



Water hyacinth covers a large portion of the Kacha River in Pirojpur district, creating disturbance to ferry services on two routes.

KACHA RIVER IN PIROJPUR

Rise of hyacinth disturbs ferry service on 2 routes

HABIBUR RAHMAN, Pirojpur

Ferry services on two routes in the Kacha River in the district are being badly hampered due to alarming increase of water hyacinth in the river.

The situation prevails during this season as water hyacinth coming from the upstream covers the river, ferrymen said.

Around a month ago water hyacinth began to increase in the river and it is likely to continue for the next two months.

Ferries now take two to

three times more than the normal time to cross the river, causing vehicles to wait for a long time on the two sides of the river.

Vehicles cross Bekutia-Kumirmara ferry terminal in the river Kacha to go to Khulna and Barisal and Togra-Charkhali ferry terminal in the same river to go to different southern areas including Patuakhali and Barguna.

Visiting the area on Saturday, this correspondent found a large number of vehicles waiting on the two sides of Bekutia-

Kumirmara ferry route.

"I got into the ferry after waiting around two hours. Normally we can get into the ferry shortly after coming to the terminal," said truck driver Md Rana who was returning to Jessore from Rajapur in Jhalakathi.

"I have missed two ferries after reaching the terminal as too many vehicles were waiting," said Masum, a bus driver of Khulna-Barisal road.

"Normally we can cross the river two times in an hour. But now it takes double the time due to increase

of water hyacinth in the river," said Kamal Hossain, a ferry driver of Bekutia-Kumirmara route.

"We face serious problem during this season as water hyacinth increases in the river. As the engine of the ferry is very weak, it becomes difficult to move smoothly in the adverse situation in the river," said Azmir Hossain Majhi, lessee of Bekutia-Kumirmara ferry terminal.

Around 300-350 vehicles move through Bekutia-Kumirmara route daily, terminal sources said.

10 injured as rival BCL men clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) clashed on Brindaban Government College campus in Habiganj on Saturday afternoon, leaving at least 10 activists from both sides injured.

The injured were admitted to Habiganj Sadar Hospital.

Campus sources said the clash ensued as a faction, led by BCL college unit leader Mohammad Swajan, attacked another group led by BCL leader Jahangir Mia, when they brought out a procession on the campus, chanting slogans against Swajan around 4:00pm.

On information, police rushed to the spot and lobbed several teargas shells and rubber bullets to disperse the clashing groups.

8-month ban on jatka catching starts

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

An eight-month country-wide ban on catching, trading and marketing jatka (hilsa fry less than 10 inch or 26 centimetres in length) began on Saturday.

District and divisional fishery officers said the authorities imposed the ban on catching hilsa fry from November 1 to June 30 in the coastal areas to ensure free breeding of the popular fish.

However, ignoring the ban, a section of fishermen continued to net jatka in different rivers of Barisal Patuakhali and Barguna districts.

Barisal district Fishery Officer Wahiduzzaman said they have already formed

vigilance teams to monitor the situation. Besides, mobile courts will take actions against the persons involved in catching, trading and marketing hilsa fry, he added.

While visiting markets in the city, this correspondent saw some traders selling jatka openly, defying restrictions.

Yearly over 1.5 crore mother hilsa safely and naturally lay 46,800 kg of eggs and if its half percent can become embryo, 29.93 crore of hilsa 'renu' will be produced and if 10 percent of the 'renu' survives, 2.93 crore jatka could be produced, said an official of the district fishery office.

"If only 10 to 20 per-

cent of jatka can get the chance to reach maturity, around two lakh tonnes of hisa worth around Tk 100 crore could be netted extra every year," the official said.

Israil Pandit, president of Bangladesh Khudra Matsyajibi Samity, said full implementation of fishermen rehabilitation plan is a must to make anti-jatka netting drive a success. Poverty and unemployment compel the fishermen to continue netting jatka in defiance of the ban, he added.

"We are bound to catch jatka to run our family, as we have no other alternative work during the period," some fishermen, seeking anonymity, said.

Land disputes leave 2 dead

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Two people were killed and 19 others injured in clashes over land disputes in Madaripur and Laxmipur districts yesterday.

In Madaripur, a woman was killed and 19 others were injured as two groups of villagers locked in clash over a disputed land at Pashim Mahishmari village in Rajoir upazila yesterday, reports our correspondent.

The deceased is Kulsum Begum, 60, wife of Alal Uddin Sheikh of the village.

Quoting locals, police said two groups, one led by Chunnun Sheikh and another by Rabi Sheikh, locked in a scuffle over cutting earth from a disputed land yesterday morning.

Later, both the groups equipped with sharp weapons attacked each other, triggering a clash that left 20 people, including Kulsum injured.

Kulsum succumbed to her injuries on way to Rajoir Hospital.

Away in Laxmipur, a local trader, who was injured in a clash over land dispute at Karaitola Bazar in Kamalnagar upazila of Laxmipur on Saturday, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) early yesterday, our Noakhali correspondent reports.

Deceased Asgar Ali, 35, son of Abdul Gofran of Karaitola village under Char Lawrence union, was a brick trader.

Police quoting witnesses said a gang of 15/20 hired goons led by Shahid attacked Asgar with sharp weapons when the latter tried to resist Shahid from constructing a shop at their paternal property, triggering a clash that left seven people, including Asgar critically injured.

Asgar was admitted to Kamalnagar Upazila Health Complex, and then shifted to a private clinic in Noakhali town. As his condition deteriorated, doctors referred him to DMCH the same night.

Asgar succumbed to his injuries at the hospital soon after his admission early yesterday.

PARBATIPUR UPAZILA IN DINAJPUR

270 of 790 FFs on the list are fake!

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Freedom fighters of Parbatipur upazila under the district at a press conference yesterday urged the intervention of the prime minister and the minister of the Liberation War ministry to cancel the certificates of fake freedom fighters and stop giving them facilities meant for the genuine freedom fighters.

As many as 270 people in the list of upazila freedom fighters' list are not real freedom fighters, they said.

Freedom fighter Md Reaz Uddin Mahmud, also former commander of Parbatipur upazila unit of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha

Sangsad, read out the keynote in presence of 75 freedom fighters at the press conference held at Parbatipur Press Club.

"According to the list in 1999, the total number of freedom fighters in Parbatipur was 537. But the number rose to 790 in 2005. As many as 270 people in the list are fake ones," he said.

Giving a list of names of the fake freedom fighters, he said, "Ten people in the list were aged between 2-6 years during the Liberation War, 23 people were Razakars (collaborators of the Pakistan occupation forces), and 19 never received any training during the time."

"Two persons with fake freedom fighters' certificates

contested for positions in the 2014 election of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad and won.

"Many people, who never fought for the country during the Liberation War in 1971, got their names listed as freedom fighters to enjoy the state's facilities, whereas a number of real freedom fighters are suffering," reads the keynote.

The freedom fighters demanded that the ministry concerned take immediate step to cancel the certificates of fake freedom fighters and take legal action against the perpetrators for providing false information in this regard, after conducting a proper investigation.



Freedom fighters bring out a procession in Pabna town yesterday demanding early implementation of the death sentences against Jamaat-e-Islami leaders Motiur Rahman Nizami and Mir Quasem Ali on charge of crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War.

Train rams truck at level crossing, one killed, 20 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

An unidentified train passenger, aged about 30, was killed and 20 others were injured as a train hit a truck at Bahadurpur level crossing in Gouripur upazila yesterday.

The injured include train driver Afaz Uddin, truck driver Farid Miah, his helper Khokon Miah and a train passenger, Shafiqul Islam. They were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College and Hospital (MMCH).

After the accident, rail communication between Mymensingh and Kishoreganj remained suspended for around three

hours.

The train service on the route resumed at about 11:30am, said Abu Taher, superintendent of Mymensingh Railway Station.

Police and local sources said the accident took place at 8:15am when a Mymensingh-bound Nasirabad Express from Chittagong smashed into a sand-laden truck at the level crossing, leaving a passenger traveling on the railway engine dead on the spot.

On information, police and fire brigade personnel rushed to the spot and conducted rescue operation.

The body was sent to MMCH morgue for autopsy.

SNIPPETS

24 crude bombs seized

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) found 24 crude bombs from Shaheed Shahidullah Kaiser Road in the town on Saturday night. However, none was arrested in this connection. On secret information, the elite force raided the area and recovered the bombs kept here using during the hartal, said Major Ahmed Mahiuddin, camp commander of Rab-7.

Sexagenarian killed in clash

UNB, Madaripur

An elderly woman was killed and 20 others were injured in a clash between two rival groups over cutting earth at Mahishmari village in Rajoir upazila yesterday morning. The deceased was identified as Kulsum Begum, 60, wife of Alauddin Sheikh of the village. Locals said Chunnun Sheikh and Robi Sheikh of the village locked in an altercation when the latter tried to bring earth from Chunnun's land in the morning. At one stage, their supporters, equipped with sharp weapons, attacked each other, leaving 21 people injured. Of them, critically injured Kulsum died on the way to hospital. On information, police rushed in and brought the situation under control, said the OC of Rajoir Police Station.

Two held with arms

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainauwabganj

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two arms peddlers along with a US made pistol, two magazines and two bullets in Sakopara area under Nachole upazila on Saturday night. The arrestees are Ashraf Alam, 24, son of Farid Uddin of Puraton Kajla village and Monirul Islam, 20, son of Intaj Ali of Kajla Purbopara village. On secret information, a team raided the area at 8:15pm and arrested the duo along with the arms and bullets, said Major Kamruzzaman Pavel, camp commander of Rab-5.

Youth stabbed to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A youth was stabbed to death at Char-Gargari village in Ishwardi upazila early yesterday. Police arrested a woman in connection with the incident. The dead is Md Abu Sayeed, 25, son of Md Nazimuddin of the village. Police and locals said Sayeed was stabbed by one of his friends over a trivial matter.

Jamaat-Shibir men held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Police arrested two Jamaat-Shibir men in Kharta area of Mehendiganj upazila town early yesterday. The arrestees are Mawlana Shahidul Alam, Jamaat Mehendiganj upazila secretary and Mujahidur Rahman, Shibir upazila unit president. They were arrested on charge of planning sabotage during hartal, said Ujjal Kumar Dey, officer in-charge of Mehendiganj Police Station.



Jhalakathi unit of Bangladesh Human Rights Commission forms a human chain in front of Jhalakathi Press Club yesterday demanding arrest and punishment of those who on October 10 brutally tortured Monir Hossen, causing loss of his eyes, a leg and a hand for marrying a girl without the consent of her parents. The participants also demanded withdrawal of a false arms case filed against Monir by the alleged torturers -- his in-laws.

PHOTO: STAR