

Mindless locals threaten Hakaluki bio-diversity

RAJAT KANTI GOSWAMI, Moulvibazar

Bio-diversity of Hakaluki haor is threatened as a section of people living around it are catching fish and drying it up by irrigating croplands.

The haor (water body) is los-

ing its fish resources and aquatic plants and trees of different species due to this mindless act.

Officials of the department of environment (DoE) seized 16 irrigation pumps and about two maunds of fishing nets from the haor in last two months, officials

said.

They said the haor is surrounded by vast government lands. Over the years, small water bodies in the haor silted up, turning those into cultivable lands which were recorded as khas lands. Portions of these

khas lands are leased on yearly terms.

Taking the advantage, local people have brought under cultivation other nearby lands also without lease.

On the other hand, marshes are leased out to fishermen, who dry up those during dry season with irrigation pumps for fishing.

Due to these unlawful activities, local species of fishes like 'koi', 'pabda', 'ruhi' and 'boal' are almost extinct in the vast water body.

Different varieties of aquatic trees and plants like 'hizal', 'tomal', 'korocho' 'murta' are also disappearing.

According to sources in DoE and fishery department, there are only 30 to 40 marshes in the haor against over 300 in the past. Many of them became silted over the years.

It was gathered that a section of fishermen introducing themselves as farmers have taken permission from the upazila administration to irrigate their croplands near in the haor.

DoE official at Kulaura in Moulvibazar district said fishing by drying up the marshes increased alarmingly in recent years though Hakaluki haor was declared an 'Ecologically Critical Area' (ECA).

Officials of DoE, upazila administration, fishery department and agriculture department visited different areas of the haor in recent days and found these allegations true. They also seized some water pumps and nets.

The haor will gradually die if fishing by drying up marshes and irrigation of croplands can not be stopped, officials said while talking to this correspondent.

Zahirul Alam, assistant commissioner (Land) in Baralekha upazila said, they allowed irrigation of croplands for Boro cultivation. Now, as the Boro cultivation season is almost over, permission for irrigation stands cancelled, he said.

'Corruption main obstacle to development, democracy'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Speakers at a views exchange meeting yesterday said corruption is the main obstacle to development and consolidation of democracy.

Politics must be freed from the clutches of musclemen and black money holders to remove corruption. Dedicated and honest people should come in politics, they said and called upon the civil society and the media to come forward to create a mass awareness in this regard.

The media can play a vital role to root out corruption by publishing objective news, they said.

The meeting on "Role of media and conscious citizens in creating social movement against corruption", jointly organised by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and Satkhira

SI held while taking bribe

A CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Joint forces yesterday arrested a police sub-inspector while he was allegedly taking bribe in Moheshpur in Jhenidah.

In another incident Friday evening, police arrested two persons in the Jhenidah Sadar upazila as they offered bribe to police.

The arrested SI Rab is identified as Golam Mortoza Ali, 2nd officer of Moheshpur thana and other two are arrested by the police are Shah Alam of Durgapur village under Sadar upazila and Palash Ahmed of Ghoramara village under the same upazila.

Rab sources said, acting on a tip-off, plainclothes Rab members were sitting in front of Moheshpur police station. At around 2:30 pm, SI Golam Mortuza Ali took two Tk 2000 as bribe from Shariful Islam of Gopalpur village at a nearby tea stall.

The Rab members along with police arrested Golam Mortuza along with the money. He was taken to Jhenidah police custody.

Contacted, Maj Hafiz of Rab-6 in Jhenidah confirmed the arrest. On Friday in the evening, SI Monirul Islam of Hatgopalpur police outpost went to Durgapur village to investigate a case. There, he arrested Shah Alam and Polash allegedly because they offered him Tk 500 as bribe.

Four bombs recovered in Benapole

A CORRESPONDENT, Benapol

Police recovered four bombs from Baropota village in Benapol yesterday morning.

Police said, villager Abdul Majid informed police after he found a packet in fodder. They recovered four bombs from the fodder.

Bomb experts have been called in by police to examine the bombs.

A case has been filed in this connection but none was arrested till yesterday evening.

In another incident Friday night, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a notorious drug smuggler-Ishrafil- with 90 bottles of phensidyl from the same village, police said.



PHOTO: STAR

A seized water pump is being removed from Kujarkuna in Hakaluki haor by men engaged by the department of environment (DoE).

2X3

10X3

10X2

8X3

8X3