

IRRIGATION CANAL IN BAD SHAPE

# Boro on 1347 hectares in Teesta project area uncertain

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Irrigation in 1,347 hectares of land in the upcoming boro season seems uncertain due to utterly bad condition of an 11.95-kilometre-long secondary canal under Teesta Irrigation Project.

The situation has arisen due to alleged irregularities in repair and maintenance of the important canal called S5D canal, originating from the Dinajpur main branch of Teesta Irrigation Project canal near Nilphamari bus terminal at Kalitola of Sadar upazila.

The secondary canal proceeds through Sutipara, Darwani, Joychondi, Sonarai, Sangalshi, Khamatpara and Mazapara villages of Sadar upazila and Dhelapeer and Botlagari

villages of Saidpur upazila with target to irrigate 1,347 hectares of land, said sources of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) in Nilphamari.

But adequate government fund for its maintenance and repair could not be arranged due to negligence of the officials concerned, said BWDB sources, adding that a scanty Tk 8 lakh was allocated for the purpose in 2001-2012 fiscal year.

Worse still, BWDB officials in Nilphamari diverted most of the money for other purposes.

"We got a fund of Tk 8 lakh for repair and renovation of S5D canal in 2011-2012. From this fund we diverted about Tk 5 lakh to build six road barriers on the right

embankment of Dinajpur main branch canal to prevent movement of heavy vehicles," said Khairul Islam, sub divisional engineer of BWDB in Nilphamari.

Asked about the justification of diverting the fund while leaving irrigation in large areas uncertain due to inadequate repair of S5D canal, he could not give any satisfactory answer.

The fund allocated for a particular project cannot be diverted for any other purpose, a high official of BWDB told this correspondent on condition of anonymity.

"Major portion of S5D irrigation canal is flowing through this union and it is in an utterly vulnerable state at present," said Abdul Majid, chairman of Sangolshi union parishad.

"Every year, the govern-

ment allocates money for its repair but most of it is wasted. In 2011-2012 fiscal year we saw some day labourers weeding out grass and bushes and fill some ditches or breaches with earth only for a few days as most of the money was diverted.

"A few weeks ago I submitted a written petition to BWDB authorities in Nilphamari regarding the matter as irrigation on 1347 hectares of land is uncertain this year due to bad condition of this canal," he said.

Meanwhile, locals said the cost of setting road barriers would not exceed Tk 1.50 lakh as they were built with sub standard concrete without using required quantity of cement and rods.

Ananta Kumar Roy, sub

assistant engineer of BWDB in Nilphamari division, also responsible for looking after S5D canal, said that repair and maintenance work of the canal was done from Joychondi point to Uttara EPZ point at Sangolshi village stretching about three kilometres by filling earth in damaged places and breaches and weeding grass and bushes with 3 lakh taka out of the 8 lakh allocated for 2011-2012 fiscal year.

Termining the work too scanty, several locals including Anil, 40, Fulchan, 28, and Soleman, 36, of Joychondi village said most part of the canal remained unutilised due to its bad condition last year and the situation worsened further this year.

During a visit to the canal on (November 25), this correspondent found that thick bushes and hedges covered the canal near the house of Deben Master at Joychondi village. Breaches and hedges were seen at Sonarai, Sangolshi, Khamatpara and Mazapara villages. Nearly the entire canal showed signs of vulnerability due to lack of proper repair and maintenance.

Most vulnerable point was seen at Songalshi Sahapara village where a big breach stretching about ten feet at the 'right embankment' developed, making it almost impossible to arrange irrigation the next season.

When contacted, Mahbubur Rahman, executive engineer of Nilphamari division of BWDB, said, "The fund for maintenance and repair of S5D canal in 2011-2012 was inadequate. So we diverted most of the money to other projects. A Tk 50 lakh proposal for repair and renovation of the canal this year is under process."



PHOTO: STAR

Satkhira district Muktijoddha Sangsad erased the names of five fake freedom fighters and a Razakar from the martyrs' memorial plaque on collectorate compound yesterday, the first day of the month of victory. Built in 2005, the authorities concerned could not inaugurate the memorial plaque for over seven years after the construction in the face of strong protests by freedom fighters. The district unit of Muktijoddha Sangsad said the memorial plaque would be opened after the correct names were put on the plaque.

## BOGRA AL LEADER SUJAN MURDER

# Wife sues 26, most belonging to Jubo League: 3 held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Police till yesterday arrested only three of the accused in the case for killing of youth and sport secretary of district Awami League Sujanur Rahman Sujan.

On Friday night, Sujan's wife Monjuara Begum filed a case accusing 26 people, most belonging to Jubo League, in connection with the murder on Thursday.

According to the case statement, main accused Mostakim Rahman is a leader of Bogra town Jubo League. Another prominent accused is Delwar Hossen Hiro Possary, a former councillor of Bogra municipality and BNP leader.

The complainant stated



Sujanur Rahman Sujan

that Sujan was protesting the extortion by the accused in the area and being furious, the accused mercilessly hacked him to death.

She demanded exemplary punishment to the killers of her husband.

Investigation officer (IO) in the case and Inspector (Investigation) at Bogra

Sadar PS Reaz Uddin Ahmed told this correspondent that Monjuara lodged a murder case against 26, mentioning the names of 20.

Police so far arrested Manik, 20, Hossen, 20, and Shanto, 30, in connection with the murder, he said.

On Thursday, while Sujan, 53, was returning home from Bogra town by rickshaw at around 9:00pm, a gang, wearing masks, waylaid him in Khander area. They hacked Sujan to death and left his body on the road.

Home Minister Muhiuddin Khan Alamgi visited Sujan's house on Friday. The minister assured the family members of bringing the killers to book.

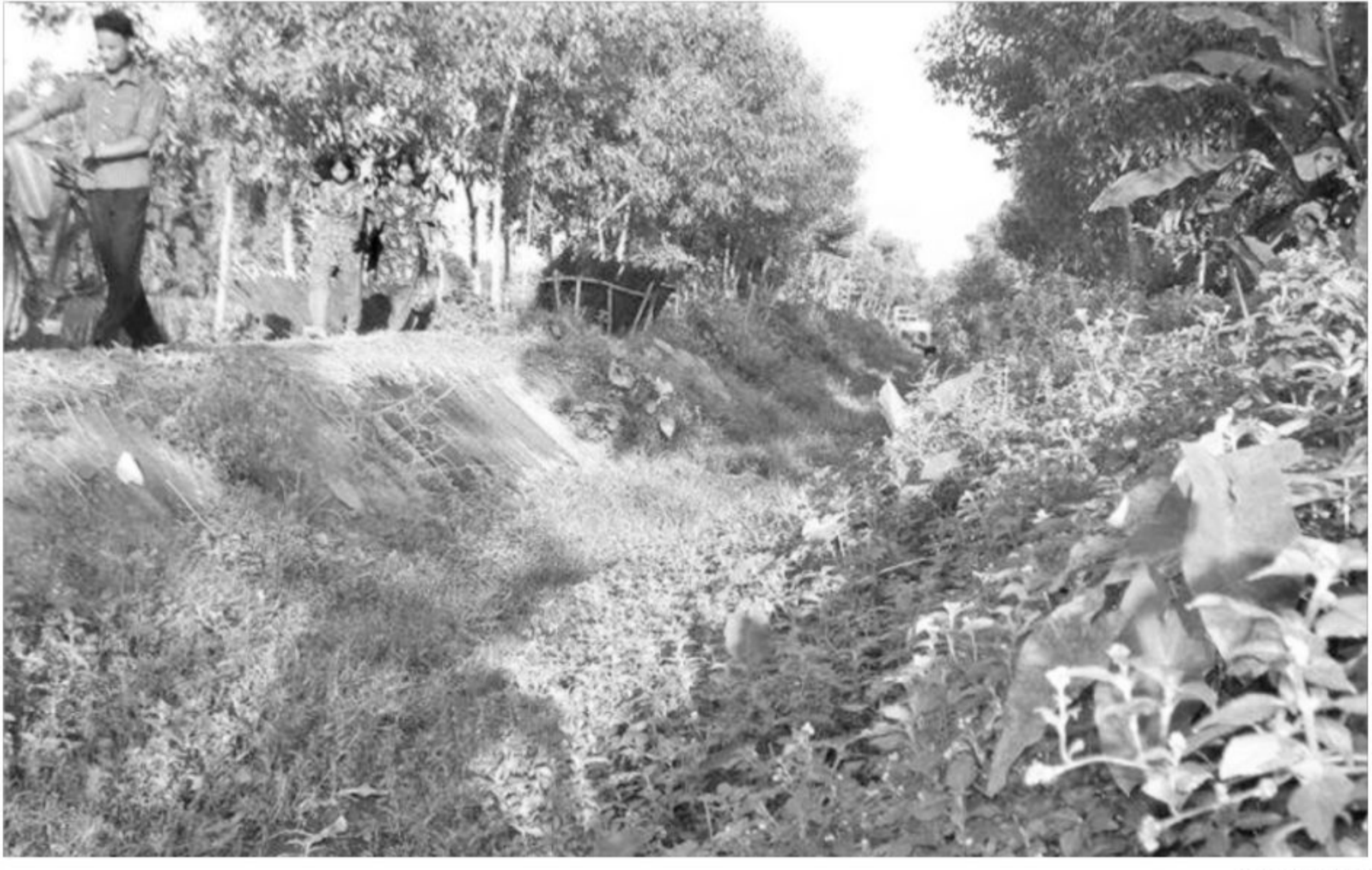


PHOTO: STAR

PICTURE TELLS THE TALE: This dried up S5D canal, a secondary canal under Teesta Irrigation Project, has been filled with shrubs at Joychondi village in Nilphamari Sadar upazila, thanks to the callousness of the authorities concerned. They diverted most of the funds meant for maintenance of the watercourse, serving as the lifeblood of a vast farmland in the area, for another purpose.

## SNIPPETS

### Fertiliser production stops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Urea production at Ashuganj Fertiliser Chemical Company Limited (AFCCCL) in the district came to a halt on Friday due to a technical fault. According to AFCCCL office sources, the factory is missing an opportunity to produce 1,400 metric tonnes of urea worth Tk 2.8 crore everyday due to the disruption. Md. Zinnat Ali, general manager of AFCCCL, said the engineers and technicians were working round the clock to repair the faults. It may take around 10 days to resume the operation, he said.

### Two injured by BSF

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Two Bangladeshi cattle traders were injured allegedly by members of Indian Border Security Force (BSF) on Mondumala border in Baliadangi upazila on Friday night. The injured are Robiul Awal, 24, son of Abdur Rahman and Sirazul Haque, 26, son of Monsur Ali of Ratnai Kashibari village. Company commander of Nagarvati BGB camp Shahjahan Ali said, BSF members of Sonamoti caught the duo and beat them up, leaving them injured while they were entering India through the border. Later, the victims were freed following a commander level meeting of BGB and BSF.

### Road named after FF

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A road in the municipality was named after a martyred freedom fighter yesterday. Mostafizur Rahman, state minister for land, unveiled the foundation stone of 'Shahid Asadullah Sarani Road' stretching around 500 meters from Dinajpur Zila School to Zora Bridge. Asadullah was shot dead during the Liberation War.

### Bogra Bar election

A CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

The pro-Awami League Sommilito Aainjibi Somonnay Parishad won seven posts including those of president and secretary while BNP led Jatiya Aainjibi Oikya Panel got 15 including vice president and joint secretary in the District Bar Association election on Friday. Forty four candidates fought for 22 posts, said election commissioner Binoy Kumar Ghosh. According to the result, president candidate Abdul Motin bagged 290 votes and secretary aspirant Moynul Islam secured 290 votes.

# IU stalemate drags on

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

The authorities concerned are yet to take any steps to end the nearly three-month-long deadlock at Islamic University (IU) in Kushtia.

The offices are open but they look desolate as teaches and most of the officials and employees have refrained from going to campus since September 8 due to the deadlock that followed controversy over appointment of 132 teachers and officials in the university on September 7.

Islamic University Teachers Association (IUTA) began agitation on September 8 demanding removal of the vice chancellor, pro-vice chancellor and treasurer for their alleged involvement in irregularities in the recruitment of the teachers and officials

Registrar office sources said Vice Chancellor Prof Alauddin left the campus on November 20, taking four days' leave. Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Kamal Uddin has been on 13 days' leave since November 20 and Treasurer Prof Shahjahan Ali has remained absent since November 20. But they all came to the university on November 27 to appear before a three-member probe body and left the campus on the day.

Though Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Kamal Uddin is supposed to rejoin office on

December 3, VC and treasurer did not come to the campus as of yesterday. When contacted over cellphone, VC Alauddin said he is in Dhaka on an emergency work. Treasurer Prof Shahjahan Ali declined to make any comment on the issue.

On the other hand, IUTA leaders yesterday urged the registrar not to send any file to the VC, Pro-VC and treasurer as the three what they said unwanted on the campus. As part of their agitation, they have been continuing sit-in in front of the administrative building since November 12.

Addressing a teachers' rally at the venue yesterday, IUTA President Prof Yakub Ali urged the government to take immediate steps to end the three-month-long deadlock at the university.

The rally was addressed, among others, by Islamic University Bangladesh Parishad General Secretary Dr Ruhul Kuddus Saleh, IUTA General Secretary ASM Tariqul Islam, Prof Matiur Rahman, Prof Mahbubur Rahman, Prof Mizanur Rahman, and Dr Baku Billah.

They speakers demanded immediate appointment of honest and competent persons as new vice chancellor, pro-vice chancellor and treasurer, removing the present ones.



People through a makeshift market on a road near the District Judge's Court in Noakhali town to buy warm clothes as the chilling cold has already set in, a bit earlier this year.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

## Processionists demand punishment of criminal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

People of Sadullapur upazila brought out a procession yesterday demanding severest punishment to notorious listed criminal Nur Mohammed, arrested by police from Bujruk Patanocha village in Sadullapur upazila early Friday.

Nur was wanted for long in several cases relating to murder, trading of counterfeit Bangladeshi currency and British silver coin, cheating, and snatching of arms from

police in different areas including Sadullapur, police said.

He formed a gang that has been engaged in trading fake currencies for a long time, they said.

Acting on a tip, police raided Bujruk Patanocha, the native village of Nur Mohammed, and arrested him from a house there early Friday.

The arrestee, a criminal listed in the record of police and Rapid Action Battalion, was handed over to the DB police, said Majnur Rahman, OC of Sadullapur PS.