

RECOVERY OF SHYAMASUNDARI CANAL LANDS

Rangpur town dwellers allege unfair eviction drive

RAFIQUE SARKER, Rangpur

Rangpur town dwellers have expressed resentment over alleged nepotism and partiality in eviction and demolition of illegal structures on either sides of Shyamasundari canal.

The municipality authority, with the help of joint forces and led by a magistrate, Sunday launched the drive to remove illegal structures on either sides of the canal to recover the grabbed lands.

Earlier, the municipality served eviction notice on the owners of 240 illegal structures.

The recipients of the notice were asked to remove their illegal structures in 10 days saying, in case of failure, the municipality authority itself would dismantle it.

A number of dwellers alleged that the municipality did not serve notice on a few land grabbers who built concrete structures on the land of the canal.

Mohammad Salim of Pashari Para said, two thatched rooms were dismantled whereas three buildings on the northern side of the canal remained untouched.

The owners of these buildings are very influential, he said adding, that is why they did not serve them with eviction notice.

When asked, the chairman of the municipality said, 'The allegation is baseless and ridiculous. The eviction drive is being carried out completely impartially and neutrally.'

He said, those who lost their structures in the ongoing drive feel aggrieved, so they might complain.

Magistrate Moniruzzaman who led the eviction drive told this correspondent that the lands on the banks of the canal belong to the municipality. So, it was duty of the municipality authority to recover them, he added.

The eviction drive is being carried out as per instruction of the municipal authority and structures

demolished accordingly, he said.

An official of the joint force on condition of anonymity assured that no illegal structure, even if of the municipal chairman on the land of the canal, would be spared.

He said, 'We are closely observing the activities of the municipality.'

Shyamasundari canal is the main outlet for drainage of Rangpur town. All drains and sub-canals from different areas of the town have been connected with it for easy drainage.

It is historical as well. The then Zaminder Raja Janoki Bollov exca-

vated the 16 km long and 50 feet wide canal and named it after his mother in 1890.

He did it at the suggestion of physicians who pointed out that malaria, diarrhoea, cholera and pox broke out frequently in the epidemic form due to lack of proper drainage system in Rangpur town.

But the canal was not repaired for over hundred years. With the advance of time, some people occupied its land, filled it and then built structures of different kinds. As a result, the drainage system of the

town totally collapsed posing health hazard to the dwellers.

Environmentalists, civil society, and elite of Rangpur on different occasions urged the authorities concerned to excavate the canal.

Due to financial constraints, Rangpur municipality could not repair the canal. Finally, RDRS and CARE Bangladesh came forward to extend their support.

A programme has been undertaken to start renovation of the canal. The eviction drive is part of this move.



PHOTO: STAR

Demolition of illegal structures occupying lands of Shyamasundari canal in Rangpur town goes on.

4 absconders held in Rangpur

BSS, Rangpur

Mithapukur police arrested four absconding convicts including three brothers from different places under the upazila in the district yesterday.

Police sources said Reazul Munshi, 35, son of Abdur Rashid of village Chuhai in the upazila was rounded up from his house yesterday morning.

He was sentenced to one year rigorous imprisonment in a criminal case and three warrants for arrests in connection with other criminal cases were issued against him under Mithapukur Police Station.

In a block raid, police picked up three brothers Ruhul Amin, 34, Reazul alias Ezazul 40, and Abdur Razzak, 36, sons of Pocha Mia of village Fulchouki in the same

upazila from their house yesterday morning.

They were fined Tk 5,000 each in default, to suffer one month imprisonment in a criminal case by a Rangpur court recently.

The arrested convicts were sent to jail hajat yesterday noon after Mithapukur police produced them before a Rangpur court, the sources said.

Expat's son, robber killed in Moulvibazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

An expatriate's son and an armed robber were killed and four others injured during a robbery committed at Sheoradiga village in Baralekha upazila Saturday night.

Baralekha police said, robbers numbering 10 to 15 entered the house of London expatriate Abdul Malik by breaking open the door at about 1 am.

They fastened the house owner, three sons and other members of the family with rope and looted 15 tolas of gold ornament, Tk 12,000 in cash, two cell phone sets and important documents from there.

When they were returning with the booty, the family members raised a hue and cry. On hearing their cries, neighbours rushed there to help the victims. At this stage, the robbers attacked the mob who also launched counter-attacks. As a result, one unidentified robber aged about 45 died on the spot while Oliur Rahman Amit, 21-year-old son of the house owner died on way to hospital.

The other injured are Abdul Malik, his wife Minara Begum and their British citizen grand daughters Amira Begum and Diba Begum.

Other robbers managed to

Rab seizes 271 fake notes in Rajshahi

BSS, Rajshahi

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) detained Santu of village Nandanpur under Puthia upazila of the district along with 271 fake notes of Tk 100 denomination on Saturday.

Rab said on the basis of an intelligence report, a team of the elite force conducted a sudden drive at the village and arrested Santu, son of Abdul Jabbar with the fake notes.

During interrogation Santu confessed that he was an active member of an organised criminal gang involved in manufacturing and marketing of fake notes.

In another operation conducted in Maskatadighi area under Motihari Police Station, another Rab team captured one drug-peddler identified as Ilash Hossain, 22, son of Rupban Mondal with 28 bottles of Phensidyl syrup.

Smuggled timber recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Detective Branch (DB) of police yesterday morning recovered Indian Gajari and Chapalish timber worth about Tk 20 lakh at Balughat point in the river Kongsha under bordering Durgapur upazila of the district.

Police said, on a tip-off police rushed to the spot and seized the two timbers loaded engine boats and arrested boat driver Nazrul Islam, 35.

Following his confession police recovered more Gajari and Chapalish timbers at three other points in the Kongsha.

Police said the dishonest timber traders smuggled the timbers from neighboring Meghalaya province of India.

A case was filed with Netrakona police.

The unsung language heroes of Magura

Posthumous honour demanded

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

Although because of their glorious movement February 21 is now being observed as the International Mother Language Day, the language veterans in Magura are still deprived of due respect.

They did a lot for the dignity of our mother tongue Bangla. Though none of them embraced martyrdom, they were tortured in various ways. Many of them were jailed during the movement in



Khan Ziaul Huq



Aminul Islam Chandu Mian



Late AKM Hamiduzzaman Ehiya

Late Abdus Salam should be ready to make supreme sacrifice for such national cause, he said.

Another language hero Aminul Islam Chandu Mian echoed the same sentiment and said 'Government should take a decision so that language heroes can get state-honour at least posthumously'. Though the language movement was launched in the capital city Dhaka, it spread to the then sub-divisional headquarters of Magura like wildfire.

At the very beginning of the language movement here, local student leaders along with general students of the then Islamic College (now the Government Hossain Shaheed Suhrawardy College) began movement for establishing Bangla as the state-language.

Afterwards, they took vigorous initiatives to take the movement to remote areas of the sub-

division.

Student leaders Nasirul Islam Abu Mian, Khan Ziaul Huq, Abdul Jalil Khan, Aminul Islam Chandu Mian and Azim Dewan mainly led the language movement at the sub-divisional headquarters. Khan Ziaul Huq and Aminul Islam Chandu Mian are still alive with their heavy hearts while two others have already passed away.

According to the language veterans, on February 21, 1952 Khan Ziaul Huq, Chandu Mian and some other leaders were picked up by police when they brought out a procession from Nomani maidan area and moved towards the Chourongi Square in the town.

Meanwhile, a student leader at Iqbal Hall of Dhaka University Mirza Shawkat Hossain came to Magura and held meetings at different educational institutions

and played a key role in motivating the general students to join the language movement.

Another student leader of Raicharan High School A K Hamiduzzaman Ehiya with the cordial cooperation of the then headmaster of Sreepur High School Abdur Rahim Joarder began to organise the students of different institutions in the then Sreepur thana. At that time Abdus Salam, Abdur Rashed, Ali Ahmed and Jitendranath Ghosh, among others, assisted Ehiya.

Language veterans recalled, on February 21 in 1952, various programmes including rally were held at the then sub-divisional headquarters under the leadership of Nasirul Islam Abu Mian while the students of Raicharan High School in Sreepur thana placed wreath at the Shaheed Minar after building it with bamboo.

3.5x3

2.5X2

5.5X3

3.5X2

9X3