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India set to choke Gidari river

Setback awaits
Lalmonirhat farmers

S DILIP ROY, LALMONIRHAT

India is building a barrage on the Gidari river, just 400 metres upstream from the no man's land at Putibari village of Aditmari upazila in Lalmonirhat, to divert its water for irrigation.

The 600 metres long and 25 metres wide structure has been under construction for the last two months and earth filling work there has been completed. Once built, it would seriously affect water flow in Bangladesh.

India will divert the river water setting up regulators to irrigate cropland and it has already dug canals across Indian villages Daribash, Jaridharla and Nagortari for this purpose, sources said.

Border Guard Bangladesh issued a protest when India started building the barrage. Durgapur BGB Camp commander Subedar Shamsul Alam said, "As the Indian Border Security Force [BSF] didn't respond to our protest, we informed our battalion commanding officer of the matter and he has conveyed it to the higher authorities concerned."

Farmers of Putibari, Dighaltari,

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The Gidari river in Lalmonirhat right after it enters Bangladesh territory from India. The river could dry up soon and make 800 acres of arable land in Bangladesh useless if India completes building a barrage upstream. Inset, Indian workers building the barrage take a break under a shed.

PHOTO: STAR

Unique helpline for farmers

Website consultation can
up production up to 30pc

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday launched an online fertiliser recommendation system meant to ensure balanced use of fertiliser that can optimise productivity by 20 to 30 percent.

By furnishing location of the piece of land, its size, crop category and type, and which fertiliser he intends to apply in the given form of Bangla website www.frs-bd.com, a farmer can get the recommended dose of fertiliser online.

Many farmers of our country are used to applying more fertiliser than the necessary dose thinking it would make better yield. But in fact, it proved counterproductive.

"If farmers use appropriate kind and quantity of fertilisers, production will shoot up and the cost will go down. The technique also reduces pest attacks and enhances crop quality," said Mokbul Hossain, principal scientific officer of Soil Resources Development Institute (SRDI).

Farmers can also visit the union information service centres or Grameenphone's community information centres to get the recommended dose of fertilisers.

Besides, subscribers of telecom operators Banglalink and Grameenphone can call at 7676 and 27676 respectively for the information.

The SRDI and Katalyst jointly developed

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KAMALAPUR STATION Another AK-22 rifle, ammo recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday found a bag with an AK-22 rifle, two magazines and ammunition in the capital's Kamalapur Railway Station just a day after the recovery of similar types of firearm and explosives from a train.

The bag was left on a pile of slippers at the station, said Abdul Mazid, officer-in-charge of Dhaka Railway Police Station. It also had seven bullets, 10 detonators and 10 packets of powerful explosive materials inside.

An identity card was found in the bag, the OC

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Digitisation won't resolve land issues

Researcher tells discussion 2.7cr years required
to dispose of existing 2.5cr lawsuits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 2.5 crore land-related cases remain pending with the country's courts, and it will take about 2.7 crore years to settle those if the case proceedings continue at the current pace, according to eminent economist Prof Abul Barakat.

"The land issue is a highly political one. The problems will not go away even if the land digitalisation project is implemented," Barakat, professor of Economics at Dhaka University, said at a round-table discussion yesterday.

The government made an electoral pledge in 2008 to form a land commission but it is yet to fulfil its promise. It, however, has set up commissions on various sectors, he said.

"If somebody touches it [the land sector], he will have his hands burnt."

Most real estate companies have implemented housing projects, grabbing khas land, said the expert on land sector.

Jointly organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation, Uttaran and CARE, the discussion on Land Digitalisation: Prospect for Land Equality in Bangladesh was held at Azimur Rahman Conference Hall of The Daily Star.

Speaking as the special guest, Abdul Mannan, director general at the directorate of land records and survey, said land-related cases take years to resolve.

Referring to his own experience, Mannan said his

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Brutal attack at RU

BCL man's ankle severed, tendons
of another cut; Shibir blamed

RU CORRESPONDENT

Miscreants severed the ankle of a Bangladesh Chhatra League leader and cut tendons of another in a manifestation of sheer brutality on Rajshahi University campus yesterday.

The victims -- Abdullah Al Masud and Tagar Mohammad Saleh -- are second-year students of history and folklore departments and residents of Madar Bux Hall.

Masud is assistant secretary and Saleh secretary for student scholarship affairs of the RU unit BCL, pro-Awami League student body.

The BCL and police have blamed Islami Chhatra Shibir, student front of the Jamaat-e-Islami, for the attack. Shibir, however, denies the charges.

The injured were whisked off to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) and later shifted to the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) in the capital for surgery.

Saleh said they were going to campus by a rickshaw from their dormitory around 8:15am to attend classes.



Masud

Tagar

Jamaat man killed in Satkhira 'shootout'

STAR REPORT

A Jamaat activist was killed in Satkhira and two leaders of its affiliated student body Islami Chhatra Shibir were injured in Benapole in separate 'shootouts' with law enforcers yesterday.

Sirajul Islam, 45, son of Babar Ali of Chinedanga village, was killed following a police raid at Debhata upazila in Satkhira early yesterday.

Officer-in-Charge Jalal Uddin of Debhata police said they had raided Keortola following information that Jamaat-Shibir men led by Sirajul were holding a secret meeting to carry out subversive activities around 4:00am.

As the police had reached the spot, the Jamaat-Shibir men started hurling hand-made bombs on them, prompting the law enforcers to retaliate by opening fire, Jalal claimed.

After a 15-minute 'shootout' the attackers had fled and the police recovered bullet-hit Sirajul from the spot, Jalal said, adding that the victim was pronounced

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The wreckage of the bus hit by a train at TT Para level crossing in the capital's Kamalapur area last night. The accident occurred as the vehicle was travelling on the wrong side of the road. At least three people were killed and 13 others injured.

PHOTO: STAR

Laughing can better memory

MAIL ONLINE

Laughing could dramatically improve your health - and be as good for you as a deep state of meditation, researchers have found.

Researchers say that laughter can help minimise the damage stress hormones cause.

They say it should be used more as a form of therapy.

Recent research has shown that the stress hormone cortisol damages certain neurons in the brain and can negatively affect memory

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1,320MW COAL-FIRED POWER PLANT AT MOHESHKHALI Deal signed with China

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday signed a deal with China to set up a 1,320-megawatt coal-based power plant in Moheshkhali upazila of Cox's Bazar.

Abdullah Ruhullah, chairman of Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB), and Zhao Longjun, president of Huadian Hong Kong Company of China, signed the memorandum of understanding (MoU) at Bidyut Bhawan in the capital.

Under the agreement, BPDB and the Chinese company will jointly

build two units with a capacity of 660MW each by 2019.

China will install ultra-supercritical technology at the plant to meet environmental standards, Abduhu said.

The cost of the plant over 550 acres of land will be finalised during a feasibility study.

Bangladesh and China will finance 30 percent of the project while the remaining amount will be taken as loan from other sources.

The plant will use 11,000 tonnes of coal a day, which will come from

Mozambique.

It is the second deal with the Chinese government. Earlier, the state-owned North West Power Generation Company reached an agreement with China National Machinery Import Export Corporation last month for setting up a coal-fired power plant of the same capacity in Patuakhali.

The government has already taken steps to acquire 5,000 acres of land in Moheshkhali so that it can build several more plants to generate 9,000MW electricity there in total, Abduhu said.

Tests for Modi, Sonia

7th phase polls today to decide fate of bigwigs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

The stage was set yesterday for the seventh phase of polling in India's long national elections today. The voting will decide the fate of stalwarts like the BJP's Narendra Modi and Congress chief Sonia Gandhi.

The campaign for the seventh phase ended with a nasty war of words that had pitted Modi on one side against all his rivals across the political spectrum on the other.

As the bare-knuckle battle for wooing the



electorate intensified, Modi found himself under attack from all sides, from Rahul Gandhi, his mother Sonia Gandhi and their ally Farooq Abdullah of the National Conference as also West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

As if the war of attrition were not enough, the campaign included a "video war", with the BJP releasing footage purportedly detailing the alleged real estate deals of Sonia's son-in-law Robert Vadra.

The Congress, however, came out with a compact disc purportedly containing

The Daily Star
Integral Energy Limited
ONLINE POLL
Do you think Bangladesh has made substantial progress towards fulfilling the 16 conditions set by the US for regaining the GSP status?
Yes (19%)
No (81%)
TOTAL VOTES: 226
TODAY'S POLL
Do you think that the police department is active enough to rescue the victims of abduction and arrest the abductors?
PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net
PRAYER TIMING April 30
Fajr 4:20 4:55
Zohr 12:45 1:15
Asr 4:45 5:00
Maghrib 6:29 6:34
Esha 8:00 8:30
Source: Islamic Foundation