

MALE BREAD EARNERS FLEE HOMES TO EVADE ARREST

Female members of 165 families in misery at Rajshahi village

RU CORRESPONDENT

Female members of about 165 families are now passing their days in misery as most of the male members fled homes at Darshanpara village in Mohonpur upazila in Rajshahi after a villagers' clash with police on Friday.

Five cases were filed with Mohonpur Police Station against hundreds of villagers including Keshorhut Pourasabha chairman Shahiduzzman Shahid on Saturday.

Rajshahi Anti-Drug Directorate inspector Shafiqul Islam and assistant sub-inspector (ASI) Abu Bakar Siddique filed the cases.

Police conducted several raids

at the village to arrest the accused yesterday.

However, none was arrested.

Many women at the village took loan from different banks and NGOs with high interest. But they are now unable to repay their loan installment due to want of money as their bread earners are now absconding.

Meanwhile, many housewives are selling their domestic animals and poultry birds including goats, hens and ducks to meet up their daily needs.

Aus and vegetable cultivation is being hampered due to absence of men.

Moslema and Yasmin, two housewives at the village said

their husbands and sons did not come back to their in last two days fearing arrest.

"We are leading an inhuman life with our dependents and passing days ill-fed or half-fed in their absence," they said.

They urged the administration and police authorities to stop harassment to villagers immediately and settle the dispute peacefully.

When contacted, Mohonpur Police Station officer-in-charge (OC) Afzal Hossain refuted police harassment on villagers. "Only the accused persons are absconding, but the general people are staying at their homes," he said.

200 more attacked with diarrhoea in Jhenidah

A CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Diarrhoea attacked 200 more people in Jhenidah town in last 24 hours, official sources said.

With the new patients, the total number of diarrhoea patients stood at 700 in last four days.

Jhenidah Civil Surgeon (CS) Shamsul Haq said, 37 new patients were admitted to sadar hospital while over 500 others were treated in outdoor camps in last 24 hours.

Members of the Army Medical Corps have opened another 'open clinic' at Beparipara in the town following deterioration of diarrhoea situation.

On contact, Captain Ashek Kamal said, a medical team is rendering healthcare service to diarrhoea patients.

Earlier, diarrhoea took lives of two children in the district town.

The disease is spreading fast for scarcity of pure drinking water due to rain and flood.

Tk 6 lakh current net seized

RU CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court in a drive yesterday seized huge quantity of illegal current net worth about Tk 6 lakh from the river Padma at Godagari upazila in Rajshahi.

Sources said, Godagari Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Sarwar Zahan with the help of fisheries department officials launched a drive at Hari Shankarpur, Prentaly, Pirizpur and Vatopara area in the river Padma and seized around 26,000 meters current net.

Later, the seized net was burnt at Godagari fisheries office premises.

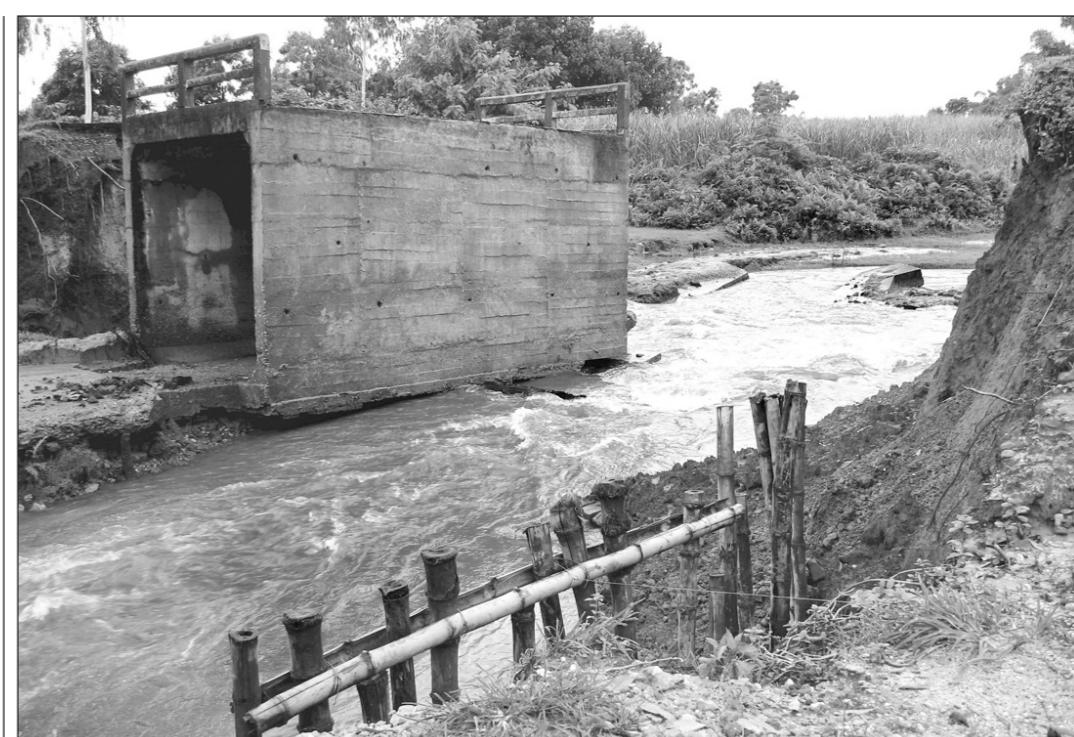


PHOTO: HASIBUR RAHMAN BILLU
This old bridge on the Bangabandha-Panchagath Road broke down about 20 days ago. At present, transport vehicles ply along a diversion road through a Bailey bridge but road communication might disrupt any moment because the bridge has become unfit for plying vehicles, Roads & Highways Department officials said.

DOMESTIC HELP MURDER

Poor parents moving from door to door for justice in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Poor parents of an indigenous domestic help 'killed' by family members of her master are now moving from door to door for justice as the killers are yet to be arrested after 13 days of the incident.

Ruma Sauthal 17, daughter of Haradan Santal of Laxmidhara was killed in Natunkuri High School area in Sadar upazila on July 16.

The alleged killer, Jyoti Chakma, a staff member of the Public Works Department (PWD), has reportedly managed the police administration by giving bribe and is trying to divert the case as suicide, sources said. Jyoti and his family members fled home after the incident.

Locals said, Jyoti's family members allegedly mixed kerosene in her clothes in a pre-planned manner

to kill Ruma. As the domestic help came near the woven, she was burnt seriously.

On information, the fire service personnel rushed to the spot and rescued Ruma in a critical condition by breaking open the door of the house of Jyoti.

At first she was admitted to Khagrachhari Adhunik Sadar Hospital but the on-duty doctors sent her to Chittagong Medical College Hospital as her condition deteriorated further. But on way to the hospital, she died, locals said.

Most often Ruma was physically and mentally tortured by the family members of Jyoti, alleged Haradan Santal, father of Ruma. He has filed a case accusing Jyoti, his wife and son as prime accused.

Khagrachhari Police Station officer-in-charge (OC) Kazi Helal Uddin said they are trying to arrest the culprits.

WORKSHOP IN SATKHIRA

'Save Jamuna from death'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Speakers at a workshop here yesterday urged the authorities concerned to do the needful to save the Jamuna from death.

The workshop titled, 'Save the Jamuna and Ensure Livelihood of People Living on its Banks,' was jointly organised by Jamuna Bachao Andolon, Satkhira and two NGOs named Barsit and Progoti. Held at the Officers' Club here, the workshop was presided by Principal Asit Kumar Majumdar.

Satkhira Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mohammad Kefayetullah was present as chief guest while Public Prosecutor (PP) Advocate Tapan Kumar Chakraborty and Advocate Syed Iftekhar Ali attended as special guests.

A Sweden based NGO Swoalodge financed the programme.

Speakers stressed on re-excavation, demolition of illegal structures from bank and cancellation of illegal lease of the fourth plot of the river, flowing through

Shyamnagar upazila.

They said the river has been turned into a mere canal due to encroachment and deposition of silt on the riverbed thereby creating water logging and environmental hazard. Cultivation on a vast tract of land is being hampered in Shyamnagar and adjoining upazilas as water flow of the river decreased to a great extent, they said.

They said the normal flow of the river has been obstructed due to encroachment, setting up of shrimp enclosures by raising bamboo barriers, building houses, brick kilns, shops and factories on its bank and encroachments by influential land grabbers.

They said there is no alternative but to cancel the lease for increasing water flow of the river.

Among others, journalist Abu Ahmed, Sharifullah Kaisar Suman, Mostafizur Rahman Ujjal, Romjan Nagar Union Parishad (UP) chairman Sheikh Alamgir and others addressed.

15X3



PHOTO: STAR
Dakumara area in Durgapur Pourasabha in Netrakona is under threat of erosion by the Sumeshwari river.

Artificial crisis of LP gas in Rangamati

Consumers opt for firewood

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

An artificial crisis of LP gas here has caused untold sufferings to local consumers.

Unscrupulous traders have created the crisis to earn windfall profit taking advantage of what they said short supply of LP gas from Chittagong.

Local dealers have raised the price of gas from Tk 50 to 100 per cylinder, but no step was taken by the district administration to control the market, consumers said.

The supply of LP gas decreased abnormally since last month, dealers said. But Total Gas and Basundhara gas are available in the market.

Gas distributors in collusion with local retailers have raised the gas price abnormally beyond

reach of the consumers from the current month.

During a visit to different markets, this correspondent talked to both the dealers and the consumers. He saw a cylinder of LP gas was on sale at Tk 1,000 defying the official rate of Tk 650 only. A cylinder of Total Gas is being sold at Tk 800 but it was sold at Tk 750 just a month ago, consumers said.

Abnormal price hike of gas has forced many consumers here to shift to firewood.

Chandan Dey, a retailer and owner of Purnima Store at Dolbi Shopping Complex, said gas prices increased due to its short supply.

Another retailer, Shibu said he purchased a cylinder of Total Gas at Tk 778 from Nandit Roy, lone

distributor in the hill town.

Shimul Chakma, a gas consumer said he started using firewood instead of gas because of its high price. Many others have opted for firewood, he informed.

Moniruzzaman Mohsin, a gas dealer said the LP gas supply from Chittagong has decreased considerably from the last month. The administration should take measure to increase gas supply, said Mohsin.

On contact, Rangamati Deputy Commissioner (DC) Md Nurul Amin said he is not at all aware about realisation of excess price from consumers by gas distributors in the hill town.

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Birth registration being hampered in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Birth registration is being hampered in Bandarban for the last one month due to lack of amended birth registration form.

Sources said the activities of birth registration are being hindered following a government circular addressed to the local registration offices to use newly amended forms instead of the previous birth registration certificate forms.

When the Chairman of Kuhalong Union Parishad (UP) in Bandarban Sadar Upazila Md Sanu Praru Marna was contacted, he said they are yet to receive the new forms issued by the local government and rural development (LGRD) ministry on July 2.

He admitted that his men are still receiving the old birth registration application forms from the appli-