

Survey of 700 acres occupied by Indians to start tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Indian officials yesterday said they would start survey tomorrow of 700 acres of land, which had been lying under Indian occupation for decades.

Returning from the Indian side through Sheola border at 6:00 pm yesterday, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Revenue, Sylhet Ahmed Shamim Al Razi, also co-ordinator of the regional survey team told this correspondent that it was agreed at a joint meeting held in the district of Karimganj in Assam.

Director survey Md Iqbal Hossain also joined the meeting while the Indian team included head of the boundary cell of the external affairs Girish Kumar, director of the land survey of Assam Sonmai Barua and deputy commissioner of Karimganj MKDas.

At the 6-hour long meeting we raised the claim on 140 acres of land on

Noagaon border in Beanibazar upazila of Sylhet district and on 359 acres on Pallathol border of Jury upazila in Moulvibazar district, said ADC Shamim al Razi.

They agreed to resume survey immediately as we presented the documents in support of our claims, he said.

Hopefully the survey will start tomorrow, he added.

Earlier, the Indo-Bangla joint survey of the Sylhet-Meghalaya border stumbled for the fourth time as Bangladesh team could not do their job on the Protappur-Padua border in the face of resistance by the Indians on Wednesday.

An official informed that the survey team went to the border at about 10:30am. But they could not reach the adversely possessed lands (APL), close to border pillar 1271, in face of resistance by Indians. Waiting for over two hours they had to come back, he said.

Sources said, over 200 acres of land are under Indian possession for long on the said border. The BDR and BSF locked in several clashes and traded thousands of gunshots during the last few years. In 2001, BDR captured a part of the area, but they had to retreat later.

The border people are opposing the survey as they fear that the lands would be handed over to the Indians in the name of joint survey.

The joint survey on the APL on the said borders was suspended on several occasions since 20 June in face of protests by border people at different points. However it resumed 13 July after the administration held several view exchange meetings with the locals to allay their fear.

The officials told the locals that the survey is being held to resolve problems, not to hand over their lands to Indians.



PHOTO: STAR

Heavy downpour during the last two days submerged Rasulpur-Bakchar road and several other areas of Satkhira town.

HEAVY RAIN FOR TWO DAYS

Most houses in low-lying areas of Satkhira town inundated

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Several areas of the town have become badly waterlogged due to continuous rain over the last two days.

The situation has made life of around 35,000 people miserable in the low-lying areas where their houses are now under knee-deep water.

Their sufferings increased manifold as at least ten roads of the town went under three to four feet rainwater.

Due to lack of drainage system, low-lying areas of the town get waterlogged after a small shower almost every year but the authori-

ties concerned seem indifferent to the problem, town dwellers alleged.

The most affected areas are Kamalnagar, Raispur, Rasulpur, Mehediabag Palashpole Rasulpur, Palashpole, Madhu

Mallardangi, Sultanpur, Rothkhola, Katia Sarkar Para, Master Para, Daulatpur, Kamal Nagar, Itagachha, Baddipur and Chaltetala where most of the houses went under water.

Satkhira police line has also been inundated.

The affected roads are Rasulpur-Bakchara intersection road, Rasulpur High School road, Police Line road, Palashpole road,

Ratkhola College road, Sultanpur road, Raispur road, Daulatpur road, Madhu Mallardangi road, Kamal Nagar road, Court road, Ghoshpara road and Baddipur road.

Rainwater remains stagnant creating water-logging in these areas during the rainy season almost every year for lack of proper drainage, locals said.

People including children were seen catching fish in Rasulpur road, Rathkhola College road, Raispur and Daulatpur roads in the town.

Contacted, Satkhira panel mayor Sheikh Safique ud-Dowla Sagar said they

had a plan to solve the problem but it could not be implemented due to fund constraints.

Sources said, almost all the low-lying areas in Assassuni, Tala, Kaliganj, Debhata, Shyanmagar and Sadar upazilas were flooded due to rain in the last two days.

Over two hundred kutcha houses in the affected areas were damaged and over 700 shrimp enclosures were washed away. Standing crops on vast areas were also submerged.

The affected people are suffering a lot as their houses are now under knee-deep water.



PHOTO: STAR

A farmer puts bundle of harvested jute plants in canal water at Dumurtala village in Narail Sadar upazila for rotting on Tuesday. Growers in Narail and Jessore districts have started harvesting the cash crop a bit early this season in order to have the lands ready for aman paddy cultivation.

Bad omen for jute growers

Low price at local markets of two districts

PONUEL S BOSE, back to Narail from Jessore

Farmers in Jessore and Narail districts started early jute harvest hoping to get higher prices and cultivate this season's Ropa-Aman paddy in the same field.

But the hopes of many have already faded as the golden fiber is being sold here at prices lower than that of last year's.

Still the fibre is coming to the local markets. While visiting the markets a few days ago, this correspondent found that each maund of raw jute is being sold at Tk 1,200 to 1,400 which is around half of last year's prices for all varieties.

This season, the farmers of the two districts cultivated jute

on 53,410 hectares (29,050 hectares in Jessore and 24,360 in Narail) of land as against the target of 52,993 hectares (33,730 hectares in Jessore and 19,269 in Narail) while the production target set by the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) was 2,46,599 bell (5 maund=1 bell).

As jute was sold at Tk 1800-2800 per maund last year, its cultivation this season was viewed by the farmers as more profitable than other crops in the region.

Several farmers said last year's higher prices and scope to cultivate Ropa-Aman on the same land encouraged them to harvest jute early although they usually reap it between late August and September.

Ropa-Aman paddy culti-

vation period starts July 1 and harvesting starts on October 15. So, the farmers are harvesting jute to prepare their land for planting paddy.

The jute production target is likely to exceed this year as farmers are expecting to get 35 to 40 maunds (one maund = 40 kg) per acre (100 decimals) while the cultivation cost for each acre stood at Tk 30,000, DAE sources said.

While visiting different areas, this correspondent saw a festive mood all around as the farmers and their family members including wife, sons and daughters were engaged in processing jute.

A farmer at Rajnagar village of Sharsha upazila under Jessore district said, "A labourer has to be paid Tk

400 per day while the harvest needs other processing too to make it ready for marketing. If proper price is not fixed, farmers would be deprived and discouraged."

Somir Biswas, a farmer at Bahirdanga village under Sadar upazila in Narail said, "I sold 37 maunds of jute at Tk 1,400 per maund. The price is too disappointing compared to my production cost."

Dr Sunil Kumar Roy, regional project manager of Second Crop Diversification Project in Jessore region, said bumper production of jute in the region is one of the reasons for dropping of price. The government should buy green jute at a fair price from the farmers to keep them in good spirit, he added.

Mother, daughter murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

A mother and her three-year-old daughter were murdered allegedly by a buyer of scrap items in Kishoreganj town yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Salma Begum, 30, wife of local businessman Asaduzzama Tipu, and their daughter Sabah.

Domestic help Khairul, 8, said Rabiul, a local buyer of scrap items, came to the house at Gaital Srinagar in the town at around 3:00pm to buy scrap items. "I went to a nearby shop to purchase some goods for the house. After I returned to the house, I found the blood-stained bodies of khalamma (Salma) and Sabah lying in a room," Khairul said.

Hearing screams of Khairul, locals rushed to the house and took Salma and Sabah to a local hospital where the doctors declared them dead.

Akbar Ali, brother of slain Salma, said Rabiul entered the house in the name of purchasing scrap items in absence of Salma's husband Tipu and their only surviving daughter Etu, 13, a class seven student of Kishoreganj SB Govt Girls' High School.

Asaduzzaman Tipu said Rabiul killed his wife and daughter and took away Tk one lakh, breaking the lock of almira. He filed a murder case against Rabiul who fled the area soon after the incident.

The bodies were sent to Kishoreganj Adhunik Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Litan Kumar Saha, additional police superintendent, said the bodies bore several injury marks. Police picked up three people-- Tipu's neighbour Rakib Mahbub, 35, Murshid Mia, 45, another local buyer of scrap items, and domestic help Khairul--for quizzing.

Rescued from hospital after six weeks of captivity

A CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Police on Wednesday evening arrested two directors and two staff of Bangabandhu Memorial Hospital at Mahiganj in Rangpur town on charge of confining a woman to a hospital room for one and a half months for failure to make full payment of her treatment bill.

Earlier the same evening, Rangpur Deputy Commissioner BM Enamul Hoque with help of police rescued the victim, Parveen Akter, wife of Shaheen of Kandrhat Pathokshikor village under Pargachha upazila, from the hospital.

On May 29, Shaheen and Parveen, both garment workers in Dhaka, were going to their Pathokshikor home. While getting down from a bus at Modern point in Rangpur, Parveen fell to the ground and received injuries to her uterus.

Her husband took her to Bangabandhu Memorial Hospital where Dr Jaharaton Ferdous Kona, a gynaecologist, operated upon her after examination.

Eight days later, Zahidul Islam, director of the hospital, told Shaheen that they would have to pay Tk 30,000 as treatment cost, Parveen said.

Shaheen told the director that he had to go to home to manage the money.

"After going home, my husband sent my mother Parul Begum with Tk 4000 to the hospital. My mother requested Zahidul Islam to take Tk 4000 and release me. Zahid took the money and asked my mother to bring rest of the amount to get me released from hospital," Parveen said.

Parul Begum went to her home at



Parveen Akter

Matidaly in Bogra district. She over phone several times requested Zahid to release her daughter but to no effect.

"The hospital management did not give me meals twice a day, snatched my mobile phone and created pressure on me to do unsocial activities. As I did not agree, they gave me death threat," Parveen told journalists at the police station after her rescue from captivity at the hospital on Wednesday evening.

Parveen lodged a case in this connection and police arrested hospital directors Jahidul Islam and Khairul Islam, manager Al Helal and nurse Modina Begum on charge of confining the woman unlawfully, said the officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station.

13 rescued, 'trafficker' arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Police yesterday rescued 13 people and arrested an alleged human trafficker from a residential hotel at Burimari land port in Patgram upazila.

The victims were brought to the border area mostly from Chandpur and Tangail districts allegedly by Sekendar Ali, 53, son of late Hazi Akbor Ali at Kharuni village of Borura upazila in Comilla, said police.

The rescued 13 are Swapon Miah, 28, son of Azizul Haque, Manik Miah, 28, son of Abu Taher, Shipon Miah, 36, son of late Abdur Rashid, Rafique Miah, 28, son of Hazrat Ali, Shahadat Ali, 45, son of late Nur Islam-- all from Baghabari Chowdhury Bari village in Kochua upazila of Chandpur district, Ripon

Islam, 26, son of late Foyzuddin, Yunus Ali, 27, son of Hasen Ali, Humayun Mollah, 30, son of late Mohammad Ali, Rahim Uddin, 28, son of Abdul Gofur of Snowtiya village in Kalihati upazila of Tangail district, Selim Miah, 24, son of Fazar Ali at Kusumpur village in Kochua upazila of Chandpur, Rasel Shaikh, 22, son of Kashem Shaikh at Arishai village of the same upazila, Belal Hossain, 32, son of late Keramat Ali at Bortula village of the same upazila and Manik Islam, 22, son of Humayun Kabir at Pilgrapi village of Borura upazila in Comilla.

Police said, a Patgram PS team and Burimari immigration police jointly raided a residential hotel in Sakhkhor Plaza yesterday morning and rescued the 13 victims and the alleged trafficker

Sekendar Ali who allegedly promised them to manage lucrative jobs at a construction firm in Bhutan.

He took Tk 50 thousand from each of the victims for the job and brought them from Dhaka on Wednesday night.

Victim Swapon Miah said, "We were jobless. So we gave him the money as he offered us job with high salary".

Sekendar however claimed that his son Sahidul Islam works at a construction firm in Bhutan.

"My son told me to send some jobless people for the construction firm. So, I took Tk 50 thousand from each of 13 jobseekers to send them through the border."

OC of Patgram PSMurshidul Karim said, Sekendar Ali cheated all 13 people from Tangail and Chandpur districts as they have no legal papers to cross the border.

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