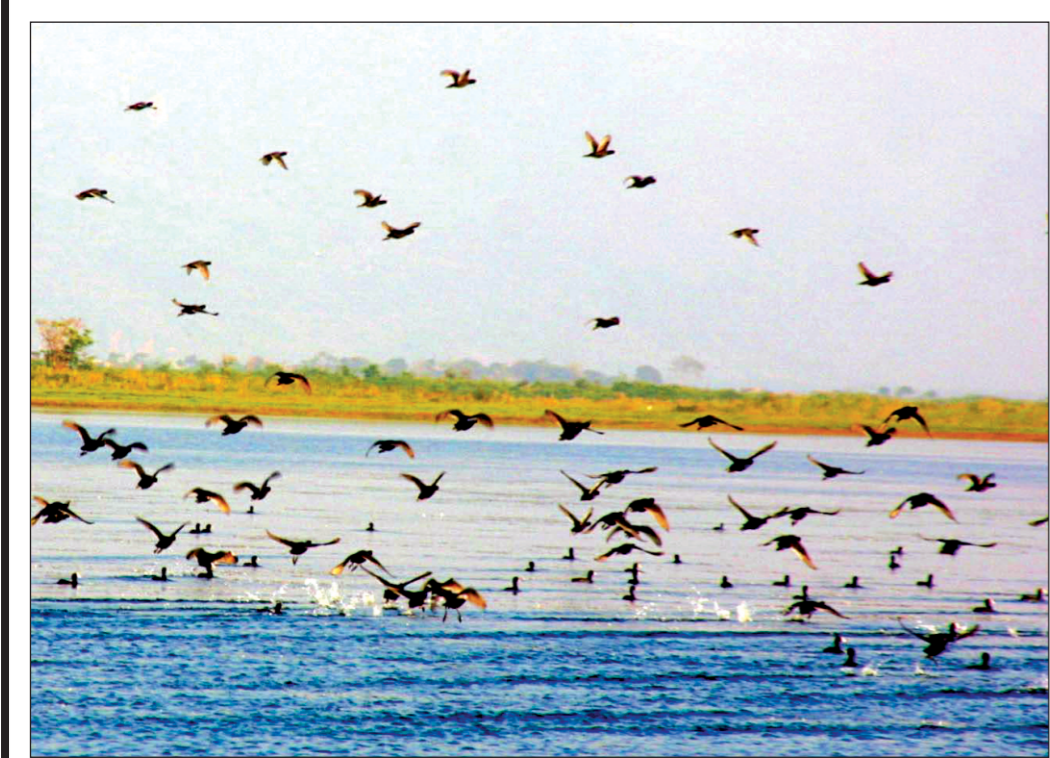


PHOTO: STAR

Guest birds chirping on calm waters of Hakaluki Haor in Moulvibazar.

Guest birds bring delight, fear

No steps yet to create awareness about bird flu

RAJAT KANTI GOSWAMI,
Moulvibazar

Numerous guest birds have flocked to Hakaluki Haor, the biggest lake in the country and other water bodies in greater Sylhet, creating a mixed feeling of delight and fear among people.

Guest birds may carry the deadly virus of Avian Influenza, commonly known as 'bird flu', experts say. But there is no move in the administrations in Sylhet and Mounvibazar to face it.

Hakaluki Haor (water body) is spread over Sylhet and Moulvibazar districts. Six upazilas of Sylhet and Moulvibazar are adjacent to this Haor, which covers 18115 hectares of land in Fenchuganj, Beanibazar and Golapganj upazilas in Sylhet district and Baralekha, Juri and

Kulaura upazilas in Moulvibazar district. Of the total, 70 percent of the water body is in Moulvibazar and rest 30 percent is in Sylhet.

Every winter, tens of thousands of guest birds of about 150 species from Siberian and other cold regions flock to the haors. They include Bright and Rose King-duck, Pati-duck, Bali Hash, Lenja, Chity, Sorali, Boikal, Nilshir Piyan, Pantamukhi, Pankouri, Buti-duck, China, Rangamuri, Black-duck, Peributhi, Chokachoki, Garia, Khonjona, Patari, Dolpi, Waterhen, North-Giria, Dahuk, Patibatana, Common-chill, Cotton-Chill, Gergini, Cottontail, Pintail, T o u g h e d D u c k . This correspondent visited the Kulaura portion of the Hakaluki haor and found that local people are not aware about bird flu. Neither the government or NGOs

have launched any awareness campaign, the local people said.

Sirajuddin Ahmed Badshah, chairman of Bhukshimol Union Parishad on the bank of Hakaluki Haor said he is anxious since the birds started arriving with the advent of winter.

The birds arrive at a time when fishermen also go for fishing in large numbers.

MM Shaheen MP, elected from Kulaura (Moulvibazar-2) constituency, when contacted said he requested the government to launch an awareness campaign.

Moulvibazar Deputy Commissioner Md Eunusur Rahman said the department concerned has no equipment to detect and test the deadly virus. He said the issue has been discussed and steps will be taken to create awareness.



A classroom (left) at Lyceum International English School at remote Singra village in Magura and Khondokar Mahbubur Rahman taking his students to school.

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

Night guard Mahbub's noble dream has finally come true. An English medium school set up by him in a remote village 17 kilometres from Magura town has earned reputation. Guardians are now eager to send their children to Lyceum International English School at Singra village in Shaikha upazila in the district. But it can not accommodate more than 128 now from play group to class five.

Besides, the student-teacher ratio must be appropriate to ensure quality education and healthy atmosphere, he says. There are 12 teachers including Mahbub, who is the headmaster. The rest 11 are women.

"Local people's worries are over now because they do not think to run to district or upazila headquarters to ensure good education for their children.

A night guard turns vanguard

Mahbub's English medium school in a remote village earns reputation

"Lyceum International School is providing the facility in an area where most of the people are poor farmers", local Union Parishad Chairman told this correspondent during a visit.

Rakib Uddin Ahmed, a guardian of a student said, "The school provides our children with good education as founder-headmaster Mahbub is very and devoted."

Khondokar Mahbubur Rahman, 40, is the son of late Golam Mawla of Shablat village in Shaikha upazila.

After appearing at BA examination in 1989 from Kamar Khali College in Faridpur, Mahbub started

his career as a teacher in Al-Rabeta Cadet Mission in Chachra in Jessore district. He lost his job centring a dispute among its directors. He then thought of establishing a good school.

In the mean time, Mahbub was forced to take the job of a night guard at Singra bazaar due to poverty.

In 2000, with the cooperation of Abul Bashir, Lecturer at Shaheed Serajuddin Hossain College, and his small savings, Mahbub hired a room at Dhaneswargati Union Parishad office and started grooming up some children.

"After about four years' efforts, I purchased six decimal land on the western side of Singra-Thoipara road and erected a two-room tinshed house with bamboo fence", Mahbub said.

The distinctive feature is that Mahbub himself drives a nasim (shallow engine-driven autotempo) to bring students to school by 9-00 am and to get them back home after classes are over at 3-00 pm.

Not only that, Independence Day, International Mother Language Day, Victory Day, Pahela Baisakh (1st day of Bengali year) and such other national occasions are

observed at the school with great enthusiasm.

Overcoming the distance of age, Mahbub is very friendly with students, who are also fond of him. Names of all the students is in his memory.

"I was deprived of good education. I want that all children in my area get the chance of good education."

"I will expand the school and bring a highly qualified headmaster", a generous Mahbub further said.

Protests against JMB bombings continue

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The 14-party alliance led by Awami League yesterday brought out processions in district headquarters across the country to protest continued bombings by JMB and government's alleged failure to ensure security of people's life.

At several districts, the processions were intercepted by police when the demonstrators tried to besiege Deputy Commissioners' office as part of a countrywide programme announced by the alliance earlier.

The demonstrators chanted slogans demanding resignation of the government.

In Rajshahi, Udichi Shilpi Gosthi staged a token hunger strike in front of Rabindra Arts Building on Rajshahi University campus protesting. JMB bomb attacks in Netrakona, our RU Correspondent reported. Udichi activists and workers wore black badges and hoisted black flags atop the RUCSU building. Our Gaibandha Correspondent

reports: The 14-party alliance in Gaibandha staged a sit-in in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office yesterday protesting bomb attacks by JMB.

Earlier, they brought out a procession and held a rally in front of the DC's office, which was addressed by district leaders of Awami League, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), NAP (National Awami Party) and Gano Forum.

Our Manikganj Correspondent reports: The 14-Party alliance brought out a procession in the district town and held a rally in front of Manikganj Press Club protesting the bomb attack across the country and demanding resignation of the 'failed' government.

The rally was addressed by local leaders of component parties of the alliance.

They said the BNP-Jamat government should resign before the situation goes out of its control because it failed to stop bomb attacks by Islamist militants.

Bombings aimed at foiling polls: Jalil

A CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil yesterday reiterated his party's demand for resignation of the government for sheltering perpetrators of bomb attacks in the country.

A coalition partner in the ruling alliance is the mastermind behind the bombings and other acts of violence by JMB. Their design is to create a chaotic situation to that the next parliamentary election is not held, he said while addressing a council of Khagrachhari district Awami League yesterday.

Held at a community centre in the hill town, it was also addressed by AL leaders Bir Bahadur MP, Dipannker Talukder, Ataur Rahman

and Kalparanjan Chakma. District AL President Jatindra Lal Tripura was in the chair. The council was held after 11 years.

Jalil said the evil forces defeated in 1971 have raised their ugly heads again under the protection of BNP. They are out to undo democracy and gains from the Liberation War.

He urged the people and opposition activists to resist the anti-liberation forces to strengthen democracy and protect people's interest.

At least 10 Awami League activists were injured when BNP men attacked their procession at Shapla Chatter in the town while they were going to attend the council, AL leaders claimed.

Way to ward off shrimp virus

New technology increases yield five to seven times in Satkhira

ABU AHMED, Satkhira

A newly introduced technology for virus-free shrimp cultivation may increase yield of the second largest export earner by five to seven times.

The new environment-friendly system is also easier than the traditional method used in the district earlier.

Cultivation of virus-free fry and application of 'Modified Traditional Technology' and 'Close System' have brought the success. The new method has been initiated by the Shrimp Seal of Quality (SSOQ), a USAID-funded project being implemented by the Agro Based Industry and Technology Development Program (ATDP) under the Ministry of Agriculture.

Production per hectare in the new method is around 1.8 tons, said Zakir Hossain a SSOQ expert, which is providing technical support to farmers.

The new technology is very important for Bangladesh as this is being followed by most of the shrimp exporting countries and buyers also want virus-free shrimp, he added.

In the new system, shrimp is cultivated in closed pond water. It ensures environment-friendly cultivation by saving trees, paddy fields and other fish species around the pond intact, he said.

Like many in Satkhira and some others south-western districts, disabled Mohinur Islam Sardar had abandoned shrimp farming after incurring heavy losses in consecutive years. He is now back to the profession with a renewed energy.

He achieved a tremendous success by cultivating virus-free shrimp using the new technology provided by SSOQ. He released 54000 virus-free fries in a four-bigha (132 decimal) pond and produced 1362 kilograms of shrimp in two crops this year.

He sold those at Tk 5,28, 000 and earned a net profit of Tk 3,26,940, he told this correspondent during a visit on Friday.

"In the traditional system, I got only 97 kg shrimps in the four- bigha

pond last year because of virus infection", said 39 year-old Mohinur of Gava village in the Sadar upazila.

Mohinur, while studying in Dhaka University, lost his right leg in a road accident seven years ago and became physically retarded. He came back home without completing the honours course due to poverty.

But he was undaunted. He started shrimp cultivation in the

"Now a lot of shrimp farmers have become interested to cultivate shrimp again. But it's risky to get success in the initial stage without SSOQ technical assistance", he said.

But Mohinur is worried because the ATDP-SSOQ project will end this month. The technical assistance is essential for training farmers who are thinking to introduce the new system, he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Physically challenged Mohinur Islam with virus-free shrimps in front of his farm at Gava village in Satkhira Sadar upazila.

pond with the assistant of his wife. Like many in the district, Mohinur had become loan defaulter due to losses from cultivating shrimp.

He success now draws officials to his project and also encourages others.

The water of the pond has to be replaced after certain periods, which needs a reservoir.

"But the cost of shrimp feed in the new system is higher than that in the traditional system because it is imported from Thailand. The SSOQ technology is profitable and very much suitable for Bangladesh, he said.

"At least 345 shrimp farmers in south-western coastal region covering Satkhira, Bagherhat and Khulna districts are now using SSOQ technology and most of them have achieved success", said Zakir Hossain, a member of SSOQ team.

Local shrimp cultivators have urged the authorities to take steps so that the program (ATDP) continues in the interest of the shrimp sector.

1000 families homeless in 3 months

Unabated erosion by Brahmaputra in Gaibandha

REZAUL HOQ, Gaibandha

Mollarchar, a shoal area in Brahmaputra which sheltered a large number of freedom fighters remaining free from occupation by Pakistani troops during the Liberation War, is disappearing into the river.

The union in the Sadar upazila covering six villages was a bastion of freedom fighters who conducted operations in different areas of Gaibandha district from there. But Brahmaputra has devoured almost one third of the area in last three months, rendering over 1000 families homeless. More 100 families are counting days and planning to shift elsewhere as erosion is unabated, local people told this correspondent on Thursday.

five years back, it accentuated during the last wet season.

The six villages in the mid-stream of Brahmaputra are Sidhai, Kazirchar, Mollarchar, Chilimpara, Mowlavirchar and Chithulia Digor.

The river has devoured vast areas of cultivable lands, houses, schools, madrasas and other structures.

Once the population of this union was nearly 25,000, which came down to roughly 12,000 in last ten years due to erosion. Local people said 982 families lost homes during floods this year and they left the area.

Over 80 percent of its people are ultra-poor. They have no option other than working as day labourers.

Only two percent people of Mollarchar are land owners, who have occupied most of the accrued

lands either by muscle power or fake deeds, local people alleged.

Earlier, there were six government primary schools, five non-government schools, three madrasas and one high school in the union. Many of the schools have been shifted to different places due to erosion. To the utter disappointment of local people, primary school teachers posted there do not attend schools regularly. They go to schools once or twice a month and engage local youths in exchange of Tk 500 to Tk 700 per month, the local people alleged.

The education system is on the verge of collapse, said Sajeda Begum, women member of Mollarchar Union Parishad.

Another UP member Hafizur Rahman said everyday the number of destitute people is increasing due

to erosion. "We could not provide adequate help in time of need for want of assistance from the district administration", he said.

"I am also a victim of erosion and have taken shelter at Gaibandha Sadar after losing my homestead and cultivable land", said Mollarchar UP Chairman Saidur Rahman. "I have a small shelter at Chithulia Digor from where I conduct official activities", he said.

The government's Shoal Livelihood Programme (CLP) for self-employment has not yet been introduced in the area, said Nirmal Chandra, Programme Manager GUK.



PHOTO: STAR

Erosion by Brahmaputra devouring homesteads in Mollarchar in Gaibandha Sadar upazila.

Bomb found at Patuakhali govt school

OUR CORRESPONDENT Patuakhali

A bomb was found from near the boundary wall of Patuakhali Government Girls' High School yesterday.

Police and school authorities said, some local people saw the bomb wrapped in red tape. Being informed, police took it to the Sadar thana and defused it.

On Saturday, another bomb was found near a telephone cable box in front of the Sadar land records office.

Academic activities continued normally at the school although the teachers, students and their became scared.

When asked, the headmistress said she will request police to ensure security in the school.