

Mindless sand lifting poses threat to bridge in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Random sand lifting is posing threat to a newly built bridge over Bangalee River at Bathuabari point of Bogra-Dhunat road.

The mindless act is causing serious erosion in the area, said locals.

A vast tract of cropland, a number of homesteads and a flood control dam in the area have gone into the river due to the illegal sand

lifting for months, said Shahin Sardar, a local schoolteacher.

A 148-feet-long bridge, constructed at a cost of Tk 4 crore, was inaugurated on the road on July 30 this year, said an official of Roads and Highways Department (RHD).

Earlier, a tender was floated on June 26 for sand lifting. A construction firm obtained the tender and started to extract sand with

five dredgers from the river, about 200 meters off the bridge.

However, according to the law, sand lifting is not allowed within 500 meters of any bridge area, said local RHD deputy assistant engineer Mehedi Hasan.

Due to mindless sand lifting, the pillars of the bridge have started to sink while erosion took an alarming turn in the area.

We have already

informed the higher authorities about the matter, he said.

Dhunat upazila nirbahi officer Hafizur Rahman said, punitive action would be taken against those responsible for the offence after investigating the matter.

Contacted, sand lifter Hasanul Karim refuted the allegation of extracting sand from near the bridge.



PHOTO: STAR

Mindless sand lifting from Bangalee River at Bathuabari in Dhunat upazila of Bogra poses threat to a nearby bridge on the river on Bogra-Dhunat Road.

AMAN KILLING

Half-day hartal in Satkhira today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Supporters of deceased BNP leader Amanullah Aman have called a half-day hartal in the district today, demanding the arrest and expulsion of his killers from the party.

Abu Jihad, President of the committee formed to ensure punishment to the killers of Aman, said they called the hartal from 6:00am to 12:00 noon. The shutdown was called by the committee on September 11, he said.

Amanullah Aman, general secretary of Satkhira Matsyajibi Dal, fishermen's wing of the opposition BNP, and also former vice-president of Satkhira Government College Chhatra Dal unit, was killed during a clash between two factions of Satkhira BNP on September 6.

Twelve others were also injured in the clash during the programme where Nazim Uddin Alam, international affairs secretary of BNP, was present as chief guest, at Satkhira Shilpakala Academy Auditorium.

Fatema Khatun, mother to Amanullah, filed a case accusing district BNP president Habibul Islam as main accused and over a hundred others in this connection.

Drug peddlers attack villagers for protesting heinous trade

8 injured in Birganj of Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

At least eight people were injured in an attack by a gang of drug peddlers at Komarpur village in Birganj upazila of the district on Monday night.

The injured are Shahin Rana, 17, Belly Begum, 40, Milon Mia, 17, Sadekul Islam, 17, Rabiul Islam, 28, Laily Begum, 32, Shymol Roy, 18 and Dulal Roy, 20. They are undergoing treatment at Birganj Upazila Health Complex.

Villagers said the drug peddlers attacked them as they tried to resist their illegal act at the village.

Witnesses said a gang led by Golap Hossain Kamar of the same village swooped on the villagers at around 11:00pm and hit them with wooden sticks and sharp weapons, leaving eight of them injured.

Being informed, police went to the village, but the gang members fled the scene, sensing the presence of the law enforcers.

Sadikul Islam, one of the villagers, alleged that they had earlier filed several complaints with the police, but to no effect. "As police didn't pay heed to our request, we tried to build up a resistance to drug peddlers at the village," Sadikul said.

Protesting the attack, the villagers formed a human chain on Panchagarh-Rangpur highway yesterday morning. They also blocked the road and held a rally there, demanding immediate arrest of the attackers.

The villagers withdrew the blockade at around 12:00noon after police assured them of taking actions against the drug peddlers.

None of the attackers was arrested as of filing of this report at 5:00pm yesterday.

VIOLENCE, DEATH OF PEDESTRIAN

400 polytech boys sued in Bhola

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

At least 400 students of Bhola Polytechnic Institute were sued yesterday on charges of vandalising buses and killing a pedestrian on Monday.

The deceased was identified as Akmal Hossain, 25, son of Deen Islam of Kachia union under Borhanuddin upazila. He was a junior clerk of Bhola Shahbazpur Gas Field under Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation.

Deen Islam and Sultan Ahmed filed the cases with Borhanuddin police station in Bhola identifying 36 students among the 400 accused.

Police arrested six of the accused, said

Mainul Hasan, in-charge of the PS.

Akmal, who was traveling a Bhola-bound bus, was seriously injured when the agitating students vandalised several vehicles and pelted brick chips during a clash with police on a road in Borhanuddin area on Monday noon.

He was rushed to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College and Hospital where he died at night, said Noor Muhammad, a senior colleague of the deceased.

Polytechnic students staged angry demonstrations countrywide on Sunday and Monday, demanding timely promotions in jobs and withdrawal of the entry-level position (supervisor) introduced for diploma engineers in 2008.

A teacher indeed!

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A teacher of a government primary school in Banna upazila of Barguna district was sent to jail on Monday on charge of sexually harassing 13 girls of the school.

Police arrested the teacher, Md Hanif Sardar, 48, of Pashchim (west) Golaghata Government Primary School in the upazila on Monday following a complaint filed by the mother of one of the victims with Banna Police Station on Sunday night.

Later, police produced him in the Judicial Magistrate's Court, which sent him to jail. Police and locals said the victim's mother also submitted a written complaint with the upazila nirbahi officer the same night.

In the case statement, she stated that assistant teacher Md Hanif Sardar of Pashchim (west) Golaghata Government Primary School was running a coaching centre in a room of the school in the evening and sexually harassed her daughter and 12 other girls at the centre.

The girls disclosed the matter to their parents and she, on behalf of the guardians, filed the case against the teacher, the complainant said in the statement.

Fatima Begum, headmistress of the school, said the guardians of the students submitted a written complaint to her a few days ago and she informed the authorities concerned of the matter.

Contacted, Md Rahmatullah, chairman of the school managing committee, said the teacher must be punished for his immoral act.

13 held while going to Malaysia illegally

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) yesterday detained 13 Bangladeshi nationals in Teknaf upazila of the district while they were going to Malaysia illegally.

A team of BGB from Hoaikang Check Post nabbed them after searching a Teknaf-bound passenger bus of Shamoly Paribahan around 8:00am, said Major Shafiqur Rahman, commanding officer of BGB 42 Battalion.

The arrestees harked from Faridpur, Mymensingh and Jhenidah districts. They were planning to travel to Malaysia by sea route.

The BGB also recovered Tk 55,900 and nine mobile phone sets from the arrestees, added Shafiqur.

Details of their travel plan or traffickers could not be known immediately, he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Buyers crowd a shop at Puran Bazar in Lalmonirhat town where smuggled Indian saris, three-pieces and other clothes are put on display.

BORDERING LALMONIRHAT

Smuggled clothes flood markets as fest nears

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Indian clothes, including saris and three-pieces, have flooded the markets in the bordering district ahead of Eid-ul-Azha and Durga Puja.

During a recent visit, this correspondent found a large number of shopkeepers at Poura Market, Shahan Shopping Centre, Uttaran Market, Janata Market, Goshala Market and New Market in the town selling smuggled Indian saris, different clothes and children's dresses.

There was a mad rush for items named after popular Indian television serials,

movies and Indian actresses.

Saris called Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gaam, Prianka, Kareena, Masakkali, Rashi while three-pieces called Kolaberi, Khushi, Jhilik, Shibam and children's dresses Doremon, Batman and Superman were on hot sale.

The items attracted mainly women, girls and children of wealthy classes who often spend a lot of time watching Indian television serials and movies, said Prokash Saha, a shopkeeper at Puran Bazar Market in the town.

Sultana Parvin, 40, a buyer, who came to Uttarn Market, said her daughter wanted to buy 'Jhilik' three-

pieces after seeing that on Indian television channel 'StarJalsa'.

"As the dish culture keeps on invading the country, girls develop fondness for the dresses of the actresses of Indian TV channels" she said.

The owners of different markets however are happy at good sale of Indian dresses and clothes as they earn a huge profit ahead of the festivals.

Apart from dresses and clothes, Indian imitation ornaments and cosmetics also occupy most shelves at shops and malls in the town and its adjoining areas, said shoppers.

SNIPPETS

Temple attack sparks protest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

People of Hindu community blocked Dhaka-Sirajganj highway at Koddar intersection in Sirajganj Sadar upazila yesterday, protesting arson attack on a temple. Criminals swooped on Shitli-Mata Mandir of Raipur Chowdhuripara village and set it on fire early in the morning. Idol of a goddess was damaged during the arson attack, said Md Habibul Islam, officer in-charge of Sadar police station. As the news spread, Hindus of the village put up barricade on the highway at 10:00am, protesting the incident, he said. They withdrew the blockade at 11:00am following an assurance by police of taking steps to arrest the attackers, said the OC.

College student murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

An unidentified gang killed a college student at Palash upazila of the district yesterday. The victim, Khairul Islam, 25, son of Md Hafiz Uddin, was a second year honours student of Narsingdi Government College. Khairul, also a private tutor, came out of his house at Pashchim (west) Kandarpara village under Danga union at around 4:00pm. A gang of criminals intercepted him on a road at the village, severed the tendons of his legs and hands and left the scene. He bled profusely and died on the spot.

Man killed by cousin

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

A young man, who sustained head injury in an attack by his cousin in Kaliganj upazila of the district on Monday, died at hospital on the day. The deceased was identified as Shah Alam, 25, son of Ayub Hossain of Arpara village. Officer-in-charge Liakat Hossain of Kaliganj Police Station said Shah Alam picked up a quarrel with his cousin Khokan, who cut down a mango tree at their orchard at the village at around 10:00am. At one stage, Khokan hit on the Alam's head with a wooden stick, leaving him injured. Alam was admitted to Kaliganj Upazila Health Complex and later shifted to Jessore General Hospital where he died soon after admission.

Gun attack injures two

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Criminals shot a man in Battali area of Matiranga upazila on Monday night. The injured was identified as Kongjoypu Marma, 36, son of late Kongo Chowdhury of the area. He was admitted to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital. The four-year-old child of the victim was also injured during the gun attack. A gang of 4/6 swooped on the house of Kongjoypu and opened fire, leaving the duo injured at 9:00pm. The child was given first aid. Mohammad Yousuf Mia, officer in-charge of Guimara police station, said the gun attack might have occurred following an altercation between Kongjoypu and his relatives over a piece of disputed land.

Smuggler held with arms

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) arrested an alleged smuggler along with a pistol, four bullets and other goods in Narayanjot border area of Tentulia upazila of Panchagarh early yesterday. The arrestee was identified as Ranju, son of Tajul Islam of Kankata village the upazila. BGB sources said, a patrol team of the border force intercepted some smugglers and held Raju after a hot chase.

TANGAIL ZONAL SETTLEMENT OFFICE

Once eye-catching bldg now risky to reside

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Tangail zonal settlement office on Zila Sadar Road in the town is running in a century-old dilapidated building, posing risk to 25 officials and employees as well as a large number of visitors.

The building housed zonal and Sadar upazila settlement offices since 1986.

After several cracks developed in the building early June, the upazila settlement office was shifted from there a few days later but the zonal settlement office continued there, office sources said.

With plasters falling off the walls and ceilings and wild plants and roots growing on it, the once eye-catching building now gives a pitiable look.

Land documents of 1996 moujas under 113 unions in 12 upazilas of the district are preserved at the office but they remain vulnerable to damage as rainwater enters the building, said Noni Gopal Das, a designer of the settlement office.

"A few days ago, chunk of plaster from the ceiling fell on me at the office. Immediately I and the officials and employees ran out of the building," said Mosharaf Hossain, 67, of Balla in Kalihati upazila, who came to the office for land related works recently.

Applications were given to the authorities concerned on several occasions to construct a new building in place of the worn out building but nothing has been done so far, said Mahbub Anwar, assistant settlement officer (Sadar).

Bijoy Kumar Mondol, executive engineer of PWD in Tangail, said, "After getting a letter from the land office, the PWD engineers have visited the building and now a technical report on it is being prepared for sending to the ministry concerned."

"The building can be used for 50 to 60 years more if its roof is reconstructed. We can start renovation work of the building after getting necessary budget from the ministry," he added.



PHOTO: STAR

Although Tangail zonal settlement office apparently looks attractive, the century-old building has become rundown, posing risk to the people working inside.