



PHOTO: STAR

Mindless sand lifting in the name of dredging has created many dangerous ditches in Tangon River between Riverview High School and Munshipara Graveyard in Thakurgaon municipal town. A six-year-old boy drowned in a ditch near Old Tangon Bridge on Monday noon, proving the people's fear that the ditches might turn into death traps any time.

## Poacher held with venison

A CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Police arrested a poacher along with eight kilograms of venison in Mongla upazila of the district early yesterday.

Arrestee Jahangir Fakir, 42, is son of Kayem Fakir of Khankarer Ber village in the upazila.

Acting on a tip-off, Mongla police conducted a raid at Joymonir Ghol and arrested Jahangir along with the venison around 11:30am, said Munirul Gias, acting officer in-charge of Mongla police station.

Two others managed to flee the scene with 15 kgs of venison, the police official said.

Jahangir and his two accomplices entered Sundarbans on Sunday and hunted the deer illegally on Monday. Later they slaughtered the deer to sell its hide and venison at high rate, he said.

A case was filed against Jahangir and two others with the police station.

Police said, in the last six months, they arrested at least 20 deer poachers along with venison, skins and bones from different areas of Sundarbans East Zone that falls in Bagerhat district.

## Kid's death in road mishap sparks protest

UNB, Narayanganj

Local people blocked Dhaka-Gopaldi road for three hours and set a bus ablaze following the death of a two-year-old boy under its wheels at Dairadi in Araihaajar upazila on Monday.

The deceased was identified as Taufin, son of Abdul Hannan of Dairadi village.

Police said, a Dhaka-bound bus from Gopaldi ran over Taufin when he was standing by the side of Dhaka-Gopaldi road, leaving him dead on the spot at around 4pm.

Locals chased the bus driver and caught him at Jalakandi after his vain attempt to escape with the vehicle.

Angry people beat him black and blue and set the bus on fire.

They blocked Dhaka-Gopaldi road from 4pm to 7pm over the accident, creating heavy traffic jam on both sides.

However, vehicular movement resumed at the road following police intervention at 7pm.

The body of Taufin was sent to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Gias Uddin, inspector (investigation) of Araihaajar PS, said additional police were deployed to avoid further trouble.

## MINDLESS SAND LIFTING IN THAKURGAON

# Ditches created in Tangon River now death traps

### Six-year-old boy first victim

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Six-year-old Shushanta Mohanta drowned on Monday as he fell into a 30-foot deep ditch created due to mindless sand lifting from Tangon River near Tangon Bridge in the town.

The tragic incident took place as Shushanta, son of Ratan Mohanta of Collegepara in Thakurgaon municipality, was taking bath in the river with some local boys at noon, locals said.

Hearing other children's cry for help, a few locals jumped into the river but they failed to rescue the boy alive. His body was recovered after half an hour.

The river has a depth of

less than 2-3 feet water upto 10-12 feet from the shore.

But several 30 to 40 feet deep holes appeared at different points in Tangon River from Riverview School to Munshipara in the town as a contractor of Water Development Board (WDB) has continued lifting sand with dredgers, locals said.

The ditches have become death traps for people, especially children, who get into the river for a bath, they said.

The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) officially put objection to the WDB as the vacuum in the river bed, caused by the sand lifting, poses threat to the nearby concrete bridge that serves as link between the district headquarters and four

upazilas.

A century-old iron bridge near Thakurgaon Shilpakala Academy auditorium in the town is also affected due to the callous act, RHD officials said.

The sand extraction near the two bridges is being done as part of WDB's Tk 80-lakh 'Thakurgaon Town Protection Project' that involves dredging an 1150 metre area of the Tangon River.

As per work schedule, sand lifting was supposed to be done up to eight-foot depth at a stretch. Violating the condition, the contractor is still lifting sand indiscriminately from 30-40-foot depth, sources said.

When contacted, RHD

Divisional Engineer Jahid Hossain said, "We sent a letter to the executive engineer of WDB on April 23 this year, asking him to stop the dredging within 50 metres of the bridge as sand lifting poses serious threat to the structure as well as embankments on the river."

WDB Executive Engineer Naimul Haque could not be contacted after repeated attempts as he did not respond to cell phone calls and was not present at his office in the afternoon.

Earlier on May 17, The Daily Star ran a report titled 'Sand lifting poses threat to two Thakurgaon bridges', describing the effects of indiscriminate dredging in the area.



PHOTO: STAR

Louhajang upazila parishad chairman under Munshiganj district felled at least 20 trees of Louhajang-Mawa Road at Kumarbhog village in the upazila to build what he said a boundary wall of his homestead along the road. The upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) and an engineer of the Roads and Highways Department said the chairman had cut down the trees without informing the authorities concerned and following procedure. Photo shows one of the felled trees on the road.

## Traffic jam now order of the day in Jessore town

UNB, Jessore

Traffic congestion has taken an alarming turn in most of the busy roads and points of the district town in the month of Ramadan, causing untold sufferings to the people.

Haphazard parking of rickshaws by the side of the markets, shopping centres and key installations are narrowing down the space for vehicles on the roads, hampering smooth traffic, town dwellers alleged.

Besides, the increasing number to battery-run auto-rickshaws plying different roads has added to the situation, they said.

An official of the municipality said they had provided licence to about 12,000 rickshaws and around 7,000 battery-run three-wheelers.

These three-wheeler drivers and the rickshaw pullers, most of whom are illiterate, do not go by the traffic rules, he said.

Sources said that most of the roads especially at busy points of the town are narrow and during the rush hours on special occasions like Eid and other religious festivals, they cannot accommodate the increased number of vehicles.

The important and busy points of the town that have been facing severe traffic congestion are Monihar Cinema and Doratana Square, Chowrasta, Hospital Road, Khajura Bus stand, Paulbari crossing, Chanchra crossing, Central Bus Terminal, Muroli Square, Civil court intersection, Rail station intersection and Dharmotola intersection.

When asked, Police Inspector (traffic) Mohammad Moslem Uddin said they have taken extra measures to ease traffic jam in the town during the current month of Ramadan.

Besides, a special drive is going on in the town to identify and seize the illegal and unfit vehicles, he added.

# Fierce clashes by BCL factions at IU: 25 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) Islamic University (IU) unit clashed on the campus and at a nearby bazar yesterday, leaving at least 25 activists from both sides injured.

The university BCL unit is divided into two groups. One is led by President Jahangir Hossain and General Secretary Shamsuzzaman Tuhin, while the other by organising secretaries Abu Jar Gifari Al Gaffar and Ali Murtoza Khasru.

The clash was a sequel to Monday's attack on Hafizur Rahman of Gaffar-Khasru group by the supporters of Jahangir-Tuhin group.

They stabbed Hafiz following an altercation over control of the campus at around 4:00pm. He was admitted to the IU medical centre and then shifted to Kushtia General Hospital as his condition deteriorated.

Protesting the attack, Gaffar-Khasru group blocked Kushtia-Khulna highway and halted movements of university staff buses yesterday morning.

They took away keys of all the 19 staff buses of the university from the drivers at Customs intersection in Kushtia town and Arabpur intersection in Jhenidah where the buses were parked.

Gaffar-Khasru group returned to the campus at around 11:00am and took position at Social Science faculty while Jahangir-Tuhin faction at the administrative building. Both groups were chanting slogans against each other.

The clash ensued when Gaffar-Khasru group chased their rivals at around 1:00pm. Both factions, equipped with firearms, locked in a fierce clash, leaving at least 15 activists from the two groups injured, campus sources said.

"We have heard the sound of gunshots from IU campus, said Additional superintendent of Police (SP) Subhash Chandra Saha. Police rushed to the campus, fired blank shots and tear gas shells to disperse the clashing groups.

Both factions further locked in a clash at Sheikhpara Bazar near the campus at around 1:30pm. At least 10 people were injured in the clash. Police also rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

BCL university unit General Secretary Shamsuzzaman Tuhin branded Gaffar and Khasru as outlawed party cadres and demanded immediate arrest of the two.

Gaffar blamed Jahangir-Tuhin group for the clash and urged the university authorities to take actions against their rivals.

## Man jailed for forging BRTA certificates

UNB, Benapole, Jessore

A court on Sunday convicted a man for forging certificates of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) and sentenced him to nine years' imprisonment.

The court also fined the convict, Moniruzzaman Mithu, son of late Sheikh Kaiyum Ali of Noyagram village in Kalia upazila of Narail district, Tk 3,000, in default, to suffer nine months more in prison.

According to the prosecution, on secret information, sub-inspector Mursalim of Kotwali police station raided the rented house of Mithu at Mollahpara in Jessore district town on July 14, 2007.

The police official recovered 29 stamp seals of different BRTA offices and post offices, five blue books and a huge number of receipts from his house.

## BDR mutiny convict dies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

A former member of Bangladesh Rifles (now Border Guard Bangladesh), who was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in mutiny case, died due to illness early yesterday.

Amzad Hossain Bhuiyan, 54, son of Saraj Uddin Bhuiyan of Chaitannya village in Shibpur upazila, was on duty at Sarail camp in Brahmanbaria during the mutiny.

Jailer Md Nazrul Islam said, Amjad was rushed to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital as he fell sick following a chest pain.

The on-duty doctors of the hospital declared him dead at around 2:00am, he added.

## Man kills nephew

UNB, Bogra

A man was killed and his three brothers were injured as their uncle and cousins attacked them at Gulia Krishnapur village in Nandigram upazila on Monday.

The deceased was identified as Abdul Jabbar, 38, son of late Moyez Uddin of the village. The injured are Afaz Uddin, Khoka Mia and Abdur Razzak.

Police and locals said, Fazar Ali, uncle of Jabbar, along with his sons Rahmat Ali, Mehedi Hassan and Korban Ali went to cut earth of the paternal land of the victim at about 8am.

Fazar locked in an altercation with Jabbar when the latter tried to prevent them from cutting earth. At one stage, Fazar hit him with a spade, leaving him dead on the spot.

On information, Jabbar's three brothers rushed to the spot only to be beaten by their uncle and cousins.

## Worker falls to death

UNB, Laxmipur

A construction worker died after falling from the rooftop of a five-storey building at Dakkhin Majupur village besides Jhumur Cinema Hall in the town on Monday.

The dead was identified as Shiblu, 25, son of Rafiqullah of the village.

Witnesses said, three workers slipped and fell down while working on the rooftop of the under-construction building in the afternoon.

Shiblu died instantly. Injured Jahir Hossain, 24, and Masud Alam, 30, were admitted to Sadar Hospital.

## SNIPPETS

### OC faces bribery charge

UNB, Sylhet

Officer-in-charge (OC) of Golapganj Model PS Emdadul Haque Sheikh was suspended on Monday, on charge of taking bribe from a colleague about nine months ago. The departmental action came after the allegation against him was found true during the primary investigation. A fax message, sent to Golapganj PS by higher authorities containing the temporary suspension order of OC Emdadul was received at the police station in the evening. The message said that the OC has been suspended temporarily and transferred to Khulna Range from Sylhet Range on charge of taking bribe from Constable Abdul Qayum.

### Youth killed in Rajbari

UNB, Goalanda, Rajbari

Body of a young man was recovered from the Padma River in Sadar upazila on Monday. Police said Wahidul Hasan, 27, son of Wahab Fakir of Dewanpara under Goalanda Municipality was brutally murdered and dumped into the river. Family sources said Wahab went out of their house on Sunday night after hearing the death news of the mother of one of his friends over phone and did not return home. Locals said the body got entangled in a net while some fishermen were catching fish in the river at Urakanda at about 11am. On information, police recovered the body at about 3pm and sent it to Rajbari Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

### Abducted girl freed in Bogra

UNB, Bogra

A minor girl who was kidnapped by criminals from her house in Nandigram municipality area on Monday for ransom was released on Tuesday morning. The four-year-old girl was daughter of the proprietor of Janata Jewelers in the upazila headquarters. Locals said, the abductors set her free on a payment of Tk 1.5 lakh as ransom at about 8am. Police said Al Mamun, son of Mozammel Haque of the area, and his accomplice abducted the girl on Monday morning. Later, Mamun demanded Tk 10 lakh from the parents over mobile phone to set the girl free.

### Elderly man murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

An elderly man was murdered at Alokdia village in Kamarkhanda upazila on Monday night. Victim Tozammel Haque Mondal, 60, was son of late Azizul Haque Mondal of the village. Police said a gang attacked Tozammel while he was returning from local mosque after saying his Tarawi prayers at about 9pm, leaving him dead on the spot. As he did not return home at night, they looked for Tozammel. Later his body was recovered from under a bridge near the mosque.



PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Several hundred people, affected by recent floods at Kulkandi Atiamari Majhibari village under Islampur upazila of Jamalpur district, are staying on a road in the area as their houses still remain inundated.