

Remove cross dams & sluice gates, revive Boral River

Demands rally in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Pabna

People from 15 upazilas of Pabna, Natore, Rajshahi and Sirajganj districts yesterday joined a rally demanding steps to save the Boral river.

Boral Protection Movement, Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (BAPA) and Bangladesh Paribesh Network (BEN) jointly organised the rally on the premises of Chatmohar upazila parishad.

Speakers at the rally urged the government to take up proper steps, including removal of cross dams and sluice gates to revive the 220-km-long river route.

In the first phase of the programme held at noon, Boral movement activists

highlighted the heritage of Boral River and discussed the adverse impact of the gradual destruction of Boral River on the environment in northern districts.

Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan spoke as the chief guest in the second phase of the rally in the afternoon.

Convener of Boral Protection Movement Gour Chandra Sarkar chaired the occasion.

The Boral River, originating from the confluence of the Padma at Chorghat in Rajshahi district and flowing through 15 upazilas of Rajshahi, Natore, Pabna and Sirajganj districts, has lost its navigability as there are five sluice gates and around 20

cross dams, speakers said at the function.

The river, once serving as important river link across Chalanbeel areas between Padma and Jamuna rivers, also played vital role for maintaining environmental balance in the region but it has turned into a narrow canal due to the government's immature planning, they said.

"The gradual destruction of the river started in 1985 when the then government set up two sluice gates at Chorghat and Nurnagar points of the river. Two cross dams were also set up in Chatmohar upazila under the district, dividing the river into four parts," said Md Mizanur Rahman, a key

organiser of 'Boral protection movement'.

"Later many dams and sluice gates were set up in 220 km river, causing damage to the river. People of Chalanbeel area have started movement to save the river as it is of vital importance for them, especially for agriculture and business," he said.

Secretary of BAPA Dr Abdul Matin, Coordinator of BEN Dr Md Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary of BAPA Sharif Jamil, Chatmohar upazila Awami League Secretary Shakhawat Hossain Shakho and upazila BNP Secretary Prof Abdul Mannan spoke on the occasion, among others.



Kuakata sea beach abuzz with visitors who thronged there to bid adieu to the passing year's last sunset yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



PHOTO: STAR

The Boral River, once serving as a major water route of 15 upazilas in Pabna, Sirajganj, Natore and Rajshahi districts, now can hardly be recognised as a river during the dry season as unplanned construction of cross dams has wreaked havoc on its flow.

One killed, 50 hurt in clash over capture of water body

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

One person was killed and 50 others were injured in a clash between two rival groups over capture of a water body in Tarail upazila yesterday.

The dead was identified as Md Edil Bhuiyan, 35, son of Md. Nizam Uddin Bhuiyan of Digidair village in the upazila.

Locals and police said the clash ensued at around 8:30am when the supporters of two members of Digidair Union Parishad--Md Asar Ali and Md Mukul Mia--tried to capture the water body at the village at around 8:30am.

Equipped with lethal weapons, the two groups swooped on each other,

leaving Edil Bhuiyan, supporter of UP member Asar Ali, dead on the spot and 50 others from from both sides injured.

Of the injured, 15 were admitted to the Upazila Heath Complex while the rest given first aid.

Faruq Ahmed, officer-in-charge (OC) of Tarail Police Station, said four people were arrested at the village for their alleged involvement in the incident. Additional police have been deployed at the village to avert any further trouble, he added.

Meanwhile, at least 10 people were injured in a clash between two groups of people at Maniknagar Sardarpara village in Bera upazila on Friday.

The supporters of Full Haque of

nearby Koitala village and Raihan Ali of Sarderpara village had an altercation over a trifling matter at noon, reports UNB.

Later, a group of 50 supporters led by Full Haque attacked the houses Raihan and his men in Maniknagar Sardarpara village. They also vandalised 10 houses and three shops.

At least 10 people were injured during the attack. Of them, Arshad, Al Mahmud, Mamun, Nurjahan, Mukul and Amena were admitted to the upazila health complex.

On information, law enforcers police from Bera Police Station rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control. Additional police have been deployed in the area.

Tipai dam to bring disaster

Speakers tell Sylhet seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,
Sylhet

Speakers at a seminar in Sylhet yesterday expressed concern over the Indian initiative to construct Tipaimukh dam defying objection of the people of Bangladesh and India's north-eastern region.

"Tipaimukh dam would be a great threat for Bangladesh's existence as one third of the country would face desertification due to withdrawal of water for the mega project," former chief Justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury said in his address as chief guest.

"Four crore people will be affected. So, we have to be united on the issue. The Bangladesh government

has to make their stance clear over the Tipai issue," Chowdhury added.

At the seminar organised by Tipai Bandh Sammilita Sangram Parishad at the district Bar association hall, Manarat University Vice Chancellor Professor MA Rab read out a paper titled 'Tipaimukh Dam, a Death Trap for Bangladesh'.

The dam will badly reduce the flow of Surma and Kushiya rivers in winter and trigger river erosion and flood in the rainy season, making hundreds of thousands of people of greater Sylhet region homeless, speakers said at the seminar.

The dam will also affect the Meghna River, create severe water crisis in Bangladesh's north-eastern region, greatly affect agriculture and threaten food security, they said.

According to Indian media report, construction work for Tipaimukh dam will start within a few weeks and complete by the end of 2012, they added.

Fishermen, river transport workers and owners and others whose liveli-

hood is linked to uninterrupted flow of Surma, Kushiya and Meghna rivers have voiced grave concern over attempt to build Tipaimukh dam, they said, adding that experts in India said the dam would affect Monipur and Assam states too.

658 farms in Khulna on bird flu alert

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,
Khulna

Six hundred and fifty-eight poultry farms in nine upazilas of Khulna district and in the city have been asked to remain on high alert against outbreak of bird flu.

Khulna District Livestock Officer Dr Md Nizamuddin said he has asked all poultry farm owners on Wednesday to take precautionary measures

against spread of bird flu.

At least 2,000 poultry birds infected with the disease had to be culled in last 12 days in Rupsha upazila of the district and Baniakhamar area of the city.

Apart from daily monitoring, we are holding regular meetings at the upazila level to create awareness among the farm owners and the people on how to take preventive measures against bird flu, he said.



PHOTO: STAR

A Rouf Chowdhury, chairman of Bank Asia, with the meritorious students of Malkhanagar, Sirajdikhan and Baligaon of Mubnshiganj district and Rohitpur of Keraniganj of Dhaka district as they receive Bank Asia Higher Study Scholarship 2011 at a simple ceremony at Sirajdikhan upazila auditorium yesterday.

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