



PHOTO: STAR

Illegal sand lifting from the Karotoa River in Chakbheka village in Pirganj upazila under Rangpur district threatens the riverbank and nearby croplands and homesteads.

CROPLANDS, HOMESTEADS FACE EROSION THREAT

Mindless sand lifting from Karotoa goes on unabated

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Illegal sand lifting from Karotoa River at Chakbheka village in Pirganj upazila goes on unabated, posing threat to the river bank and its adjoining establishments and croplands.

At least 300 acres of cropland, over 100 homesteads and a graveyard at the village have already gone into the river and more areas, including dwellings

face erosion threat due to mindless sand lifting by some unscrupulous traders, said locals.

Abdul Hamid, 50, a farmer of the village, said they prevented the sand traders from lifting sand from the river last year, but they again started lifting sand from the river.

A section of unscrupulous traders, allegedly led by Nurul Islam, 45, an assistant teacher of Chakbheka Government Primary

School in the area, extracted sand from the river using shallow machine after managing some influential political leaders and dishonest officials in the local administrations, alleged villagers.

Despite repeated pleas, the authorities concerned are yet to take any step in this regard, they said.

The villagers also urged the local administration to take immediate steps to

protect their croplands and others establishments from erosion by stopping sand lifting from the river immediately.

Contacted, Nurul Islam said he has stopped illegal sand lifting from the river.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) ATM Ziaul Islam said stern action will be taken against persons involved in sand lifting after investigation.

Sramik Dal leader murdered in Comilla

UNB, Comilla

A local leader of Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal, the labour wing of BNP, was found dead at Boalmari village in Daudkandi upazila yesterday morning.

The deceased, Mokhesur Rahman, 45, was president of Boalmari union unit of Sramik Dal and son of Mujibur Rahman of the village.

Family sources said Mokhesur went out of the house on Wednesday evening and did not return since then.

Locals spotted his body lying on a cropland at the village at around 9:00am and informed the police who went to the spot, recovered the body and sent it to hospital morgue for an autopsy.

Officer-in-Charge Abu Salam Miah of Daudkandi Police Station said the body bore several injury marks in the head.

8 maunds of jatka seized, 5 arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Police seized eight maunds of jatka and arrested five people while they were carrying the hilsa fry from Kalapara to Barisal at around 2:00pm yesterday.

The arrestees are Sekander Ali Mridha, 70, Abul Hossain Howlader, 40, Joynal Howlader, 28, Kallur Rahman, 35 and Yunus Mollah, 28. They hail from different villages in Patuakhali and Barguna district.

'TORTURE' ON NEWSMAN

12 Rab men sued, victim gets bail in Habiganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Twelve members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) have been sued on charge of torturing Din Islam, reporter of local daily Bijoyer Protidhoni, in Habiganj town on Tuesday evening.

Din Islam's maternal uncle Shah Alam of Uttar Sulanshi village of Habiganj Sadar filed the case with the Court of Habiganj District and Sessions Judge Md Mahub-UI-Islam yesterday, court sources said.

The same judge yesterday granted bail to the journalist in the case filed by Rab two days ago.

The judge also asked the civil surgeon to check the health condition of Din Islam and submit report in seven working days.

The accused in the case filed for torturing Din Islam include Saniul Islam, deputy assistant director of Rab-9 camp at Srimangal, ANAA Mosabbir, in-charge of the

Follow-up

camp, PC Taher, AB Faruque, NAB Kamal, and seven unnamed Rab members—all of the same camp.

In the case statement, complainant Shah Alam alleged that the accused beat his nephew Din Islam with timber stick in presence of hundreds of people who took part in the Ashura procession at Kotiadi Bazar of Habiganj Sadar at about 7:00pm on Tuesday.

"Demanding a big amount of money, the Rab men tortured Din for 3/4 hours, and took him unconscious to the hospital and then handed him over to the police. Police then admitted the victim to the Sadar hospital. The following day, the victim was sent to jail in the case filed by Rab on charge of alleged attempt to attack them," he said.

The Rab men also threatened Din to put on crossfire, he alleged.

The complainant mentioned 16 as witnesses to the incident.

They include Habiganj Sadar upazila parishad chairman Syed Ahmedul Haque, Bahubal upazila parishad chairman Abdul Hai, and Lashkarpur union parishad chairman Md Ali Amzad.

"Rab picked up Din Islam from Kotiadi Bazar after Muharram [Ashura] procession Tuesday evening and handed him over to the police after hours at 10:30pm. As he was injured, he was admitted to the hospital. In the case filed by Rab, he was sent to jail the following day," said Md Nazim Uddin, officer in charge of Habiganj Sadar Police Station.

Demanding steps against the Rab men in three days, around 5,000 locals took out a procession, held a rally at the DC office premises and handed over a memorandum to the additional deputy commissioner (Rev-



PHOTO: STAR

Owners of these two hotels and three other business establishments, illegally built on the government's khas land in Kuakata sea beach area of Patuakhali district, have received notice from the district administration to dismantle the structures within seven days.

5 illegal set-ups in Kuakata get eviction notice

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The district administration has served eviction notice to the owners of five business establishments near the Zero Point in Kuakata sea beach as those were illegally built, occupying government's khas land.

The notices, signed by Patuakhali Deputy Commissioner Amitav Sarker on November 2, reached the owners of Hotel Sea Queen, Shad Restora, Hotel Taj, Sikder Market, and Hotel Sunflower on Wednesday.

They have been asked to remove the structures, all situated outside the flood control embankment, within seven days.

Patuakhali district administration took the step following a letter given by Patuakhali Public Works Department (PWD) on October 2.

"To protect the beach, we are taking lawful action against those who built illegal structures occupying government land," said Kamruzzaman, executive engineer of Patuakhali PWD.

On September 30 this year, Patuakhali district administration demolished over 100 illegal structures on the beach, sources said, adding that earlier the district administration imposed ban on selling and buying of all kinds of land in Kuakata, Latachalee, Char Chaplee, Kawar Char and Gongamoti moujas in the area.

District administration issued such order as per instruction from the Office of the Prime Minister on May 20 in 2012, PWD sources said.

The High Court (HC) on June 3 in 2011 directed the authorities concerned to immediately remove all structures from Kuakata sea beach, and submit a report. It also asked them to take necessary steps to stop encroachment, earth filling and construction of structures on the beach.

The HC directive came following a writ petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh on the basis of a report headlined "Realtor faces eviction case in Kuakata" in the June 1, 2011 issue of The Daily Star.

Hit by bridge girder, 4 train roof passengers killed in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Four train roof passengers died after being hit by the overhead girder of Koidanga Rail Bridge in Bhangura upazila under the district in separate incidents on Wednesday.

The tragic accidents occurred amid increase of train roof passengers due to days-long countrywide hartal enforced by Jamaat-e-Islami, railway sources said.

Two people riding on the roof of Khulna-bound intercity train Chitra Express were hit by the overhead girder of the bridge when the train was crossing Koidanaga Rail Bridge at about 9:30am, said Md Humayun Kabir, officer in charge (OC) of Ishwardi Government Railway Police (GRP) station.

An unidentified pas-

senger died on the spot while Lavlu Sheikh, 22, of Parchalna village in Dakope upazila of Khulna, was admitted to Ishwardi upazila health complex where he succumbed to his injuries at noon, he said.

Two other train roof passengers of Rajshahi-bound 'Silk City Express' from Dhaka were hit by the girder at the same spot around 8:00pm on Wednesday, said Kamal Ahmed, OC of Sirajganj GRP station.

An unidentified man, 25, died on the spot while Md Tasil Hossain, 17, of Sapahar in Naogaon district, died in Rajshahi Medical College Hospital around 11:00pm, he said.

"Primary inquiry suggests that both the trains were carrying excessive passengers on roof.

"Due to the ongoing countrywide hartals, there is huge rush of passengers on trains. Failing to find seats in the train, many passengers ride on the roof. The victims were hit by the girders of Koidanga Bridge, which poses high risk for roof passengers as only a little distance remains between the roof of running trains and the girders of the bridge."

"GRP takes special precautionary measures to prevent accidents during Eid holidays when there is huge pressure of passengers. That time trains halt before the bridge and the roof passengers are alerted with the whistle. But this is not a usual busy period and so, no precautionary step was taken," the OC added.

Main accused in Rangpur schoolboy killing case held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Police arrested the main accused in the case for killing schoolboy Habibur Rahman from Dhap area in the city on Tuesday night.

Locals caught accused Jahid Hossain Mon, 18, son of Zakir Hossain, from a house, beat him up and later handed him over to the police.

On October 19, Habibur Rahman Habib, 15, a Class IX student of Al-Madina Institute in the city, and son of Jahidul Islam of Pasharipara area, prevented Mon and his two associates, Kabbyo, 18, and Sajib, 17, from beating his two classmates Shihab, 15, and Hridoy, 15, for puffing cigarettes in front of them. The trio then threatened Habib of dire consequences and left the scene.

On October 29, Mon along with Kabbyo and Sajib waylaid Habib while

he was returning home from a local market around 6:00pm. They stabbed him with sharp weapons, leaving him critically injured.

Hearing screams, locals chased the attackers, rescued Habib and rushed him to Rangpur Medical College Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries the following day.

Deceased father lodged a murder case with Kotwali Police Station, accusing Mon, Kabbyo and Sajib the same day.

Saifur Rahman, a sub-inspector of the police station, also the Investigation Officer of the case, said during primary interrogation, Mon confessed his involvement in the killing.

Officer-in-charge of the police station, Abdul Qader Jilani said they are conducting drives to nab the two other accused in the case.



PHOTO: STAR

Men allegedly belonging to a former union parishad chairman felled at least 74 roadside trees at Narayanpur village in Bhandaria union of Dhunat upazila under Bogra district yesterday morning.

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