

# Mosque of 'brotherhood' near Indo-Bangla border

KONGKON KARMAKAR, Dinajpur

A mosque near the zero line at Srikrishnapur village under Hili police station of Dakkhin Dinajpur in Indian state of Paschim Banga is regularly thronged with people from both sides of Bangladesh-India border as Muslims of the neighbouring villages offer daily prayers there.

"Around 200 people of both the countries daily offer their prayers together at the mosque. We maintain brotherhood although we have been separated geographically since the partition of 1947," said Md Shajahan of Jamalpur village in Hili Thana of

Dakkhin Dinajpur. Idris Ali Master of Dakkhin Daudpur village in Birampur upazila of Dinajpur is the imam of the mosque located between 26 and 27 sub pillars of 289 main pillar of India-Bangladesh border.

The mosque was founded about 150 years ago, said Boyan Uddin, 65, a resident of Dakkhin Daudpur village, and a ward member of Katla union parishad in Birampur upazila.

"We are separated geographically, but it could not separate our minds. Neighbouring villagers of both the countries interact on a regular basis," he said. "We share our joys and

sorrows. We don't know much about border laws but we know each other very well," said Md Rezzak Hossain, a resident of Jamalpur village in Hili Thana under Dakkhin Dinajpur.

Villagers said they maintain brotherhood and harmony as they have friends and relatives in both countries.

However, the situation turns different when tension prevails between Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) due to unwanted situations in the border area.

"Fearing atrocities of border security men, we cannot offer prayers at the

mosque during such situations," said a villager.

During a recent visit to the area, this correspondent found that prayers at the mosque remained suspended as border security men of both the countries remained alert over the March 5 incident at Jamalganj village under Hili Thana of Dakkhin Dinajpur.

BSF injured three Bangladeshi people and detained one of them early morning of March 5 while two others managed to enter Bangladesh territory, said the villagers.

Md Golam Hossain, 26, one of the victims of March 5 incident, died at a Rangpur clinic on March 9. His body was brought to Dakkhin Daudpur village under Birampur upazila of Dinajpur on the night.

Hossain was a resident of a house inside Bangladesh territory adjacent to the mosque close to the zero line and his namaj-e-janaja was supposed to be held at the mosque.

But due to 'too strict' surveillance by the border guards of the two countries, the namaj-e-janaja was held in an area inside Bangladesh territory on March 10.

However, villagers from both sides of the border took part in his janaja and burial at a local graveyard, said Nazim Uddin, a resident of Dakkhin Daudpur village in Birampur upazila.



PHOTO: STAR  
This 150-year-old mosque near the 'zero line' at Srikrishnapur village under Hili police station of Dakkhin Dinajpur in Indian state of Pashchimbanga serves as the symbol of fraternity among residents of several neighbouring villages on both sides of the India-Bangladesh border as a good number of Muslims of the area offer daily prayers there.

# 7 injured as BNP factions clash in Lalmonirhat

## Pabna dissidents to form committee

STAR NATIONAL DESK

At least seven people were injured as two factions of BNP clashed at Shialkhowa Bazar in Kaliganj upazila of Lalmonirhat district on Monday night.

Police said the rival groups, one led by district BNP Vice-President Saleh Uddin Ahmed Helal and the other by district unit Organising Secretary Rokan Uddin Babul, locked in a clash at the bazar at around 8:00 to establish their supremacy in the area.

At least seven activists from both sides were injured and three motorbikes vandalised during the clash that continued for half an hour, according to our correspondent.

On information, police rushed to spot and dispersed the clashing groups. The injured are Bappi Islam, Firoz Kobir, Aminur Islam, Sobur Ali, Ataur Rahman,

Jalil Miah and Mominul Islam. They are undergoing treatment at Kaliganj Upazila Health Complex.

Rokan blamed his rival party men for the incident. He said Helal's men were trying to take control of the market, assaulted his supporters and vandalised their motorbikes.

Refuting the allegations, Helal held the supporters of Rokan responsible for the clash. No case in connection with the incident was filed with Kaliganj Police Station as of 5:00pm yesterday.

Meanwhile, Aggrieved Pabna BNP men, who were not included in the new district unit formed in January this year, have decided to form a committee and hold central programmes separately.

They decided to meet from a meeting held in the town on the night of April 15, reports our correspondent.

Chaired by district BNP leader Saiful Islam Badsha, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Pabna municipality mayor Kamrul Hassan Mintu, Jubo Dal district unit secretary Mosabbir Hossain Sanju and BNP leaders Maksudul Haque Firoz and Mosharaf Hossain.

They rejected the new committee, alleging that it was formed without taking opinion of the upazila and union committees. Moreover, dedicated party men have been excluded from the committee, they said.

BNP leaders and activists of 10 unions in Pabna Sadar upazila and the leaders, who have been dropped from the new committee, joined the meeting.

A 172-member Pabna district unit with Major KS Mahamud as president and Habibur Rahman Tota as secretary was approved by the central committee on January 22.

# Precious statue seized

UNB, Benapole, Jessore

Police recovered a 'gold-made' ancient statue of a Hindu god at Uttarpara of Bhaturia in Sadar upazila yesterday.

Villagers said, day-labourer Tajibor Rahman found the statue, weighing 500 gram and worth over Tk 1 crore, while cleaning Tajjeler Pukur (pond) near Shib Bari Bridge and brought it to his house and kept it there on Monday.

As the news spread, local gangsters, including Kamal, Razzak, Arshad, Harun, Mannan and Anisur stormed into Tajibor's house at night and took away the statue at gun point.

Being informed, a team from Kotwali Model PS raided different places of the village and seized the idol from the gangsters and brought it to the police station yesterday.

Officer in-charge (OC) Abdul Jalil said they kept the gold-made idol at the police station.

# Mob beat 'robber' dead

UNB, Comilla

An alleged robber was killed in mob beating at Itakhola village in Daudkandi upazila yesterday.

The identity of the deceased, aged about 38, could not be known immediately.

OC of Daudkandi PS said, a gang entered the house of Habibur Rahman, a farmer, to commit robbery at about 3am.

As the members of the house raised a hue and cry, neighbours rushed to the spot and encircled the house. They captured one of the gangsters while the rest managed to escape.

The angry villagers beat the alleged robber black and blue leaving him dead on the spot.

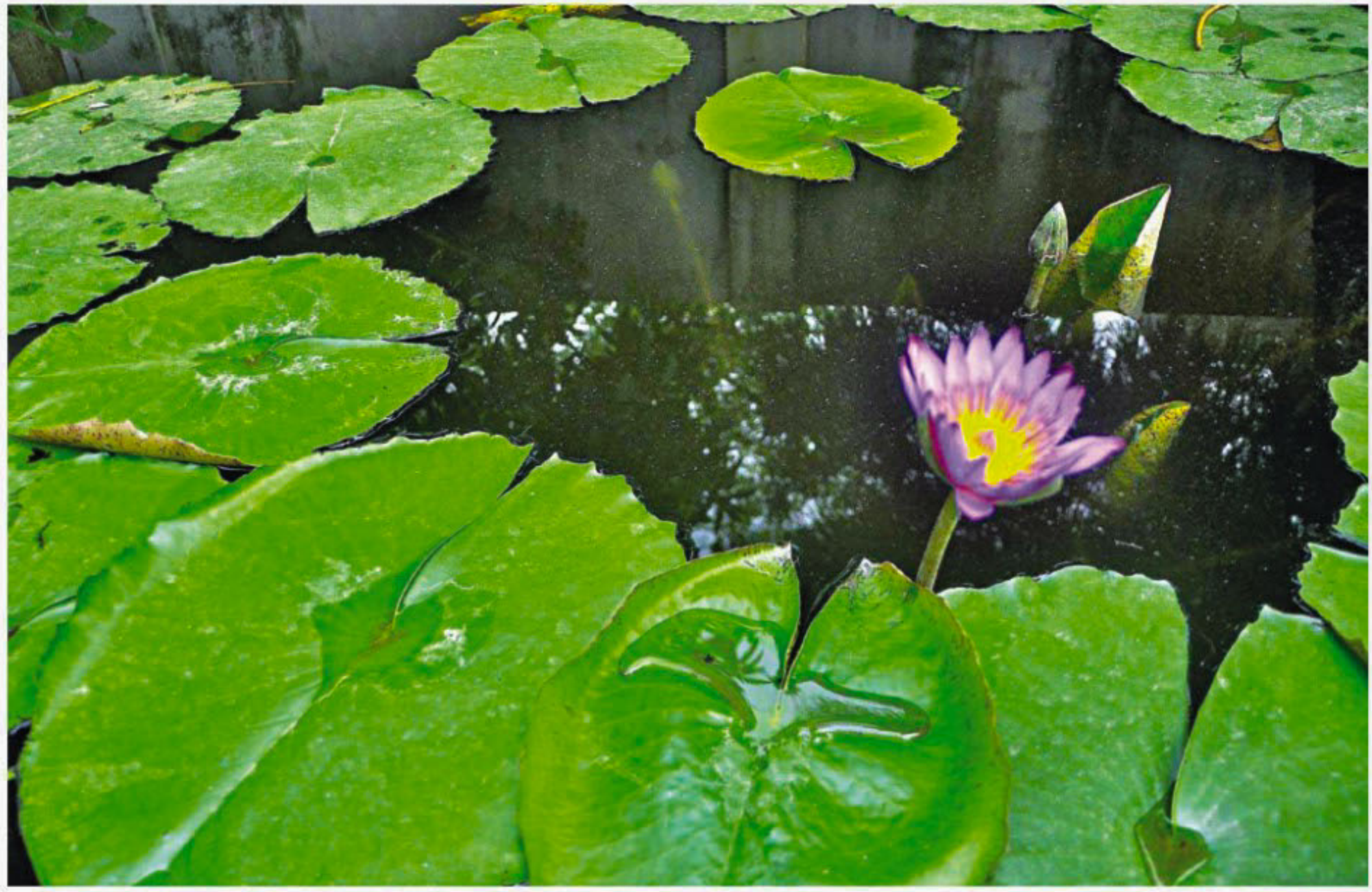


PHOTO: STAR  
A rarely seen lotus, locally known as neel padma, adorns a water body at Boalia police station intersection in Rajshahi city.

# No convocation held at RU in the last 14 years

AM JAHID, RU

Rajshahi University (RU) has not seen any convocation in the last fourteen years.

The university authorities arranged it only seven times since the university started its journey in 1953 while that last one was held on November 29, 1998.

A few teachers and students alleged that the authorities are not holding convocation due to indifference and political discord on the campus.

Zulfiqar Ahmed, assistant professor of Law and Justice department, blamed both the present and previous authorities for failure to arrange the convocation.

Prof Malay Kumar Bhoumick of Management department, said convocation is a part of university culture. When the authorities fail to hold it over years, one can raise questions regarding the standard of

the education at the university, he said.

A number of students alleged that session jam was prevailing in many departments for the last several years spoiling valuable time of their life.

They believed that if convocation was held every year, those departments would have completed their academic year in right time to take part in the convocation.

Amanullah Asad, who recently completed his Masters degree from Mass Communication and Journalism department, said he had long cherished to receive certificate from the university Chancellor.

"But, I believe my dream will never come true."

Prof Moazzam Hossain Khan, president of Rajshahi University Teachers' Association (RUTA), said the authorities could not

arrange convocation due to political discord on the campus.

He also blamed the then pro-BNP-Jamaat administration for not taking any initiatives to hold convocation.

On September 16, last year, vice chancellor Prof Abdus Sobhan, at a view exchange meeting said that the authorities were taking steps to hold the eighth convocation by March, 2012.

However, pro-vice chancellor Prof Muhammad Nurullah said there was no chance to hold the convocation within the deadline now as the authorities are yet to get a nod in this regard from the education ministry.

He said that the authorities wrote to the Chancellor and President Zillur Rahman for holding the convocation this year.

"We hope to hold it by November this year", he said.

# Brothers of Mizan taking away all donation

Alleges wife of slain teacher of Natore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Razia Sultana, wife of slain Natore college teacher Mizanur Rashid, yesterday alleged that her brothers-in-law took away the money given as donation by different organisations after his death.

They also withdrew Tk 56,000 from Mizan's DPS (Deposit Pension Scheme) account with a bank and grabbed his landed property, alleged Razia, also a teacher of Banerwar Degree College in Putia upazila of Rajshahi.

She made the allegations at a press conference held at a restaurant in the city.

Razia's five-year-old daughter Nusra Rashid Momo, father-in-law Shawkat Alam, Jatiya Mohila Sangstha Chairman Morjina Parveen and Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association Coordinator Dil Sitara Begum were present at the conference.

Mizan, a chemistry teacher of Lokmanpur College in Bagatipara upazila of Natore, was critically injured as two stalkers ran a motorcycle into him and hit with an iron rod at Lokmanpur Bazar on October 12 in 2010 as he protested stalking of his college girls.

He succumbed to his injuries at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University in the capital on October 24.

The stalkers—Abdul Awal Rajon and Mamunur Rashid Asif—were given life imprisonment by a Rajshahi court on February 7 last year.

Razia told the conference that different organisations, including Dutch-Bangla Bank, Janata Bank and Rajshahi district and police administration, gave Tk 15.45 lakh after the death of her husband. Of the amount, Mamunur Rashid and Harunur Rashid took away Tk 7.50 lakh, she alleged.

She further alleged that Mamun and Zaman captured all her household belongings and eight tolas of gold ornaments from her Rajpara residence in Rajshahi city.

"Recently, I filed a GD with Rajpara Police Station as my brother-in-law Zaman gave me a death threat," she told the conference.

Razia consulted with Jatiya Mohila Sangstha and Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association. Both organisations have sent legal notices to her brothers-in-law.

Contacted, one of Razia's brothers-in-law Mamunur Rashid refuted all allegations brought against him and his brothers. He said Razia herself withdrew the money from banks.

Razia said she is taking preparations to file a case against her brothers-in-law.



PHOTO: STAR  
Dr Beth Cullen, a scientist of International Livestock Research Institute, makes a presentation on the findings of her research on the role of crop residue and stubble in restoration and retention of soil fertility at the workshop held at the auditorium of Dinajpur Wheat Research Institute yesterday.

# 'Use of crop residues, stubble helps retain land fertility'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Farmers can greatly benefit through restoration and retention of land fertility if crop residues and stubble are used in the field, said scientists at a workshop organised by International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) at Dinajpur yesterday.

Huge crop residues that are wasted every year can also be used as fodder, said the scientists at the workshop held at the auditorium of Dinajpur Wheat Research Institute (WRC).

Dr Jalal Uddin, director of WRC, was present as chief guest while Md Abdul Mannaf, chief scientific officer of WRC, and Dr Rezaur Rahman Sarker, district livestock officer of Dinajpur, were present as special guests.

Dr Beth Cullen and Dr Braja Bandhu Swain of ILRI and Dr Elahi Baksh of WRC made presentations on their research on use of crop residues.

Leaving crop residues and stubble in the field has numerous benefits including minimising water and soil erosion, and returning valuable nutrients like carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulfur, calcium and magnesium to the soil, said Dr Abdul Mannaf.

ILRI and International Wheat and Maize

Improvement Centre have been working as part of the System-wide Livestock Programme on crop-livestock interaction in Dinajpur since May 2010.

The study aims at better understanding tradeoffs in crop residue use in cereal based systems in four regions: millet, sorghum, maize based systems in West Africa; maize based systems in Eastern and Southern Africa; and wheat/rice based systems in South Asia.

Dinajpur is one of the South Asian study sites selected for the project.

The major tradeoffs in most systems are the short term benefits of using crop residues to feed livestock versus leaving crop residues in the field to improve soil productivity that comprises nutrient balance, erosion control, and soil health.

The study focuses on capturing the diversity of crop residue use at various scales as well as decision making processes at farm level. The aim is to identify technical, institutional and policy options to improve livelihoods without compromising long term system sustainability.

Agricultural economists from WRC in Dinajpur are involved in the project works including data collection and validation of survey results.



PHOTO: STAR  
Dug out earth and construction materials are haphazardly kept on the road adjacent to Mominunnesa Government Girls' College in Mymensingh town, much to the trouble of commuters and pedestrians, especially the students attending the ongoing HSC examinations.