

# FLOOD CONTROL, IRRIGATION IN 5 SYLHET UPAZILAS Project to be delayed as another revision likely

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

There is little hope of early implementation of the Upper Surma-Kushiyara Irrigation and Flood Control Project covering five upazilas though the area suffers colossal damage in flood almost every year.

The project covering Zakiganj, Kanaighat, Beanibazar, Golapganj and Sylhet Sadar upazilas was initiated in 2001 with an estimated cost of Tk 111 crore. It was scheduled to be completed by 2005-2006 financial year.

Six years have already passed while only 15 per cent work has been done and Tk 15 crore disbursed, Water Development Board (WDB) sources said.

The project has been revised several times raising the initial estimated cost.

Yet another move is there to revise the project again.

The ministry of planning held a meeting with WDB officials weeks ago to make further changes in the project, the sources said yesterday.

The project area begins from the starting point of Surma and Kushiyara rivers at Amolshid border.

**'Adopt policy for rural women's rights'**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Speakers at a national dialogue in the district town have urged the caretaker government to adopt a policy for establishing the rights of rural women.

They urged the government to adopt a policy for ensuring control over food and food resources and providing equal salary to the women in agriculture sector.

Bangladesh Resources Center for Indigenous Knowledge (BARCIK), Bangladesh Nari Sangbadik Kendro (BNSK), Steps Towards Development (STD) and Social Advancement Center (SAC) jointly organised the national dialogue at Zila Parishad Auditorium yesterday.

A 14-point demand was also placed at the dialogue that includes gender equality of, ensuring dignity of Adibashi rural women, ensuring equal salary.

Women who are deprived of equal rights are not treated with dignity, speakers said.

Speakers also urged the government to take decision to observe October 15 as Rural Women's Day at all the villages.

Women leader Nina Rahman presided over the function while eminent writer Selina Hossain attended as chief guest. Deputy Commissioner Ataur Rahman, Manikganj Municipality Chairman Sudev Saha, Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Department Mokbul Hossain Talukdar, Chairman of Garpara Union Parishad Aloma Begum addressed as guests.

Ferdausi Akter Ritu of BARCIK presented a keynote paper at the function where around 300 rural women took part.

Under pointy in Zakiganj, covering lands along the rivers up to Golapganj and Sylhet Sadar.

Sylhet WDB Superintending Engineer GM Shamsur Rahman told the Daily Star that the project is being revised again by higher authorities.

Project structures can not be built without land acquisition, he said.

Months ago, the project cost was raised by 58 per cent, involving Tk 181 crore and re-fixing FY 2009-10 for its completion.

It involves acquisition of 450 hectares of land at Tk 32 crore, construction and reconstruction of 15 KM embankments at Tk 33 crore, 20 drainage regulators at Tk 16 crore and a pumping station at Tk 36.15 crore, 813 irrigation structures, 56 kilometre drainage canals, installation of four irrigation pumps and two bridges, sources said.

The water resources ministry again asked for cutting the expenditure and formed a 4-member committee, which submitted its report.

Two months ago, the project was slightly revised and the cost was cut down to Tk 135 crore. It will be revised again, the source added. Only 77 hectares of land could

be acquired so far at Tk 6.22 crore and work on 41 KM embankments done at Tk 7 crore in Zakiganj and Kanaighat upazilas, Shamsur Rahman said.

Project structures can not be built without land acquisition, he said.

Only Tk 2.76 crore was disbursed against Tk 5 crore sanctioned preliminarily as ADP allocation for FY 2007-08.

Implementation of the project would provide irrigation facilities to 38,000 hectares of land. The project area covers over 49,000 hectares, said the official.

lion share of the sanctioned money would be spent for land acquisition for construction of embankments and canals, which are vital for flood control in the five upazilas, the sources said.

The sources said 25 kilometre embankments should be constructed immediately. Otherwise, its implementation would be delayed.

This year, the region experienced repeated and prolonged floods by waters rolling from Indian hills, leaving a colossal damage to crops and houses.

The victims were Khalid Hossain, 20, of Keragachhi village in Kalarou upazila and Rabiu Islam, 22, of Nazimongol in Kalligonj upazila.

The two youths along with others had gone to India to buy cattle. They were shot dead at Tarali under Swarupnagar police station in 24 Parganas district while crossing the border with cattle. BSF took away the bodies.

Sub-inspector (SI) Subir Kumar of Swarupnagar police station handed over the bodies to Sub-inspector (SI) Shahin of Satkhira Sadar police station in Bhomra border, police sources said.

On contact, Satkhira police super Mirza Abdullah Baki confirmed the incident.

## BSF picks up 5 Bangladeshis in Sylhet Returns two bodies in Satkhira

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The Indian BSF took away five Bangladeshi fishermen from Kushiyara river yesterday afternoon when they were fishing near Amolshid border.

Its price in wholesale markets in Patuakhali now range between Tk 80 and 200 per kilogram depending on size.

The prices were Tk 250 to Tk 400 two months back.

Hundreds of trawlers began catching Hilsa from October 25 when the ban on netting it was over. The fisheries department imposed the ban for 10 days from October 15 to 24 at four points in the Bay to allow Hilsa breeding.

The points were Latachapela near Kuakata beach in Kalapara upazila in Patuakhali district, Sherkali to Haitkandi under Mirsharai upazila in Chittagong, North Kutubdia to Gandomara in Cox's Bazar and North Tajumoddin to West Syed Aulia in Bhalua district. These covered 7,000 square kilometres in the Bay, considered best areas for natural breeding of Hilsa.

This correspondent visited fish markets in Kuakata, Mohipur, Galachipa along the coast and New Market, Launch Ghat and Katpatree in Patuakhali town yesterday and the day before and saw Hilsa being sold at between Tk 80 and 200 per kilogram.

"Over 25 tonnes of Hilsa remained unsold at different fish markets in the area for lack of sufficient buyers," Abdus Salam Howlader, president of Fish Traders Association at Mohipur wholesale market told this correspondent

The two youths along with others had gone to India to buy cattle. They were shot dead at Tarali under Swarupnagar police station in 24 Parganas district while crossing the border with cattle. BSF took away the bodies.

Sub-inspector (SI) Subir Kumar of Swarupnagar police station handed over the bodies to Sub-inspector (SI) Shahin of Satkhira Sadar police station in Bhomra border, police sources said.

On contact, Satkhira police super Mirza Abdullah Baki confirmed the incident.

## Editor of B'baria fortnightly remanded in extortion case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria  
Haroon-ur-Rashid Dali, editor of fortnightly Aparadhpatra published from Brahmanbaria, was taken in a day's remand yesterday in an extortion case filed with Sreemangal police station in Moulvibazar district.

On Monday, Investigation Officer (IO) of the case SI Ali Mahmud of Sreemangal police station produced Dali before a magistrate court in Moulvibazar.

Police source said, Dali was arrested by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Sreemangal as he demanded Tk 10 lakh from a school teacher there on October 19. He was sent to Moulvibazar jail.

## Fishery project for ultra-poor launched in Nilphamari



Nilphamari Deputy Commissioner Mokhlesur Rahman and Maj Anis Md Ersad Haq release fry in Dinajpur Canal under Teesta Irrigation Project yesterday.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

A fishery project aiming at helping the ultra-poor people was launched in Teesta irrigation canal in Nilphamari yesterday.

Bangladesh army relief fund has provided financial support for the project, the first of this kind since commissioning of the Teesta Irrigation Project in 1998.

Nilphamari Deputy Commissioner Khondoker Mokhlesur Rahman and Maj Anis Md Ersad Haq of the joint forces released 400 kg of fish fry at Nilphamari point of Dinajpur canal in Sadarupazila.

Three harvests are expected in a year as fishes grow fast in water bodies with current as in Teesta canals, he said.

The released fish fry are of ruhit, katol, silver curp, brigade curp, glass curp and other varieties.

The fishes in the 12km-long canal from Chanderhat sluice gate to Sonarai sluice gate in the upstream will be reared under 'open pisciculture method' in open water body, district fishery office sources said.

To maintain the fishes of the project two groups comprising 200 members have been formed, District Fishery Officer MI Goldar said, adding that the Army has allocated Tk 5 lakh to undertake the fishery projects in Teesta irrigation canals.

Police source said, Dali was arrested by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Sreemangal as he demanded Tk 10 lakh from a school teacher there on October 19. He was sent to Moulvibazar jail.

## BNP LEADER JEWEL MURDER IN SATKHIRA Court accepts naraji petition, orders fresh probe

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira  
July 8 last year.

Victim's mother Rokeya Khanam filed a case with Patikelghata police station on July 9.

Investigation Officer (IO) of the case Sub-inspector (SI) Humayun of Patikelghata police station submitted the charge sheet on July 2 this year to a magistrate court in Satkhira over 11 months after the incident.

Ten people have been accused in the charge sheet. They are outlawed PBGP (Purba Banglar Communist Party) regional leader Pulin Bihari Sarkar of Goudangla village; Ananta Sarkar, Kalu Pada alias Kalu Sarkar, Bimal Mondal, Jhantu Sheikh alias Mamun Sheikh, Gafoor Gazi, Deb Brata Mondal and Sanjoy Mondal of Duddi village in Tala upazila; Maru Gain of Kharidanga village in Satkhira Sadar upazila and Sanjib Kumar Adhikari of Raruli village in Paikgachha upazila in Khulna.

All the accused are absconding, police sources said.

A court in Satkhira yesterday accepted the 'naraji' petition by the plaintiff against the charge sheet and asked police to re-investigate the murder of Mirza Masud Jewel, president of district Jatiyatabadi Matsjibhi Dal, a front of BNP.

Judge Ashish Ranjan Das passed the order as some 'major faults' in the charge sheet were detected, court sources said.

The court also asked the authorities to appoint a senior police official to re-investigate the case.

Jewel, son of Mokhtar Hossain Kha of Duddi village in Tala upazila, was shot dead by assailants near his village home on the night of

VOTER LISTING

Orientation meet held in Nilphamari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Election officials and the joint forces held an orientation meeting with the members of the computer operation team at Sadar upazila parishad auditorium yesterday as the voter listing task in the district will start from November 4.

In the meeting, Maj. Anis Md Ersad Haq, Sadar upazila Nirbahi Officer Khorshed Alam, also upazila voter enrolment committee president, district Election Officer Sekandar Ali explained various aspects of the voter listing process, while Maj. Kamrul Hossain discussed the technical sides of computer-related matters.

The highly energetic and ambitious candidate is specially encouraged to apply with full resume to the following e-mail address latest by 5th November, 2007 or send his CV along with two copies of passport size colour photographs, copies of certificate / testimonial mentioning the name of the position applied for, on the top of the envelope. The application addressed to The Managing Director, Monno Group of Industries, Islampur, Dhamrai, Dhaka. Mobile No: 01716499142, and can also be submitted by e-mail: gmadmin@monno-group.com

## Plenty of Hilsa netted in Bay

A big size fish retailed at Tk 80-200 per kg in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Hilsa prices have come down considerably as the delicious fish is being netted in plenty in coastal waters for about a week.

Its price in wholesale markets in Patuakhali now range between Tk 80 and 200 per kilogram depending on size.

The prices were Tk 250 to Tk 400 two months back.

Hundreds of trawlers began catching Hilsa from October 25 when the ban on netting it was over. The fisheries department imposed the ban for 10 days from October 15 to 24 at four points in the Bay to allow Hilsa breeding.

The points were Latachapela near Kuakata beach in Kalapara upazila in Patuakhali district, Sherkali to Haitkandi under Mirsharai upazila in Chittagong, North Kutubdia to Gandomara in Cox's Bazar and North Tajumoddin to West Syed Aulia in Bhalua district. These covered 7,000 square kilometres in the Bay, considered best areas for natural breeding of Hilsa.

This correspondent visited fish markets in Kuakata, Mohipur, Galachipa along the coast and New Market, Launch Ghat and Katpatree in Patuakhali town yesterday and the day before and saw Hilsa being sold at between Tk 80 and 200 per kilogram.

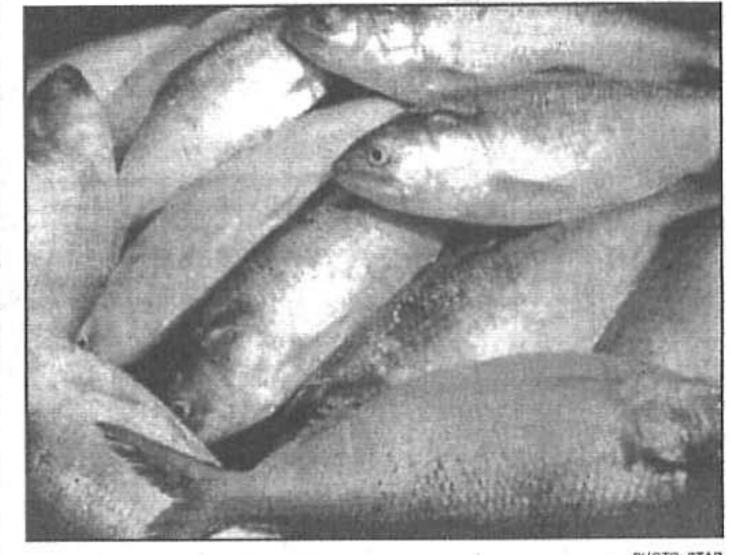
"We sent over 50 tonnes of Hilsa to different cities and towns including Dhaka, Jessor and Satkhira through trucks today," he said.

Patuakhali town said, four big Hilsas, which were sold for Tk 1200 to 1600 a week ago is now sold at only Tk 600-900.

"This is for the first time in many years that we see a steady supply of Hilsa," said Liton at New Market.

Fazlu Gazi, president of fishing trawler owners association in Kuakata, said, "We have to sell Hilsa in local market at lower rate. We are not getting fair price".

The district administration formed market monitoring teams to observe Hilsa price. A team led by Monirul Islam, district marketing officer, regularly visits New Market, Natun Bazar, and Puran Bazar fish markets.



With large catches of Hilsa, the delicious fish is now affordable by consumers. The photo was taken from Patuakhali New Market yesterday.

yesterday.

Patuakhali town said, four big Hilsas, which were sold for Tk 1200 to 1600 a week ago is now sold at only Tk 600-900.

"This is for the first time in many years that we see a steady supply of Hilsa," said Liton at New Market.

Fazlu Gazi, president of fishing trawler owners association in Kuakata, said, "We have to sell Hilsa in local market at lower rate. We are not getting fair price".

The district administration formed market monitoring teams to observe Hilsa price. A team led by Monirul Islam, district marketing officer, regularly visits New Market, Natun Bazar, and Puran Bazar fish markets.

ATTACK BY MILITANTS  
NGO officials meet on ways for protection

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Amid increasing threat on NGO workers by religious militants, high officials from over 15 national and local NGOs yesterday met at the regional office of NGO POPI at Battish in the town to discuss ways to resist the criminals.

NGOs are playing a vital role in nation building but their staff working in remote areas are exposed to attacks by religious militants and criminals and the perpetrators often go unpunished, speakers said at the meeting.

They urged all the NGOs to take a collective stand against any assault on NGO workers so that no militant dare attacking them.

Drawing attention to the problems in haor areas of the district, they asked newsmen present at the meeting to highlight the issue for action at the national level.

Representatives from different NGOs including Brac, Proshika and Asa

stressed coordination in the work of the NGOs working in the district.

Murshed Alam Sirkar, executive director of POPI, presided over the meeting.

The participants formed two committees with representatives of different NGOs.