

Earth lifting from Ichhamoti causes erosion in Sirajganj

Dwelling houses, lands and installations threatened in Kamarkhanda upazila



The dredger that was used to lift earth from Ichhamoti River at Kuthirchar village in Kamarkhanda upazila in Sirajganj district, left, portion of Sirajganj-Bogra road affected by erosion caused by the unplanned mud-lifting.

GOLAM MOSTAFA JIBON, Sirajganj

Hundreds of dwelling houses, about 1.5 km stretch of important Sirajganj-Bogra road, a large area of cultivable lands and several installations are now threatened by erosion due to sand and earth lifting from Ichhamoti riverbed at Kuthirchar Sengati in Kamarkhanda upazila of Sirajganj district.

Contractor Abdul Motaleb, owner of a construction firm, with the assistance of dredger machine owner Abdul Alim lifted sand from the riverbed and supplied sand and earth to the site of ACI Food Ltd for one and a half years by 'managing' permission from unscrupulous officials.

The sand and earth lifting continued until recently, posing threat for the environment and massive erosion in the area, Water Development Board officials said.

About 200 dwelling houses in eight villages, a portion of Sirajganj-Bogra road near Kuthirchar village, a large area of cultivable lands and a few installations were damaged during the last rainy season while several

others have become vulnerable due to the unplanned dredging in the river.

Nalka Bridge on Dhaka-North Bengal highway, Bazaar Bhadrachar and Bhadrachar primary and high schools may not be able to stand the erosion in the next rainy season, WDB sources said.

Locals said they earlier submitted petitions to the authorities concerned for not permitting such massive digging in the riverbed to protect the urban area, but to no effect.

Several affected villagers in November last year lodged a case with Sirajganj District and Sessions Judge's Court accusing nine persons including Sirajganj deputy commissioner, upazila nirbahi officers of Kamarkhanda and Raiganj, assistant commissioners (Land) of the two upazilas, manager of ACI Food Ltd, construction firm owner Abdul Motaleb and dredger owner Abdul Alim.

During a recent visit to the area, this correspondent saw that another dredger was installed in the river near Kuthirchar Sengati

while another firm was making preparations for lifting sand and earth.

Landowner Fazal Huq, a resident of Kuthirchar village said the erosion caused by the lifting of earth and sand has already devoured a large area of croplands and many homesteads on the river bank.

Faced with erosion, Shahena Khatun, 55, wife of Tara Shaikh of Bazaar Bhadrachar, shifted her homestead a few days ago. Many others including Nur Hossain, Haider Ali and Abdur Rezzak shifted their homesteads to safer places due to unexpected erosion in last year.

Abu Rawshan, executive engineer of Roads and Highways Department in Sirajganj, told The Daily Star that, about one and half kilometre of Sirajganj-Bogra Highway near Kuthirchar village got badly damaged during the rainy season in last year and it may collapse in the coming rainy season.

Terming unplanned sand lifting responsible for the situation, he said records say that the area did not see such erosion in last fifty years. If sand and earth collection is not stopped completely, many installations including the adjoining road and bridges will be affected, he said. He also sent letter to the ACI Food Ltd for stop-

ping sand and earth lifting.

Locals urged the higher authorities to take initiatives against the officials who gave 'illegal approval' to lift sand and earth from the riverbed.

When contacted, Sirajganj Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ibrahim Khalil said he asked the ADC (Revenue) a few days ago to see the matter and take necessary steps in this regard.

The DC, however, could not say what has been practically done in this regard.

Contributions of language heroes recalled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

'Nilmon Gallery', a research organization, held a meeting to recall the contributions of language heroes at Pabna Central Shahid Minar on Friday.

A discussion was also organized to mark the occasion. Discussants lamented observing sheer indifference to Language heroes. They said no road or any other important place was named here after language heroes. They urged all to show due respect to the heroes.

A T-shirt printed with the first Shahid Minar of the country which was built on 23 February in 1952 was unfolded on the occasion.

Govt mulls withdrawal of ban on parlour politics outside capital: Matin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Home Adviser Maj Gen (rtd) MA Matin yesterday said the interim government is considering withdrawal of the ban on parlour politics outside the capital as its prime target is to hold a free, fair and acceptable general election for handing over power to an elected government.

The task is to be completed by this year in line with the roadmap announced by the Election Commission, he said at a view exchange meeting with division and district level officials from the four districts under Sylhet Division at Sylhet Circuit House.

Deputy commissioners and Superintendents of Police of Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Habiganj and Sunamganj districts, deputy inspector general of police, commissioner of Sylhet Metropolitan Police, commander of the joint forces, officials of the WDB, Agriculture Extension Department, Pali Bidyut Samities, BADC, LGED and others were present at the meeting with Divisional Commissioner Aziz Hasan in the chair.

In view of the importance of saving Boro crops from natural calamities like early floods this year, the government has taken up measures to ensure safe harvest of the lone cash crop in the country's low lying regions like greater Sylhet, he said.

Soon the government will constitute human rights commission, also steps had been taken for enacting consumers' rights law and right to information act, the adviser said.

2 killed, 35 hurt as villagers clash in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Two persons were killed and 35 others injured in separate clashes in Durgapur and Purbadhala upazila in the district yesterday morning.

One person was killed and 25 others were hurt at Nawgaw village under Durgapur upazila in the district at about 10:00am yesterday, Durgapur police said.

Following a land dispute, residents of Anantapur village attacked the villagers of Nawgaw village with sharp and lethal weapons. The villagers of Nawgaw counter attacked on Anantapur villagers and Abdul Malek was killed on the spot and 25 people of both the villages were injured. Seriously injured Abdur Rashed, 35, Abdur Khalak, 27, Mostafa Mia, 23, and Waras Ali, 60, were sent to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

As a serious clash occurred between the people of Kumri village and Langajura village of Purbadhala upazila over fishing in Nanka Beel, Nur Mahmud, 40, was killed on the spot and 10 others injured, police said.

B'Baria Shishu Mela brings joy for children

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

A different type of children's fair (Shishu Mela) was held here yesterday where at least 6,000 children took part in a joyous mood.

Held at the Industrial School playground here, the fair was organized by Brahmanbaria District Information Office. It was aimed at making people aware about children so that they can rear up as intelligent people.

Events like Dress As You Like, songs and music, recitations, rhymes, acting, jocks, painting competitions and extempore speech were organized where children participated with much enthusiasm. At least 100 to 120 competitors participated in each competition.

A special event was organized for disabled children. At least 70 disabled children took part at a painting competition.

A large number of children of different schools and kindergartens along with their guardians and teachers gathered at National Hero Abdul Kuddus Makhan Mukta Manch ground at Tankerpar here in the morning. They carried banners, posters, placards, festoons and colourful flags with them. From there a large procession was brought out at about 10 in the morning. Processionists paraded the main streets of the town. When the children were passing through the streets in procession with rhythmic slogans and playing musical instruments, passers-by and shopkeepers waved them.

The main venue of fair was decorated with a big colourful pandal. About 20 stalls of books, art and craft and other products were erected there. Primary School Teachers' Training Institute (PTI), BRAC, Directorate of Women Affairs also opened stalls. There was a stall for counseling the children and women on different issues.

The fair and children's competitions started after an inaugural address given by Md Azizul Alam, additional deputy commissioner of Brahmanbaria who chaired the opening session.

Sapon Kumar Bhaumik, director of Mass Communication Department, was present as chief guest.

Among others, Md Hafizur Rahman Mollah Kachi, chairman of Brahmanbaria Pourasabha; Md Jahurul Islam Chowdhury, ASP (Sadar circle) of Brahmanbaria police; Jubura Begum, upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Brahmanbaria Sadar; AKM Jahurul Islam, acting district information officer of Brahmanbaria; Abdul Manna Sarker, secretary of Ustad Alauddin Sangtangan and journalist Muhammad Musa addressed.

Earlier, they also participated in the procession.



Children, guardians, and delegates at the inauguration ceremony of Shishu Mela (children's fair) at the ground of Brahmanbaria Industrial School yesterday.

Skill dev training for poor women

STAR NATIONAL DESK

About 22 poor women were given skill development training on cell (mobile) phone servicing and information technology (IT) at Madhobi in Narsingdi district recently, says a press release.

They were given the skill development training so that they can earn a living as technicians. Kathalia Sukher Disha Community Resource Centre organized the training course while it was funded by Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM).

On conclusion of the training, Tk 1,000 instrument were distributed to each successful trainee at a function to help them run their small business.

Kathalia Sukher Disha Community Resource Centre president Harun-or-Rashid presided while it was attended by Ministry of Science and Information Technology joint secretary Md Shamsul Alam Khan as chief guest. ICT Team Leader of DAM Sayed Shamsul Ziaul Haque was present as special guest.

600 cft smuggled timber seized, 4 held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Police seized 600 CFT smuggled Indian Segun timbers worth about Tk 6 lakh from Kailati village on the bank of Kongsha River in Durgapur upazila in the district yesterday morning and arrested four people in this connection.

The arrestees are Matiur Rahaman, Hossen Ali, Arif Hossen and Rafiqul Islam, all from village Chaiterhati under Durgapur upazila. The timber was smuggled from India and the arrested ones were trying to carry it in an engine boat to neighbouring district Sunamganj, sources said.

On information, police rushed to the spot, seized the timber and arrested the 'smugglers'.

Advertisement for Bangladesh SDC Corporation regarding the construction of a 18000 sq ft building in Sirajganj. Includes details about the project, location, and contact information.

Directorate General of Defence Purchase Ministry of Defence. Tender Notice for supply of 180 Lbs MK-4 Flies Inner, Qty-205 Nos. Includes details about the tender process and contact information.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Army recruitment. Details the recruitment process for various posts, including eligibility criteria, application dates, and examination details.

BPS's International Tender Notice. Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Tender for major overhauling work of black start 3 MW Emergency Diesel Engine of Baghabari Power Station. Includes detailed technical specifications and procurement information.