

## CHAOS AT PABNA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

# Five students arrested on case filing, later expelled

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Pabna

The authorities of Pabna University of Science and Technology yesterday expelled five students following their arrest on charge of unruly activists earlier on the day.

The authorities also announced closure of the university from August 5 to September 4 'on the occasion of August 15, Eid-ul-Fitr, and puja'.

The expelled students are Md Baki Billah of computer science and engineering, also convener of the 'students' agitation committee', Mahadi Hassan of physics, Sajjad Hossain Jitu and Khalid Hossain of mathematics, and Al Amin of electrical and electronic engineering department.

"According to the decision of the 16th Regent Board meeting, the five students have been expelled from the institution for violating university law," said a press release issued by Bijon Kumar Bromma, deputy registrar of the university.

University sources, however, said there was actually no meeting of the Regent Board, the highest administrative committee of the university, yesterday although officially all the papers were prepared for holding it.

Talking to the members of the Regent Board, it was learnt that most of them did not even know about the meeting yesterday.

"University authorities issue notice to us before holding Regent Board meet-

ing. But I did not know of any Regent Board meeting today [Wednesday]," Md Tanvirul Haque, chairman of Rajshahi education board, also a member of PUST Regent Board, told this correspondent yesterday.

When this correspondent visited the university administrative building to collect information about the Regent Board meeting, the vice chancellor, the registrar and other high officials declined to talk to journalists. Even their cell phones were found switched off in the afternoon.

Earlier in the morning, police arrested five students of the university when agi-

tating students gathered at Mojahid Club area near the university.

"Police arrested them following a case filed by the university proctor accusing 30/35 students on charge of attacking teachers of the university today," said Md Afzal Hossain, officer in charge of Pabna Sadar police station.

The university authorities could not start classes yesterday due to students' agitation.

Talking with this correspondent, agitating students claimed they did not attack the proctor or teachers.

They vowed to continue movement until realisation of their demands.

The students started agitation demanding removal of the vice chancellor on July 29.

Earlier on July 17, agitated students started demonstration with their eight-point demands that include introduction of 'short semester system' for promotion, amendment to present GPA (Grade Point Average) system, cancellation of results published according to the running GPA system, eight years' registration validity instead of present six years, recruitment of experienced teachers, construction of university campus hurriedly, and end to 'ill-treatment' by the teachers.



PHOTO: STAR

**Students of Pabna University of Science and Technology stage a sit-in on the road in front of the administrative building after parading the town (inset) yesterday demanding release of five students arrested on charge of unruly activities on the campus earlier on the day.**



## Gecko freed, 3 poachers jailed

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Khagrachhari

A mobile court here on yesterday sentenced three poachers to six months' imprisonment for smuggling gecko, a kind of reptile, locally known as 'takkhok'.

The convicts are Sobuj Dash, 37, son of Hamonta Dash from Bashkhali area of Chittagong district, Mohammad Omar Faruk, 34, son of Mokhlasur Rahman of Trishalpur area of Mymensingh district and Udyan Chakma, 34, son of Paddashan Chakma of Dighinala upazila town in Khagrachhari district.

Officer in-charge of Khagrachhari police station Mostafizur Rahman said, police arrested the three poachers along with a caged gecko and Tk 14,000 in cash, from a local hotel in the district town around 09:30pm of Tuesday.

## 2 abducted in Laxmichhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Khagrachhari

Two villagers were allegedly abducted from Marachanghimukh Para and Jatindrakarbari Para under Laxmichhari upazila of the district early yesterday.

The victims are Jotimoy Chakma, 30, son of Rajkumar Chakma of Marachanghimukh Para and Karuna Chakma, 32, son of Probin Chakma of Jatindrakarbari Para under the upazila, locals said.

Officer in-charge of Laxmichhari police station Mohammad Kamrul however said that they had heard about the incidents. None came to file any complaint, he added.



COURTESY: FIDA

**A farmer of Nandigram in Bogra district planting paddy seedlings using Tegra technology. The system increases yield by around 20 percent and reduces dependence on labourers. Inset, seedlings raised under the package.**



# Tegra, a farming package that increases rice output

BSS, Bogra

Shamsher Ali of Nandigram upazila of Bogra district is confident of getting better Aman crop than many other farmers in his neighbourhood this year as he has mechanised his paddy farming with the help of a leading global life science company.

"Insha'Allah, I'll get more rice this year using the modern technology" said a beaming Ali.

Like Ali, Mohammad Aftab Uddin and a few other co-villagers are also replacing their traditional crop growing by a modern way of paddy farming named Tegra.

Tegra, a brand name developed by Switzerland-based multi-national company Syngenta, is a farming package comprising of seed, raised seedlings, transplanting, labour for logistics while transplanting and application of herbicides at the time of transplanting, besides advisory on agro-nomic practices.

"Farmers will get at least 20 percent more crop by using Tegra as this solution provides them with comprehensive services to ensure risk and tension-free paddy production," Dr ABM Ziaur Rahman, head of Tegra in Bangladesh told a group of

journalists who went to see the use of Tegra in the district.

FIDA, an organisation for agriculture reporters organised the field visit, in association with Syngenta, Bangladesh.

Syngenta, after successful launching of Tegra in India in 2009, introduced the mechanised paddy farming services this year in Bangladesh on 150 acres of land in Bogra district.

Many farmers in this area said they are dependant on labourers from neighbouring districts and disruption of labour flow often hinders paddy production.

Rahman said the technology would help farmers overcome labour shortage and rising cost of labourers besides enhancing the yields by an average of up to 20 percent.

Some farmers in Nandigram this year planted BRRI 32 and BRRI 59 on 150 acres of land by using Tegra, a four-stage comprehensive services for paddy cultivation.

At the first phase, paddy seeds are placed in specially designed trays by a machine, which puts rice bran, water, nutrients and chemicals there. The trays are then taken to the seedling area where a team looks after the seedling process that takes 16 days.

"This is much earlier than the traditional process of growing seedling, which takes 30 days or more," Rahman said.

After 16 days, the seedlings are taken to the paddy field and transplanted by a machine, which effectively replaces the age old time consuming hand transplantation process.

The younger seedlings can produce as many as 50 tillers per hill whereas farmers produce only 30 tillers in their usual process.

"More tillers mean more grain-bearing panicles," Rahman said and added that the machine also helps farmers save seeds as it plants two seedling per hill compared to the traditional 4 to 6 seedlings per hill.

Farmer Ali said the price of a smaller version of the transplanter is around Tk 300,000. But, currently he is getting the comprehensive services from Syngenta for Tk 4,500 per acre, which is almost same as manual farming process.

He said the transplanter also helps save time and labourers as only two persons can plant 4-5 acres a day. Besides, the machine consumes only half a litre of fuel oil per hour.

## SNIPPETS

### Abducted girl rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Police rescued a college girl on Tuesday night after four days of abduction from her house. Hailing from Gilapal village under Sadar upazila, the 18-year old girl passed the HSC examination this year. Officer in charge (OC) of Sadar police station Iqbal Bahar Chowdhury said, on Saturday last a gang entered her house at night and abducted the girl tying her parents. Later the abductors demanded Tk five lakh as ransom.

### Two girls drown

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Two girls drowned at Bamundighi and Baradap villages under Atwary upazila in Panchagarh on Tuesday. Locals said Runa, 14, mentally challenged daughter of Quaiumuddin of Bamundighi village went missing on Monday evening. Family members later found her body floating in a pond near their house on Tuesday. In another incident, two-year old daughter of Santa Ghosh of Baradap village fell into a ditch beside their house at around 10:00 am on Tuesday and drowned.

### Outlaw held with arms

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a 'regional leader' of outlawed PBCP Red Flag faction with firearms from Bhelupara village in Ishwardi upazila on Tuesday night. The arrestee is Md. Shahidul Islam alias Kuni Shahid, 56, son of Hassen Khan of village Choradanga in Ataikula PS of the district. Rab said, acting on a tip off, a Rab-12 team from Pabna camp led by K.M. Tanvir Anwar, raided Alhaj More of Bhelupara at about 11.45 pm as a few criminals were hiding there. During the drive, Rab arrested Shaid from the spot and recovered a revolver and three bullets from his possession. Officer in charge of Ataikula police station Md. Robiul Hassan said Kuni Shahid was one of the most wanted criminals in the district.

### Housewife tortured for dowry

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Madaripur

A housewife was tortured allegedly by her in-laws for failing to meet their dowry demand at Naraynpur village under Rajoir upazila of the district on Monday. Minara Begum, 22, daughter of Abdul Latif Boyati of Nagar Goadi village under the same upazila, is now undergoing treatment at Rajoir upazila health complex. Family members said Minara was married to Mosharaf Shikder of Naraynpur village under the same upazila eight years ago. After the marriage, Mosharaf and his family members often tortured her for dowry. The victim told this correspondent at the hospital that at about 3:00am on Monday, her brother-in-laws Bayjed and Sujon along with five to seven others beat her up, leaving her unconscious. Later Minara's father rescued her in a seriously injured condition with the help of Rajoir police.

# Roadblock protesting hike in toll for crossing bridge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, C'nawabganj

Vehicular movement on Chapainawabganj-Sonamasjid highway remained halted for six and a half hours from 6:00am yesterday as transport workers blocked the road protesting hike in toll for crossing Birshreshtha Captain Mohiuddin Jahangir Bridge.

The Roads and Highways Department has increased toll for vehicles crossing the bridge over the Mahananda River with effect from midnight on Tuesday.

Angered by the decision, drivers and helpers of buses, minibuses and trucks blocked the highway, keeping vehicles haphazardly near the toll plaza in the town and Baroghoria point.

Several hundred buses, trucks and other vehicles got stranded on both sides of the bridge, causing immense sufferings to the passengers and hampering smooth supply of goods.

On information, police rushed to the spots but failed to restore communication. Later, the district administration sat with the leaders of bus owners' association and Truck and Motor Workers' Union.

In the meeting, the district officials assured the transport leaders that the authorities concerned would collect toll from vehicles at earlier rate.

Following the assurance, transport workers withdrew the road blockade at around 12:30pm.

Monwarul Islam, president of Chapainawabganj Bus Owners' Association, and Sarwar Hossain, vice-president of District Truck and Motor workers' Union, told this correspondent that they called off the road blockade programme following a fruitful meeting with the district administration.

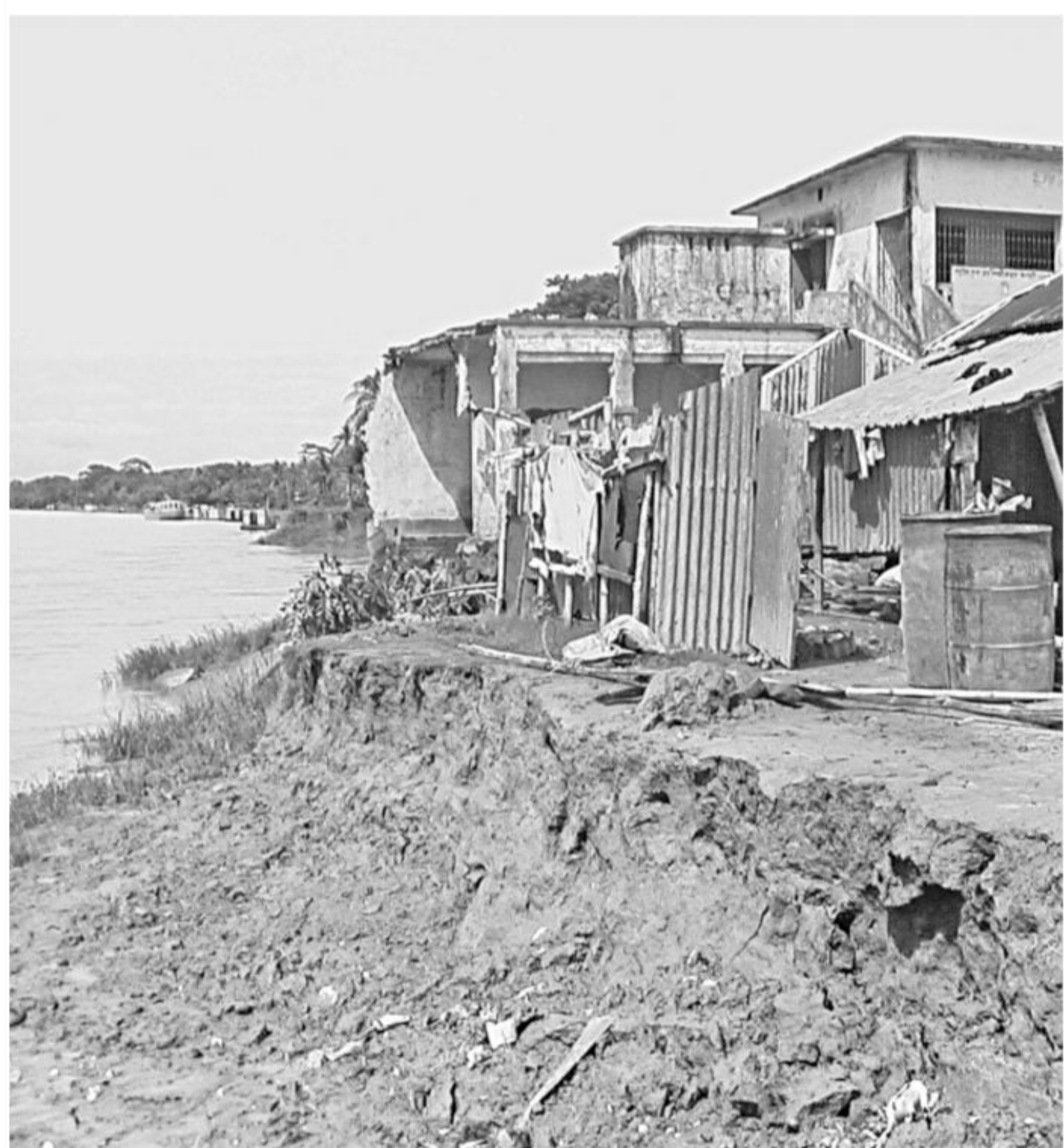


PHOTO: STAR

**The Naboganga River continues to erode homesteads and farmland in two unions under Kalia upazila of Narail district. Photo shows the river about to devour Hamidpur Union Parishad office at Hamidpur Bazar in the upazila.**

# Erosion renders 70 families homeless in Kalia of Narail

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Narail

Erosion by Naboganga River has taken a serious turn in Kalia upazila in the district, rendering around 70 families homeless in the last two weeks.

With the recession of water level in the Naboganga, the river started devouring large areas of cultivable lands, trees and structures in two unions under the upazila.

About 180 more families, their lands and homesteads, Debipur Govt. Primary School and Hamidpur Union Parishad building face serious threat by the river.

The erosion started three years ago. But last year, it took an alarming turn devouring a tract of cultivable land and leaving a good number of people landless, mostly marginal farmers.

Several hundred families of Salamabad and

Hamidpur unions in Kalia upazila of Narail have shifted their houses to safer places due to severe erosion by Naboganga in the last one month.

While visiting the erosion hit areas on Monday, this correspondent saw Debipur people hurriedly removing their houses as Naboganga river was eroding the village fast.

A large number of erosion victims could not shift their houses while many families were yet to get any support, either from government or from non-government sources, villagers said.

The affected areas are Debipur, Noldanga, Bahirdanga and Beel Baus of Salamabad union, and Bhompur, Mochandopur, Bisnupur, Babupur and Gazirhat Bazaar area of Hamidpur union.

Locals said about 70 families have been dis-

placed in the last two weeks while the erosion now threatens more than 180 other families.

Nikhil Das, 50, of Debipur village in Salamabad union, now landless by erosion, said "I had five acres of cropland. The river has devoured all my lands. Now I am staying with my family on others' land".

UNO of Kalia Mohammad Faruq said he visited the erosion affected areas and informed the matter to higher authorities.

"The erosion victims will get help if the authorities sanction fund for them," he said.

Contacted, executive engineer of local Water Development Board (WDB) Zulfikar Ali said he had nothing to do at the moment. We are preparing a design which will be submitted to higher authorities for preventive steps and funds, he added.