



PHOTO: ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER

Only small portions of Moulavipukur at Chandgaon and Sattar Collectorbarir Pukur at Agrabad in Chittagong remain unfilled as filling up of water bodies for construction work continues unabated in the port city.

Ponds, water bodies in Ctg city disappearing fast

SHAHIDUL ISLAM, Chittagong

Over 14,000 ponds and other water bodies have disappeared from the map of Chittagong city in last 18 years, thanks to unplanned urbanisation and lax monitoring by the authorities.

Filling up of the water bodies, including ponds and tanks, poses serious threat to environment and compounds water crisis in the port city.

According to a survey conducted by District Fisheries Department in 1991, the number of water bodies in Chittagong city was 19,250 while the Physical Feature Survey conducted by Chittagong Development Authority in 2006-2007 indicated existence of 4,523 water bodies there.

According to the survey, the number of water bodies in the district is 35,906.

However, the data on the number of water bodies in the port city vary in surveys conducted by different organisations while there is not any recent information regarding the number of now existing water bodies.

During the past 18 years, a number of large and well-known ponds and water bodies of the city have been filled up for construction of apartments, markets and other commercial establishments.

Rajapukur in Anderkilla, Dewanjipukur in Dewan Bazar, Rotherpukur in Nandankan, Moulvipukur in Chandgaon, Daummapukur in Firingee Bazar, Maillerpukur and Munshipukur in Bohaddarhat were once well known to the people but there is no trace of the ponds at present.

Rajapukur, a large pond at Rajapukur Lane near the Chittagong City Corporation in Anderkilla, is now a history as high-rise apartment blocks replaced it a few years ago.

The Dewanjipukur in Dewan Bazar has been replaced by apartments and a temple while the Rotherpukur near Tulshi Dham Temple in Nandankan area by apartments and markets.

Moulvipukur in Chandgaon has almost disappeared to give space for truck terminal, apartments and markets. The remaining narrow

portion is now waiting to be filled up.

Maillerpukur and Munshipukur in Bohaddarhat were replaced by bus terminal and apartment.

The process of filling up water bodies has not stopped yet, thanks to the lax monitoring by the authorities concerned.

Earth filling on Nazirpukur in Patenga, Masjidpukur in Dakshin-Maddhyam Halishahar, Pakhir Dokanerpukur in Sholokbahar, Abdus Sattar Collector Barirpukur in Agrabad, Abdul Majid Masjidpukur in Monsurabad By-lane, Baluadighi in Korbaniganj, a pond near Haji Noor Ahmad Road in Al Falah Goli and a number of ponds at Munsipara, Mollapara and Rongipara in North Agrabad is still going on.

Expressing concern over the situation, Sharif Chowhan, coordinator of environmentalist group 'Save Chittagong', said, "Water bodies are like tissues in our body. They provide the water needs for the health of our soil and environment. But, nobody cares for this."

Member of Forum for Planned Chittagong engineer M Ali Ashraf, an expert on town planning and drainage, said the fire fighters have also been facing acute shortage of water while dousing fire due to the water body crisis.

"The country's second largest city doesn't have any fire hydrants. Besides, there is virtually no water body in densely populated areas like Chaktai and Khatunganj," he said.

"Most of the city dwellers depend on the tube-wells because of acute water crisis of Chittagong Water and Sewerage Authority. The overuse of tube-wells will surely lower the underground water level," Ashraf said.

Officials of Civil Defence and Fire Brigade Department here said there is a rule to obtain NOC (no objection certificate) from the department before filling up any water body but nobody seems to care about it.

"If filling up of water bodies continues at the current pace, our fire fighters will find themselves helpless spectators in case of any fire incident in near future," said an official preferring anonymity.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS

5-year-old girl raped

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A five-year-old girl was raped on Sunday afternoon at Lauthuti village under Sadar upazila. Officer in-charge (OC) of Thakurgaon police station Shohrab Hossain and locals said at about 1:00pm Ismail Hossain Liton, 15, of the village took Rikta, 5, daughter of Akin Ali, to his house and raped her. Hearing Rikta's scream, neighbours rushed to the spot and rescued her. On information, police went to the village and arrested Liton early Monday. Rikta's father filed a case accusing Ismail Hossain Liton of violating her daughter. Police sent the girl to Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital for medical test on Monday afternoon.

Mugging inside bank

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A gang on Sunday noon mugged a government officer by firing gunshots and made good with Tk 1.10 lakh. The incident took place inside the Treasury branch of Sonali Bank in the municipality town of Jhalakati district. The bank branch is beside Jhalakati deputy commissioner's (DC) office and near the municipality police post box. The mugging occurred when Jahangir Hossain, officer of Jhalakati Zila Parishad was counting money after drawing it at around 12:30pm. Acting officer in-charge (OC) of Jhalakati police station told this correspondent that a case has been filed in this connection and police are trying to catch the muggers.

Football tournament

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The 'Deputy Commissioner Gold Cup' football tournament will begin on November 7 at Khagrachhari Stadium. At least eight upazila teams from Khagrachhari Sadar, Panchhari, Dighinala, Mohalchhari, Matiranga, Ramgarh, Manikchhari and Laxmichhari are likely to participate in the tournament. Deputy commissioner Mohammad Abdullah told newsmen on Sunday that the district administration took this initiative to boost ties and cement communal harmony among the people of eight hill upazilas. Divisional commissioner of Chittagong MAN Siddiq is expected to inaugurate the tournament, he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Rifles seize 1790 bottles of phensidyl from a truck at Nayagola in Chapainawabganj town yesterday.

Work abstention programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Bangladesh Lighter Shramik Union has called an indefinite work abstention across the country from November 08 midnight to press a number of demands including raising of minimum wage of its members to Tk 5000. The union leaders took the decision at a meeting held at the union office at Bangla Bazar on Saturday. The other demands include raising and maintaining navigability of the rivers through dredging and an end to toll extortion and piracy in the river route. The work abstention is being also observed in support of 22-point demand of Bangladesh Water Transport Workers' Federation. After announcement of the work abstention programme, the lighter workers brought out a procession that paraded different areas of Bangla Bazar, Majhirghat and Sadarghat.

Fertiliser seized in Bogra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Law enforcers yesterday and on Sunday seized 955 sacks of fertiliser from Madla area under Shahjahanpur upazila and Pirob area under Shibganj upazila. Police jointly with members of Rab-12 yesterday recovered 835 sacks of fertiliser including 147 sacks of urea from a godown of Lokman Hossain of Madla area for illegally hoarding them. Shahjahanpur police arrested Lokman in this connection. Earlier on Sunday, police recovered 120 sacks of smuggled and adulterated fertiliser raiding three houses in Pirob area under Shibganj upazila. Police arrested one Javedul and later filed cases against two people including Javedul.



PHOTO: STAR

People including different parties and organisations join demonstrations in Kishoreganj town yesterday demanding retention of the district's 'undivided status', right, agitators burn tyre on a road during the hartal.

Hartal in Kishoreganj to press for its 'undivided status'

A CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

People from all walks of life yesterday joined a day-long hartal throughout Kishoreganj district demanding retention of the district's 'undivided status'.

While taking part in a procession, one Mokbul Hossain, 65, of Bazitpur died of cardiac arrest.

The shopkeepers kept their shutters down and government offices, educational institutions, banks and other financial organisations remained closed during the day-long hartal called in protest against move to include three of its upazilas with proposed Bhairab district.

People joined protest rallies and demonstrations throughout the district as leaders and workers of all the major political parties participated in the hartal.

All types of vehicular movement

remained suspended while six train services could not operate as the agitating people put barricades on rail tracks at different places of the district. Picketers also put burning objects on roads.

District Bar President Mia Muhammad Ferdous led the agitation programme organised by Zila Akhandata Rakkha Sangram Parishad in the town.

Black flag was also hoisted at places in protest against the move to include a part of Kishoreganj with proposed Bhairab district.

Locals put up barricade at Manikkhali rail track, preventing running of Kishoreganj-Dhaka intercity Egarosindur Express and Bhairab-Mymensingh local train service.

To continue movement against the initiative to include Nikli upazila with proposed Bhairab district, a citizens' committee was formed with lawmaker Afzal Hossain as convenor. A Janapratidinhi Sangram Parishad was also formed with upazila

Chairman Iqbal Hossain as convenor.

Kishoreganj Zila Sammilita Chhatra-Jubo Forum on Saturday started observing a three-day black flag hoisting programme in the town. They also collected mass signature on a one kilometre-long paper.

Earlier on Sunday, people of Nikli upazila barricaded Dhanu River route at Singpur, barring plying of hundreds of cargos, launches, trawlers and boats.

A Correspondent reports from Narsingdi: Sammilita Nagorik Samaj organised a rally on Mahmudabad High School ground on Sunday demanding declaration of Raipura upazila a district.

Public representatives and political leaders addressed the rally.

Later the agitators put barricade at Nilkuti on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway from 5:00pm to 6:00pm, creating tailback on both sides of the road.

Jubo League men assault UNO, AC land, five others in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Jubo League leaders and activists yesterday physically assaulted the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) and the assistant commissioner (Land) and five other government staffs at Ramgarh Upazila Complex in Khagrachhari district.

Two Jubo League leaders were also injured during the clash between Jubo League men and upazila office staff.

Following the incident, Jubo League activists blocked the road, disrupting communication with Khagrachhari and other areas while panicked traders and businessmen closed their shops and business offices.

Police said the incident began at noon when a group of Jubo League men led by Ramgarh upazila Jubo League Organising Secretary Faruq Shah and ward-level Jubo League leader Mohammad Faruq mistakenly entered the office of AC (Land) Mohammad Abul Hasan and asked where the upazila engineer was.

As the official told them to see the signboard before entering an office room, Faruq Shah held his shirt collar and punched him. Hearing the uproar, UNO Raihan Kowsar and other staff of the office

rushed to the spot and asked the intruders how they dared to attack a government official.

Introducing themselves as Jubo League leaders, the unruly young men also assaulted the UNO.

Getting united, the upazila complex staffs beat up a few Jubo League men including the two leaders and kept the two men confined inside the office.

Getting information, around a hundred Jubo League men went to the spot, beat up office staff, ransacked furniture and cabinet file of the AC (Land) office and freed their leaders.

The Jubo League men also brought out a 'protest' procession demanding immediate removal of the UNO and the AC (Land) and punishment of the government staffs involved in attacking their men.

Local sources said police remained silent spectators during the clashes between Jubo League activists and staff of the UNO office.

Admitting the incident, Additional Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Salauddin said, "An urgent meeting has been called at Ramgarh Upazila Complex auditorium to settle the matter. The ruling party leaders are expected to attend it."

Ban on 'jatka' catching takes effect

UNB, Barisal

A seven-month ban on catching 'jatka' (hilsa fry less than 9 inches or 23 centimetres in length) from November 1 to May 31 began in all hilsa regions of the country Sunday.

Abdul Aziz, deputy director and Bankim Chandra, assistant director of Barisal office of fisheries department said, hilsa fries grow 2-2.5 cm in length per month and start moving towards sea after reaching 15-17 cm in length. They start return journey to sweet water rivers after growing 25-28 cm, each having an average 300-450 grams weights, for laying eggs.

So, if only 10-20 per cent of 'jatka'

could be saved from catching, then hilsa resources of around of two lakh tons worth hundreds of cores of taka could be increased every year, said the officials.

But while visiting the markets in Barisal city on Sunday, it was found that open sale of 'jatka' was on under the nose of the law enforcers.

Local fisheries department officials said, they were unable to take action against 'jatka' catchers due to fund constraints, lack of manpower and other logistic support and also for loopholes in the law.

Fish Research Institute sources here said hilsa resources doubled in last 14 years as catching of hilsa was 1.47 lakh metric tonnes in 1983; 2.20 lakhs MTs in

2002, 2.8 lakh MTs in 2007 and more than 3 lakh MTs in 2008.

A study says the contribution of hilsa to the country's gross domestic product is 2 per cent and this fishing sector earns about 9 to 12 per cent of total forex.

Steps taken by the government for strictly imposing and monitoring ban on using thinly knitted current nets, seven months (November-May) ban on 'jatka' catching, two months (March-April) ban of hilsa fishing in four sanctuaries, 10-day (October 15-24) ban on hilsa fishing in 7000 kilometre areas in the country have started giving positive results in increasing hilsa resources of the country, the sources added.



PHOTO: STAR

To increase hilsa production, the government has put a ban on jatka (hilsa up to nine inches long) catching for seven months from November 1.

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বাংলাদেশ মেডিকেল এন্ড ডেন্টাল কাউন্সিল কর্তৃক স্বীকৃত নয় এমন কোন চিকিৎসা শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান (মেডিকেল/ডেন্টাল কলেজ) হইতে যদি কেহ ডিগ্রি/সনদপ্রাপ্ত হন তাহা হইলে চিকিৎসা কার্য পরিচালনার জন্য তাহাকে রেজিস্ট্রেশন প্রদান করা হইবে না এবং তিনি বাংলাদেশে কোন রকম এলোপ্যাথি চিকিৎসা করিতে বা চিকিৎসক বা ডেন্টাল চিকিৎসক হিসাবে পরিচয় দিতে পারিবেন না। এমতাবস্থায় কোন চিকিৎসা শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে (মেডিকেল/ডেন্টাল কলেজ) ভর্তিছুক ছাত্র-ছাত্রী এবং তাহাদের অভিভাবকগণকে প্রতিষ্ঠানটির সরকারি অনুমোদন (Uptodate), বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধিভুক্তি (Uptodate) এবং বাংলাদেশ মেডিকেল এন্ড ডেন্টাল কাউন্সিলের স্বীকৃতি সম্পর্কে অবহিত হওয়ার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

রেজিস্ট্রার

বাংলাদেশ মেডিকেল এন্ড ডেন্টাল কাউন্সিল
২০৩, শহীদ সৈয়দ নজরুল ইসলাম সরনী
(৮৬, বিজয়নগর), ঢাকা-১০০০
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