

RAMNABAD RIVERBANK IN PATUAKHALI

MP Rony's men building illegal structures ignoring HC order

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Men of Golam Maula Rony, lawmaker from Patuakhali-3 constituency (Galachipa and Dashmina), have continued construction works on about 8.5 acres of land on the bank of Ramnabad River near Galachipa upazila town, defying a High Court (HC) order issued two years ago.

Rony's men are also illegally constructing another market on the bank of Ronogopaldi River, affecting the normal flow of the important river, local sources said.

A brick wall was built marking about 8.5 acres of land on the bank of Ramnabad River, near Galachipa upazila town in 2009 as Rony planned to build a market there.

Different national and local dailies including The Daily star ran reports on the matter.

Over the issue Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association filed a writ petition with the HC.

After primary hearing, the HC on May 4 in 2010 issued an order to stop building the marker.

Later on June 9 in 2011, an HC bench issued an order to remove all the structures and construction materials from the spot within 60 days.

But the local administration is yet to take any step over the matter.

Now Rony's men are using the land for business

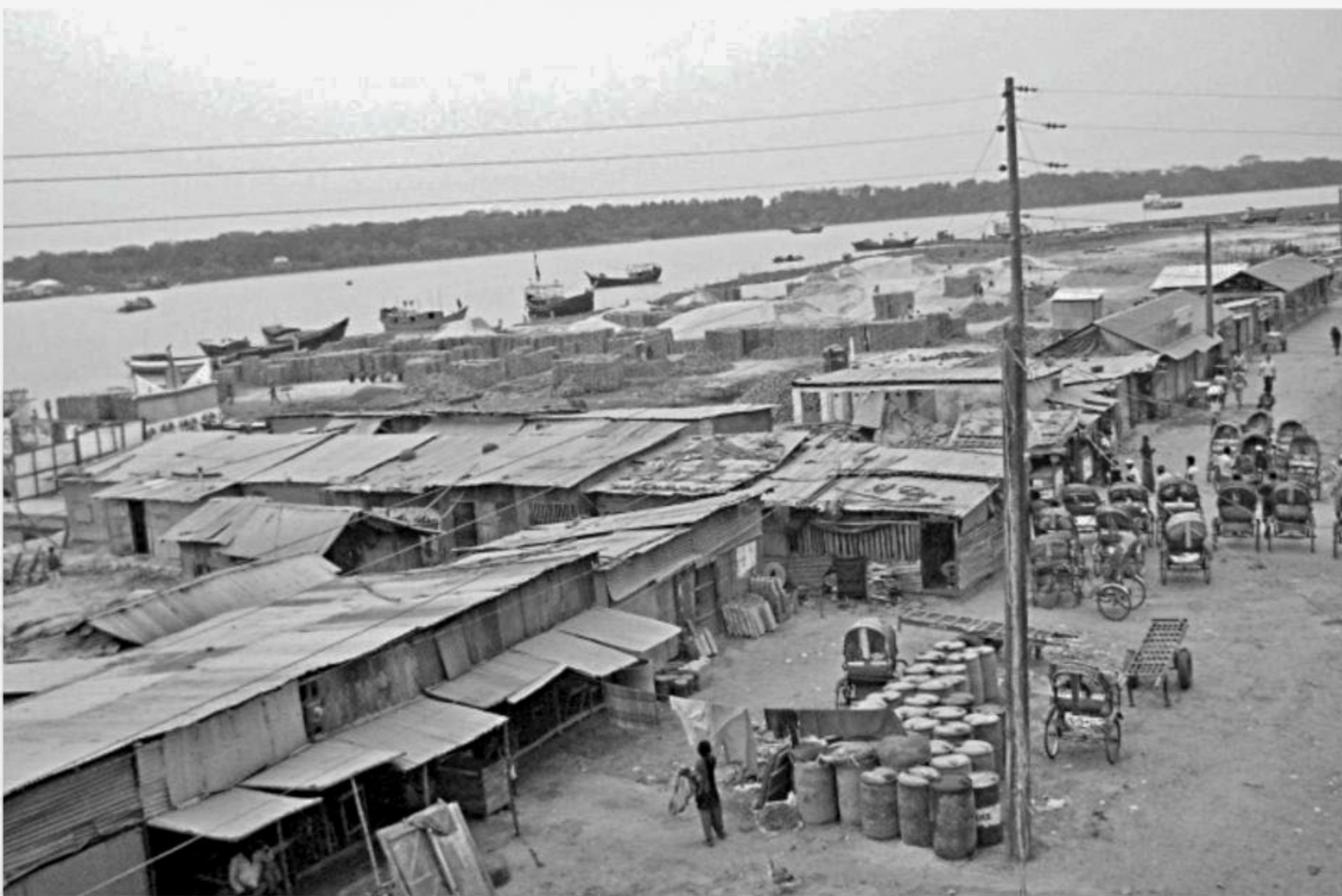


PHOTO: STAR

Illegal occupation has continued on the bank of Ramnabad River in Galachipa upazila under Patuakhali district as the local administration has failed to take proper measures two years after the High Court issued an order to remove all illegal set-ups from the riverbank.

of bricks, sand and other construction materials and also taking toll from businessmen there.

Meanwhile, a group of local influential people led by a relative of Rony has made around 100 plots on the occupied bank of Ronogopaldi River at Ulania Bazar in Galachipa upazila and already sold around 25 plots among local businessmen for Tk 80,000 to one lakh each, sources said.

He also grabbed a piece of khas land beside Gajalia canal near Dakua bridge bazar in the same upazila, made 60 plots there and is selling each plot for Tk 40,000 to 50,000. Structures have already been built on most of the plots.

The grabber could not be contacted repeated attempts by this correspondent as his over mobile remained off.

Md Harun-or-Rashid, chairman of Galachipa

upazila parishad, also president of the upazila unit of ruling Awami League, said, "The High Court order has not been implemented due to the negligence of local administration."

Md Mahbul Alam, UNO of Galachipa upazila, said, "After joining here last year, I heard about the order issued by the High Court to remove all the structures from the bank of Ramnabad River but I could not find any

copy of the order in office files. So I could not take any step regarding the matter."

Patuakhali Deputy Commissioner Amitav Sarker, who also joined the office last year, said, "I heard the High Court order but copy of the order could not be found. I cannot say details about the matter without examining the relevant papers. I will be able to take step if the copy of the order is found."

Sirajganj town protection dyke under erosion threat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Sirajganj town protection embankment faces threat of erosion from the River Jamuna as a portion of the embankment started eroding on Tuesday evening.

The river was swelling fast at the portion of the embankment in the afternoon, said locals.

A few spurs of the embankment were also found floating on the river, causing the townspeople to worry, they said.

On information, a survey team of Water Development Board (WDB) visited the embankment, said Sirajganj WDB executive engineer Babul Chandra Sheel.

An initiative was taken to repair the damage portion to avoid any risk, said the engineer.

It is nothing to worry as the damage at the embankment took place due to heavy current in the river, he added.

Away in Faridpur, erosion by the River Padma devoured around 20 home-

steads and about 200 acres of cropland in Char Bhadrason upazila in the last few days, reports UNB.

Farhad Hossain Mridha, chairman of Char Jhaukanda union parishad, said 150 acres of paddy field of Uttar Nawabganj and Munsidangi village was eroded besides the houses.

Ahmed Razzak, chairman of Char Bhadrason union parishad, said the river washed away some 50 acres of cropland during the period.

RMG workers go on rampage, set fire to 6 units in Narsingdi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

Several hundred RMG workers set fire to six factories and vandalised others demanding their salary arrears and eid bonus in Chowala industrial area of the town yesterday.

Nannu Ali, general secretary of Chowala Textile Industries Owners' Samity, said around two to three hundred workers ransacked furniture of the Industries Owner's Samity office first.

Later, they attacked around 100 factories one by one and vandalised electrical metres and looted valuables.

The agitating workers also set Al-Amin Textile, two units of Kajal Textile, Reaz Textile, two units of Mahub Textile on fire.

On information, fire

fighters rushed to the spot and doused the flame after an hour of hectic efforts.

Abdul Gaffar, 25, a worker, was also injured during the incident, said the agitators.

The workers demonstrated for their salary arrears and Eid bonus from Wednesday, they said.

Yesterday morning, the Textile Mill Owners paid the workers weekly wages except the eid bonus of Tk 2000, which was fixed on Wednesday by local lawmaker Nazrul Islam Hiru.

Following the incident, the workers went on rampage at the factories. On information, Narsingdi Sadar Model police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

Additional police have been deployed in the area to avert further trouble.

Bid to kill AL leader foiled, six held with arms, ammo

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Police arrested a gang of six from Mawa ferry terminal area early yesterday as they were reportedly on a mission to kill a local Awami League leader.

The law enforcers also seized five firearms, 18 bullets and a microbus bearing a 'press' sticker from their possession.

The arrestees are Chapati Shamsu, 45, a top criminal in the capital, Reazul Islam Titu, 30, Eramat, 30, Mohammad Ali, 35, Mohammad Al-Amin, 38, and Mohammad Sadek, 35. Two other members of the gang managed to flee, sens-

ing the presence of police. Hafizur Rahman, sub-inspector and in-charge of Mawa police outpost, said they, acting on a tip-off, intercepted a microbus with eight people on board at the terminal at around 12:30am.

"We detained the six while two others managed to escape," the sub-inspector said, adding that they recovered the arms and ammunition from the microbus.

During preliminary interrogation, the arrestees told police that they were hired to kill Ashraf Hossain, general secretary of Medinimondol union unit of AL in Lauhajang upazila

and also a lessee of Mawa terminal. On receiving the news, AL activists blocked Dhaka-Mawa Highway at Mawa point at 10:00am in protest against the killing attempt, causing a tailback on the road.

On information, police led by Assistant Superintendent of Police (Circle) Kutub Rahman Chowdhury rushed to the spot and removed the blockade at around 12:30pm.

Habibur Rahman, superintendent of police in Munshiganj, said police are quizzing the detainees. Two cases were filed against the arrestees with Lauhajang Police Station.

Bird poaching goes on, actions rare

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

A section of locals are engaged in hunting of birds, especially herons, posing threat to the stock of the graceful creature of nature.

A poacher sold five herons at Balapukur Bazar in Aditmari upazila of Lalmonirhat for Tk 150 to 200 each on Monday afternoon.

"I trap the birds in different areas and sell them at different markets without facing any obstacle from law enforcers or locals. Some people put order in advance to buy heron," said the poacher, Jalal Hossain, 45, from Batrish Hazari village of Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

"I catch birds to earn a living. Many others in the district do the same. I do not know of any law against bird hunting," he said.

Herons come to the beel (large water body) to eat puti maachh (an indigenous fish) but the birds are caught in the poachers' traps set with the fish.

Poachers regularly come to sell the birds especially herons at Balapukur Bazar as many locals are highly interested to buy the birds, said Mofar Uddin, 35, another poacher of the same village.

"Earlier I saw many herons coming to the local beel to catch fishes but the scene is becoming rarer. Shrinking of water bodies, decrease of

indigenous fishes and indiscriminate poaching are responsible for the situation," said Altaf Hossain Sarker, 82, a farmer at Batrish Hazari village in Lalmonirhat Sadar.

The Wildlife (Protection and Safety) Act 2012 keeps the provision for awarding one year jail and a fine of up to Tk 1 lakh or both to the bird poachers, said Dr Abu Hossain Sarker, district livestock officer.

"With the help of law enforcers, I will conduct drive against bird poachers if I get information. It is highly necessary to build up awareness among the people to stop bird poaching," he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Herons trapped by a poacher are brought for sale at Balapukur Bazar in Aditmari upazila under Lalmonirhat district.

No fire station in seven upazilas of Comilla

2.5 million people remain vulnerable

YASMIN REEMA, Comilla

Seven of the 16 upazilas of the district are still without any fire service and civil defence station, leaving around 2.5 million people living in the areas vulnerable to serious losses in case of fire incidents.

The seven upazilas are Debidwar, Burichong, Brahmanpara, Nangalkot, Monoharganj, Meghna, and Titas.

At least 539 fire incidents took place in the district in one year till July 20 this year, causing an estimated damage to properties worth Tk 7 crore 24 lakh 62 thousand taka.

Fire service stations could not be established in the seven upazilas due to the complexity regarding land acquisition, although the government allotted necessary fund for the purpose, said Md Sahabuddin

Mazumder, deputy director of Fire Service and Civil Defence in Comilla.

Of the incidents, 148 originated from the ovens in the kitchen rooms and the other from electric short circuits, fire services sources said.

The number of fire incidents increased in recent times due to unawareness, scarcity of water, and lack of security measures, they said.

"In most cases, our fire fighting units could not enter the areas where the fires originate forcing them to spray water from long distance. The extent of losses caused by the fires had also increased due to unplanned urbanisation. The damages could be much lower, if the city would be built as per an urban planning and our vehicles could reach the fire spots uninterrupted," said

Md Sahabuddin Mazumder.

Parvez Hossain Sarker, chairman of Titas upazila parishad, said, "A fire service station is a crying need here. During the last few years, many fire accidents happened in this upazila. Valuable lives and properties could be saved if there was a fire service station here."

"As there is no fire service station in Brahmanpara, Devidwar and Burichong, fire-fighters have to come from Comilla and Muradnagar in case of an accident. Much damage is done by the time firemen reaches the spot after covering a long distance," said Dr Ali Hossain Chowdhury, principal of Ershad Degree College in Brahmanpara.

The authorities concerned should take proper steps for setting up fire stations in the upazilas, he said.

Roadblock for restoration of power supply

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

People of three villages in Gaibandha Sadar upazila blocked Gaibandha-Nakaihat Road at Gopalpur Bazar point on Wednesday, demanding immediate restoration of power supply at their villages.

They villagers also formed a human chain and held a rally at Gopalpur Bazar. Addressing the rally, the speakers said Power Development Board (PDB) set up a 100-KV transformer

in Gopalpur area to ensure power supply to the three villages under Ramchandrapur union years ago.

Since the areas were brought under electrification, the villagers set up business centres, husking mills and poultry farms.

But the transformer went out of order over 10 days ago, plunging the three villages into darkness.

Despite repeated pleas, the authorities turned a blind eye to the matter, said

Rafiqul Islam, chairman of Ramchandrapur Union Parishad.

Contacted, local PDB Assistant Engineer Abu Asad demanded Tk 17,000 from the villagers for replacing the transformer, alleged the speakers.

The official also misbehaved with the villagers when they urged him to take steps to restore power supply, they said.

Refuting the allegations, the engineer said it needs two weeks to get the transformer repaired.

Five forest robbers held in Satkhira

Another beaten to death in Mymensingh

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Police arrested five forest robbers from Gulakhali area near Sundarbans in Shyamnagar upazila of Satkhira district on Wednesday.

The arrestees are Jamirul Islam, ringleader of infamous 'Jamu Bahini', Anwar Ali and Ujjal Mondol, while the rest two are Indian citizens Bidyut Odikhari and Priyojit Mondol of Jharkhali village under 24 Parganas district of Pashchim Banga, according to UNB.

Our Mymensingh correspondent reported that a robber was killed in mob beating at Tangabo village in Gafargaon upazila early yesterday.

He was identified as Razib Hossain alias Raju, 28, son of Nurul Islam of Pachahar village in the upazila.

Raju was wanted in four robbery cases filed with Kapasia Police Station in Gazipur and Pagla Police Station in Gafargaon, police said.

Locals encircled Raju and his gang members when they were taking preparations to commit a robbery at the village at around 1:00am.

Locals chased the gang and caught Raju while others managed to flee, said Md. Kamal Hossain, officer-in-charge of Pagla Police Station. They beat up Raju mercilessly, resulting in his death on the spot, the OC added.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) morgue for autopsy. They also recovered a pipegun and four bullets from the spot.



PHOTO: STAR

The people of three villages in Ramchandrapur union of Gaibandha Sadar upazila blocked Gaibandha-Nakaihat road on Wednesday demanding immediate restoration of power supply in their area.

BSF picks up boy from border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhemdah

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) picks up a teenage boy from Kusumbari frontier area in Moheshpur upazila on Wednesday.

The victim is identified as Omar Ali, 15, son of Vutu Mia of Loraighat-Noapara village, said an official of Border Guard

Bangladesh (BGB).

BCG Chuadanga 6 Battalion Commander Lt Col Gazi Ashaduzzaman said, BSF men caught the boy when he entered the Indian territory through the border.

He was sent to Indian jail, said Lt Col Gazi Ashaduzzaman.