

'Free Rayer Khal from encroachers'

Activists in Barisal city also demand its re-excavation

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Barisal

Rights activists have demanded immediate steps to free six-kilometre-long Lakutia Rayer Khal (canal), which is flowing through Barisal Sadar and Babuganj upazilas, from illegal occupation.

They raised the demand at 'meet the press' programme jointly organised by Prantajon Trust, Campaign for Sustainable Rural Livelihood and Uttaran, at Barisal Reporters' Unity office on Tuesday.

SM Shahzada, executive director of Prantajon Trust, local human rights and civil rights activists Mujibur Rahman Khan, Rafiqul Islam Alim, and Niaz Morshed spoke.

They said construction of illegal structures, unplanned sluice gates, small cross-dams, bridge and culverts on the canal are contributing to the death of Rayer Khal.

The participants said more than 2,700 families of fishermen and farmers depend on the canal for fishing and supplying

water to around 1,000 acres of farmland, but a section of unscrupulous people are gradually grabbing the canal under the nose of the local administration.

Rayer Khal was excavated from Lakutia Zamindar Bari during British period and joined with Jail Khal at Natun Bazar area of Barisal city.

They demanded re-excavation and preservation of the canal so that the farmers of the areas can supply their produce to Barisal, Babuganj, uzirpur, and Banaripara upazilas, using this canal.

Rights activists also called for immediate steps to save major water bodies in and around Barisal city as they are going to disappear due to encroachment on them.

Barisal had nearly 600 water bodies, including canals. But the indiscriminate act of filling in the water bodies for commercial and residential purposes has reduced their number significantly, they said, requesting the authorities concerned to construct embankments



PHOTO: STAR

Bamboo fences have been put in a portion of Rayer Khal in Barisal city for fish farming. Unscrupulous people continue to encroach upon the canal, erecting such enclosures and structures at different points of the six-kilometre-long water body.

and walkways on both sides of the canals and dredge them to maintain their navigability.

They said non-existence

of sufficient ponds or water bodies is not only posing threat to the environment, but also causing ecological imbalance, water-logging,

health and sanitation problems.

The participants urged the city corporation and other authorities concerned

to take immediate steps to stop encroachment upon Rayer Khal and save ponds and water bodies in the city from land sharks.

LAND DISPUTE

Acid attack on two women in Sherpur

UNB, Sherpur

Two women sustained severe burn injuries as rivals threw acid on them as a sequel to a land dispute at Haldibata village in Jhenigati upazila of the district early Tuesday.

The victims were identified as Khaleda, 40, wife of Hasen Ali, and her sister-in-law (husband's sister) Phulesa Begum of the village.

Locals said, there had been a longstanding dispute between Hasen Ali and Akhter Ali, sons of Salam Mia of the Haldibata village, over a piece of 30 decimal home-stead lands.

The day before the fateful night, Akhter along with police went to take possession of the land but failed even producing the documents he had.

Later in the dead of night on Monday, Akhter and his

men entered the house of Hasen Ali and threw acid on Khaleda and her husband's sister Phulesa when they were asleep in their rooms.

Different parts of their bodies, including faces and eyes, were severely burnt.

They were rushed to Sherpur Sadar Hospital. Khaleda, lying on her hospital bed, said that Akhter along with Joynal and Noor Islam threw acid on her and Phulesa entering their house after midnight on Monday.

Resident Medical Officer (RMO) of the hospital DMA Samad said, Khaleda's one eye and left side of Phulesa's face were badly damaged due to acid attack.

Officer in-charge of Jhenigati police station Belayet Hossain said, nobody lodged any complaint with them in connection with the incident.

Qul-khani



Al-Haj Dr. Mortuza Ahmed Choudhury, son of Late Sajjad Ali Choudhury and Late Amina Khatun, hailing from Shadimapur, Beani Bazar, Sylhet, expired on December 24, 2012 at 5:00 am at his Uttara residence.

"Innallahi wa inna ilaihi rajiun..."

He leaves behind his wife, two sons, a daughter, five grandsons and a large extended family to mourn his passing.

His Qul-khani will be held on Friday December 28, 2012 after Asr prayers at his residence: Pearlstone Park, House 1, Road 12, Sector 7, Uttara, Dhaka. Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend and pray for the departed soul.

May Allah grant him Jannath and bless him with eternal peace.

Nurun Nahar Choudhury
Tehsin Ahmed Choudhury
Ehsan Ahmed Choudhury
Rubana Choudhury



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