

Hassle, harassment-the other name of land record office

ZAHANGIR SHAH, Manikganj

People coming to the district land record office to get parcha (survey document) of their land are forced to give bribe for the purpose as a syndicate of employees and their brokers cause intentional delay and harass the service seekers in different ways.

During a recent visit to the record office at night, this correspondent found several people lying, some of them sleeping, under the open sky on the premises of the deputy commissioner's office, beside the record room.

Hearing arrival of a journalist, they got up to narrate their sufferings.

They alleged that the record room employees have made an unofficial 'rule' to take Tk 500 for delivery of a parcha and adopt different tricks to realise the bribe.

Md Ratan Mia, a poor farmer of Angurpara village under Baliakhora union of Ghior upazila, came to the record room of the deputy commissioner's office at around 4:00am for standing in a queue to take parcha from there.

"My serial number was 50. The office closed at around 1:00pm after completing serial No 49. Now I am staying here at night along with some other people like me to get the parcha the next day," he said.

During the last Ramadan, private company employee Afzal Hossain, son of Nurul Islam of Kafatia village of Manikganj Sadar upazila, came to the record room at 4:00am to be at the head of the long line to get the parcha of his land. He stood in the line, his serial number



PHOTO: STAR
People coming from different upazilas stand in a long queue to collect parcha (survey document) of their land from the record room of Manikganj deputy commissioner's office. Inset, service seekers sleep on the premises of the record room with hope to avail the opportunity early next day as they failed to get the parcha even after maintaining all the official formalities due to alleged tricks played by dishonest staff.

being 40.

"But a broker demanded Tk 3,000 from me for delivery of six parchas. As I declined, the broker made my serial No 60 instead of 40," he alleged.

Even after staying there for two days under the open sky while observing fast amid problem to take sehri and iftar, he failed to get parcha, he said.

Quite a few others have similar tales to tell.

At around 10:00pm one

night, Deputy Commissioner Munshi Shahabuddin Ahmed came to the record room premises to see for himself that several people were staying there, with hope to avail the front places in the line to get parcha the next day.

Overall situation, however, did not improve much even after that, said several sufferers.

"After failing to get my parcha, I gave Tk 500 to

record room employees and they provided it to me immediately," said Abdur Hossain, son of Helal Uddin of Gobindal village in Singair upazila.

Dewan Mizanur Rahman, a lawyer of Manikganj District Judge's Court, said,

"My chamber is situated beside the record room. Many people are seen in front of the room even late at night as people coming from different parts of the district

have to wait for days to get their parcha."

When contacted, Deputy Commissioner Munshi Shahabuddin Ahmed said he has already directed the official concerned to solve the matter soon.

The official concerned, Executive Magistrate Kamrul Hasan said, "We are trying to find out the brokers and ensure smooth delivery of parcha to the people concerned."



Lightning kills 4 in Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Lightning killed two children and two men and injured two others in Kaharol upazila yesterday.

The dead were identified as Shibu Roy, 9, son of Romesh Chandra Roy and Sharif Uddin, 8, son of Mohammad Ali, of Atisha village and Md. Habibur Rahman, 30, son of Nawshad Ali and Mohsin Ali, 29, son of Keturu Mohammad of Sudarpur village in the upazila.

The injured are Md. Sayed Ali, 28, son of Nawshad Ali of Sudarpur village and Ratan Roy, 25, son of Satiru Roy of Hossainpur village in the upazila.

The injured were admitted to Dinajpur Medical College and Hospital.

Kaharol police, quoting witnesses, said that a lightning struck the children when they were fishing in a pond at around 10.30am, killing them on the spot.

Habibur Rahman and Mohsin Ali were killed while they were working at their homestead.

In Rangpur, a minor girl was killed by lightning at Badarganj upazila on Tuesday evening, reports our correspondent.

The deceased was identified as Khadija Khatun, 9, daughter of Hashem Ali of Dakkhin Baochandi Bottala village in the upazila. She was a student of Class II at Dakkhin Baochandi Bottala Government Primary School.

Nuruzzaman Chowdhury, Officer in-Charge of Badarganj police station said Khadija was struck by lightning while she was returning home from a crop field.

EROSION BY SWELLING JAMUNA Over 150 metres of Hazirhat dyke in Gaibandha damaged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

More than 150 metres of the flood protection embankment at Hazirhat in Phulchhari upazila were seriously damaged by the swelling Jamuna following heavy rain in the last couple of days.

People of Singria, Udakhali, Ratanpur, Kathur, Uria, Katlamari, Haripur and Chandia areas near the embankment started leaving their homesteads for safer places.

Erosion by the river also rendered around 50 families of Namapara and Kamarpara villages in

Gajaria union homeless. Vast tracts of cropland and several homesteads were devoured.

The erosion hit people have already taken shelter on roads and government offices.

The water level of the river was flowing 27 centimeters above danger mark, said an official of Water Development Board (WDB).

Phulchhari Degree College, a madrasa, a primary school and two temples are now under serious threat of erosion.

During a recent visit, this correspondent found a number of villagers at

Namapara leaving their homesteads in fear of erosion.

Villagers Nonda Das, Nagen Chadra Das and Zitu Ram Das of Kamapara said the river devoured their homesteads and croplands during the period.

Despite repeated pleas, the authorities did not take any step to control the erosion, said Manotosh Roy, chairman of the union.

Arun Kumar Sen, an official of Gaibandha WDB, said they have already sent a letter to the higher authorities seeking fund to tackle the situation.



PHOTO: STAR
Over 150-metre area of Fulchhari Flood Control Embankment collapsed at Hazarhat in Fulchhari upazila under Gaibandha district yesterday, triggering erosion in the area.

Ethnic girl abducted in CHT, freed after 7hrs

Punishment for friendship with a Bangalee boy?

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A female student of Jahangirnagar University (JU) was released seven hours after her abduction allegedly by United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) activists in Matiranga upazila of the district yesterday.

The victim, a Chakma, girl, was released at Giripul area in Khagrachhari Sadar upazila around 3:00pm as the law enforcers started a drive to rescue her, said Joynal Abedin, acting superintendent of police (SP) in Khagrachhari.

Eight to ten ethnic men picked up the girl, an honours student at JU, from a night coach at Alutilla in Matiranga upazila around 8:00am when she with her Bangalee friend was returning to her residence in Sluce Gate area of the town from Dhaka, the SP said.

The abductors also beat up the boy and left the place with the ethnic girl, police said,

adding that now her friend is in police custody as he was feeling insecure.

"UPDF activists, who were travelling in the night coach from Dhaka, abducted me," the girl told this correspondent.

"They forced me to walk with them. Although I could not continue it for long due to my illness, they compelled me and questioned repeatedly why I made friendship with a Bangalee boy," she said with tears in her eyes.

After walking about 12 to 14 kilometres through the hills, they reached Giripul where the abductors released her and escaped, she said.

Contacted, Niran Chakma, press and information secretary of UPDF, denied the allegation of abduction against their organisation.

"Some ethnic youths picked up the girl after observing her unusual attitude towards her friend. The UPDF helped to rescue the girl", he said.

Tragic!

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Two schoolboys, who went for a picnic at Bhangura in the district, were crushed under the wheels of a train at local Baral Bridge station yesterday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as Emran Hossain, 16, son of Hafizul Islam of Mothurapur village in Tarash upazila of Sirajganj and Md Sohel, 17, son of Abdus Subhan of Boalia in the upazila.

Emran was studying at class nine at Tarash Azimnagar Technical and Business Management School and College while Sohel at class ten.

Md Akhter Hossain, sub-inspector at Bhangura police station, said around 150 students of the institution came to the area to enjoy a picnic in the morning.

Of them, the duo were taking photographs in the middle of the rail line at about 2:00pm, ignoring any possible mishap.

All of a sudden, a Saidpur-bound intercity train Neel Sagor Express ran over the victims, leaving them dead on the spot, said the SI.

RAPE OF HILL WOMAN

Road blockade in Dighinala

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A 12-hour road blockade from 6:00am yesterday was enforced in Dighinala upazila of Kharachhari district demanding immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the culprit, who raped a hill woman in Nalkata area of the upazila, on Tuesday.

Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP), Democratic Youth Forum (DYF) and Hill Women's Federation (HWF), front organisations of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF), staged the blockade programme at Larma Square on Khagrachhari-Dighinala Road.

Leaders and activists of the three organisations took out a procession at the upazila headquarters and then held a rally at Larma Square.

The rally was addressed, among others, by UPDF leader Kishor Chakma, PCP

leader Ankan Chakma, DYF leader Jiban Chakma and HWF leader Daizy Chakma.

The speakers demanded immediate arrest of the rapist. Otherwise, they threatened to launch a tougher agitation programme. A protest rally was also held in Khagrachhari Sadar upazila yesterday.

The 25-year-old hill woman was raped allegedly by a Bangalee settler in Nalkata area under Dighinala upazila at around 5:30pm on Tuesday.

Police quoted locals as saying that the woman was raped by one Azhar Ali of the area. Azhar had gone into hiding soon after the incident.

Officer in-Charge (OC) Sahadat Hossain Tito of Dighinala Police Station said the victim's husband filed a case with the police station yesterday morning, accusing Azhar. "We are trying to arrest the accused," the OC said.

Settlers in Panchhari enforce hartal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A dawn-to-dusk hartal protesting the attack on a local Awami League leader passed off peacefully in Panchhari upazila yesterday.

Bangalee settlers announced the hartal on Tuesday night protesting the attack on Abu Taher, general secretary of the upazila unit AL.

All kinds of vehicles went off the road and shops at markets of the town kept their shutter down as pickets took position in different areas since morning.

Acting police superintendent Joynal Abadin said no untoward situation took place during the daylong shutdown.

Criminals attacked Abu Tahar in Baroitai area of the upazila at around 8:30pm, leaving him critically injured.

Following the incident, Pahari Banglaee Chhatra Parishad brought out a procession protesting the attack, said Alamgir Hossain, officer in-charge at Panchhari police station.

The victim blamed the men of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) for the attack.

Press and information secretary of UPDF Niron Chakma refuted the allegation, adding that the incident might be a sequel to the internal conflict of AL.



PHOTO: STAR
Police seize two guns and 507 pistol bullets from separate places of Brahmanbaria town, right, 21 bullets of LMG from a bridge over Dashani River at Sajimara village in Bakshiganj upazila of Jamalpur district yesterday.



Over 500 bullets, 2 arms recovered in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Sadar police on Tuesday night recovered over 500 bullets and two guns from two spots of the town.

Acting on a tip off, a team of police, headed by officer in-charge (OC) of Sadar PS Md. Abdur Rab raided a spot near Niaz Muhammad Stadium and recovered two guns, one foreign made and the other locally made, in an abandoned condition.

Later, they raided a sand field near district Eidgah Maidan and recovered 507 pistol bullets in several

cartons kept in a polythene bag, also in an abandoned state.

The recovered arms and ammunitions were later deposited with the malkhana of the PS.

Contacted, OC Md. Abdur Rab said that the bullets were live.

We are investigating how and by whom the bullets were brought to the spot. Police have launched a drive to arrest the culprits, the OC said.

JAMALPUR

In Jamalpur, police recovered 21 live LMG bullets from a bridge at Sajimara village in

Bakshiganj upazila of the district early yesterday, reports a correspondent.

Officer in-charge (OC) of Bakshiganj police station Md. Fazlul Karim said, a police team, while on routine duty went to the bridge over Dashani river at the village at about 1:30am.

At that time, a gang of robbers was waiting there to commit robbery.

Sensing the presence of police, they jumped into the river from the bridge and managed to flee. Police later recovered the bullets from the spot, the OC said.