

BR water body being filled up ignoring legal notice

All for public interest, says lawmaker

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Nilphamari

Unauthorised filling of a 0.81-acre water body of Bangladesh Railway (BR) at Neamatpur in Saidpur upazila under the district is going on, despite a legal notice served by the lawyer of BR to a local lawmaker

who inaugurated the work on June 14.

MP Shawkat Chowdhury, also opposition whip in parliament, on Monday laid foundation of the boundary wall of the Eidgah supposed to be made on the filled water body popularly known as 'Jorapukur'.

Railway authorities earlier leased the water body to a person for fish cultivation.

"As per a High Court order, none can change the original structure of any land owned by the railway. Violating the order, Whip Shawkat Chowdhury and

others are filling the railway water body called Jorapukur," said advocate Raful Islam Khaja, lawyer of BR at Saidpur.

"I served a legal notice to the whip on July 17, requesting him to stop the earth filling work. The notice mentioned that otherwise

the railway authorities would file a regular case against the persons responsible. The whip is yet to reply to the notice," he said.

Visiting the site on Tuesday noon, this correspondent found that the pond filling work was going on in full swing to complete the task before the Eid-ul-Fitr.

Eighty percent of the filling has been done and the rest will be complete by a week, said Sultan Ali, president of ward No-5 unit of Jatiya Party, who was supervising the work.

Asked by the parliamentary committee on railway early July, BR officials concerned submitted a report regarding filling up of the water body, but there is no sign yet of stopping the work, BR sources said.

"Jorapukur is the only remaining water body in the municipality from which fire service men could procure water in time of any devastating fire," said Amzad Hossain Sarker, mayor of Saidpur municipality.

Contacted, lawmaker Shawkat Chowdhury said, "Jorapukur is not a water body but a ditch that creates an unhealthy situation for surrounding people and its filling is not unlawful."

"I have submitted a letter written on my official pad to the railway minister, requesting him to cancel the present lease of the ditch and allocate the place for an eidgah to meet local people's need," he said.



Illegal filling of a water body, popularly known as 'Jorapukur', of Bangladesh Railway at Neamatpur in Saidpur upazila of Nilphamari goes on, ignoring a legal notice served by the authorities concerned, inset, foundation of a boundary wall of a proposed Eidgah laid by the lawmaker on the filled up water body on Monday.

PHOTO: STAR

Road gets badly damaged within week of repair

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

One kilometer of Dhaka-Khulna highway stretching from Kharikhali bus stand to Bishoykhali Bazar under Sadar upazila has been damaged allegedly within a week of completion of its renovation work.

The Roads and Highways Department (R&H) recently repaired the road at a cost of Tk 14 lakh last month, said sources.

A week after completion of the renovation work, it became unfit for traffic and motor vehicles due to huge potholes and cracks, causing immense sufferings to the commuters, especially local school and college going students.

On June 2, R&H had floated tender to renovate the road using stone chips and bitumen coatings and contractor Matiar Rahman alias Rumi got the tender with

lowest cost of Tk 13.89 lakh.

As the contractor used sub standard materials, a number of potholes and cracks developed just a week after completion of the renovation work of the road, alleged locals.

The contractor completed the repair work at a cost of Tk 3 lakh, not at Tk 13.89 lakh, otherwise the road would not have been damaged at such a short time, they apprehended.

Contacted, Rumi claimed he ensured the construction work with 100 percent sincerity but could not explain the reason behind the early damage of the road.

Jhenaidah R&H executive engineer Rafiqul Islam said stern action would be taken against the contractor concerned if found responsible for the awful condition of the road.

We are investigating the matter, he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Punished for telling the tale of boss's bribery to press

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Pirojpur

A class four employee of the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) in Nazirpur office in Pirojpur got immediate transfer to Galachipa upazila in Patuakhali as he allegedly gave information of corruption by his boss to the journalists.

Sources said Md Abdul Khaleq Hawlader, sub-assistant engineer of DPHE of Nazirpur upazila, took a large amount of bribe from the locals for giving them deep tube-wells but all the people concerned were not given the tube-wells.

The official engaged Md Sohrab Hossain, a tube-well mechanic of DPHE office in Nazirpur for collecting the bribe money.

A few national and local newspapers ran reports on the matter a few days ago.

"Sir (Abdul Khaleq) told me to collect money from the locals for giving deep tube-wells, I brought the money. People had to give Tk 40,000-50,000 for installing a deep tube-well although the real cost is Tk 5,000," said Sohrab.

"As I disclosed the matter to local journalists, I have been transferred from Nazirpur to Galachipa in Patuakhali. I got the transfer letter from the Barisal zonal office of DPHE on Sunday afternoon. It was signed on July 15 and July 21 was the

last day of joining," he said.

Sohrab joined Galachipa office on June 20.

"When I asked Sohrab if he collected money from the locals on behalf of Abdul Khaleq, he admitted the matter to me in presence of the engineer," said Lahel Mahmud, Nazirpur correspondent of Bangla daily Jugantor that published the news on bribery concerning setting up of deep tube-wells on July 13.

"With some other sources, I collected some information from Sohrab Hossain," said Sheikh Jakir Ahmed, Nazirpur correspondent of local daily Pirojpur Katha where reports of corruption against Abdul Khaleq was published on July 20.

After publication of the incidents of bribery concerning tube-wells and misappropriating sanitation project money in the upazila, Abdul Khaleq Hawlader took leave and extended it for several days showing different reasons, said office sources.

Sources said, not only Khaleq, but also some of his bosses in DPHE office are involved in the scam as they share the bribe money.

Khaleq could not be contacted for his version as his cell phone remained off.

This correspondent also called the executive engineer in Pirojpur but he did not receive his land and cell phones.

2 UPDF activists held with arms, ammo

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Army personnel arrested two activists of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) in Dullatali area under Laxmidhara upazila yesterday.

They also recovered three country made guns, eight bullets, one set military dress and a knife from their possession.

The arrestees are Khilu Aung Marma, 40, son of Chailapru Marma of Masterpara area and Rupan Chakma, 22, son of Laigya Chakma of Puillyakarbarai Para in the upazila.

Contacted, Press and Information Secretary of UPDF Niran Chakma claimed the arrestees as innocent villagers and demanded their immediate release.



The Teesta devours part of a two-storey Dhusmara Government Primary School in Kaunia upazila of Rangpur district as erosion by the river has taken an alarming turn in the area.

PHOTO: STAR

Teesta turns furious, devours homesteads

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Erosion by the River Teesta took a serious turn in Kaunia upazila in the last five days, devouring at least 100 homesteads and a vast tract of cropland at Dhusmara Char village in Balapara union.

Besides, a part of two-storey Dhusmara Government Primary School, the only educational institution at the village, went into the river.

"Scores of houses and 100 acres of arable land in the area have gone into the river due to its furious onslaught," said Nurul Haque, chairman of Balapara union parishad.

The whole village is now under erosion threat, he said.

"If the erosion continues for few more days, the entire school building will go into

the river," said Anisur Rahman, a resident of the village.

The school was about a kilometre away last year, he said.

Nazrul Islam, chairman of Dhusmara Government Primary School Managing Committee, told this correspondent that they informed Water Development Board (WDB) authorities about the condition of the institution.

Despite repeated pleas, the authorities are yet to take any steps to save the school from erosion, said headmaster Rezaul Islam Muku.

Kaunia Upazila Nirbahi Officer Md Abdul Motaleb said they wrote to local WDB to take immediate steps to thwart the erosion.

3-parent babies

FROM PAGE 16
diseases which affect mitochondria – the "powerhouse" of cells.

Now, Britain could become the first country in the world to allow mitochondrial replacement (MR) therapy, following Government changes to fertility rules in February.

If permitted, more than 100 "three-parent" babies could be born in the UK each year.

MR treatment works by removing the nuclear from a donor egg, and replacing it with genetic information from the mother's egg. This egg is then fertilised by sperm, and is implanted using IVF techniques.

While critics argue that the treatment could be the first step towards "designer babies" and even eugenics, the regulations are to be drawn up over summer before they are presented to Parliament, a Department of Health spokeswoman said.

A final decision to allow patients access to the treatments will need the approval of both Houses of Parliament, but could come as early as next year.

বড়পুরুরিয়া কোল মাইনিং কোম্পানী লিমিটেড (পেট্রোবাংলা একটি কোম্পানী)		
BARAPUKURIA COAL MINING COMPANY LIMITED		
(A COMPANY OF PETROBANGLA)		
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