



Grabbers closing in on a dying Nayanjuri Khal which in its yester years flowed with an average width of about 200-250 feet connecting the Bongshi and Turag rivers through Kaichabari, Baipail, Gazirchot, Zamgora and Yearpur union in Ashulia. In other sections, multi-storey buildings encroach on the canal, which the administration says is a recurrence following their drive last year and that they plan to recover the canal soon. The photo was taken at Baipail in Ashulia yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHAD AHAMAD

## Bumper mango production predicted

BSS, Rangpur

The process of mango formation has begun smoothly amid favourable climatic condition predicting bumper production of the most popular fruits in the northern districts this season. The fruit setting stage is progressing now well and the tress started wearing eye-catching looks in the orchards, gardens and homestead areas.

According to official sources in the Department of Agriculture Extension, and the Horticulture Centres of Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI), over 85 percent mango trees have bloomed during this season on an average.

Talking to the news agency, Horticulture Specialist Khondke Md Mesbahul Islam of the DAE said the fruit setting stage was progressing well and farmers were contacting the officials and experts to take extensive care for better production.

He suggested that the farmers nurse their orchards at this stage and control pests' attacks.

He said the farmers could spray insecticides of the Delta Methrin or Cyper groups at recommended dose or suggested level to the smaller sized growing mangoes for combating hoppers at this stage.

According to the DAE sources, there are about 4.7 million fruit-giving mango trees on some 37,000 hectares of land in the northern districts as the number continues increasing every year following expansion of commercial mango cultivation.

The farmers have been showing more interests on commercial cultivation of the sweetest mangoes like gopalbhog, lengra, fazlee, nakfazlee, khirsapati, mohanbhog, chyatapori, haribhanga and lakhna.

Principal Scientific Officer of Burihat Agriculture Research Centre Dr Hamim Reza of BARI made the same suggestion.

Associate Director-Agriculture of BRAC International (South Asia & Africa) Dr MA Mazid predicted excellent mango production this season if climatic condition, fluctuation in temperature, rainfall, attack by pests and insects remain within limit onwards this time.

Deputy Director of the DAE for Rangpur Zulfiqur Haider predicted bumper mango production if the temperature does not go very high, extents of seasonal nor'westers remain within tolerable limits and drought situation does not prolong this season.

## Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 13th death anniversary of Sabrina Arjumand Tina, a former student of City Dental College, Dhaka and the youngest daughter of ex-additional divisional commissioner of Dhaka Mohammad Tahir and Monowara Tahir, said a press release.

## Dispute

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Zahirul was a manager of a stockbroker a few years back when he helped the BRIA deputy director buy shares worth a "handsome amount of money", said the colleague. Switching to a stockbroker in Gulshan at the same position last June, Zahirul had been pushing Sitangshu to transfer the latter's shares to his new workplace. For this, he used to frequent Sitangshu's office and residence. "But Sitangshu was reluctant," he added.

The Daily Star could not independently verify the employment timeline. "We are suspecting the share dealing as the motive behind the murder but not overlooking other possible clues," Dhaka Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner (Tejgaon) Biplob Kumar Sarkar told The Daily Star.

Multiple teams were working to arrest Zahirul, son of KM Shahidul Islam of Rajshahi, he added.

Mohammadpur police said they raided Zahirul's office and Pallabi residence.

## Tk 7 lakh snatched inside Sonali Bank in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Snatchers took away Tk 7 lakh from a borrower inside Sonali Bank, Chawak Bazar Branch in Barisal city yesterday.

Rustam Ali Mallik, 70, a poultry businessman of Zia Sarak area, was waiting for his relatives as he received the money as an SME loan from the bank around 12:00 noon, said the victim.

All of a sudden, the culprits took away Mallik's bag containing the money and fled after they diverted his attention by saying money of somebody fell on the floor, said bank officials.

Mallik alleged nobody from the bank, which has no security guard, came forward to catch the gang.

Acknowledging the fact, Bank Manager Sultan Hossain Khan said all 13 staff were busy with their own duties.

The higher authorities were informed of taking steps to appoint a guard several times, but to no avail, he said.

Sultan said the snatchers could be identified through the close circuit camera of which video footage was collected by Kotwali police.

Officer-in-Charge Shakhawat Hossain said they were investing the incident.

## 2 injured as railing of DU Surya Sen Hall collapses

DU CORRESPONDENT

Two people were injured when a railing on the 2nd floor of Surya Sen Hall of Dhaka University collapsed due to heavy rainfall yesterday morning.

The injured are Shahinur Rahman Reza, a 3rd-year student, and Shah Paran, a shop employee of the hall.

Cracks have appeared in different parts of the building as the hall is very old. Around 100 rooms will be repaired soon, ASM Maksud Kamal, hall provost, told The Daily Star.

## Illegal sand trade endangers Faridpur embankment

UNB, Faridpur

Illegal sand extraction from the river Padma has made the Faridpur town protection embankment vulnerable, much to the worry of local residents.

A group of local influential people having political clout are lifting sand illegally from the mighty river near the town embankment at Baliadangi village in Dicirchar union of Sadar upazila.

During a recent spot visit, the news agency found sand extracted from the river being loaded into trucks along a vast area on the west side of Dholar Mor up to Baliadangi.

Around 400 to 500 trucks heavily loaded with the extracted sand are plying the embankment every day making the infrastructure rickety.

The embankment constructed at a cost of Tk 194 crore is now on the way of getting largely damaged.

The residents are in fear that the embankment may collapse any moment.

Local sources said allegedly led by Dicirchar union Jubo League President Mintu Fakir, local influential people, including Ayub Mollah, are lifting sand from the river point.

Villager Musa Sheikh said sand is being lifted from the river defying rules.

A sand trader of C&B Ghat area, requesting not to be named, said people including Mintu Fakir and Ayub Mollah sell sand worth Tk 1.5 lakh to Tk 2 lakh from the river every day.

Ayub Mollah said, "We are extracting sand from the river taking permis-

sion from the Water Development Board (WDB) and managing the local Awami League leaders."

Jubo League leader Mintu Fakir claimed they were lifting sand from their land on the shoals that emerged in the river.

Executive Engineer of Faridpur WDB Shahidul Islam denied giving anyone permission to extract sand from the river.

He said they earlier conducted several drives but could not arrest any of the culprits as they remained off the scene seeing their presence.

Deputy Commissioner of Faridpur Sardar Sharafat Ali said he conducted mobile courts several times against the sand lifting.

He also assured of bringing the offenders to book whichever political party they belong to.

## High-rise in Sonai River

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was taken by the national taskforce on rivers in June.

However, instead of implementing the decision, another committee, with M Ataharul Islam, chief commissioner of National River Conservation Commission (NRCC), as convener, was formed to investigate the matter.

"Based on a site visit, related documents from different departments and ministries of the government and interviews of the locals, we have viewed that the structure stands on private property. No incident of land grabbing was visible," Ataharul Islam told The Daily Star.

Bapa's Jamil, however, said the visit was

made during the dry season but nothing in this regard was mentioned in the committee report, based on which the taskforce permitted resumption of the construction.

Law defines a river based on its flow during the rainy season, noted Bapa General Secretary Abdul Matin.

Rights activist and Co-president of Bapa Sultana Kamal said development work should not contradict law.

Bapa's five other demands include removal of the wrongly placed demarcation pillars and implementation of the High Court's 2009 order that the boundary markers should be placed newly, 50 metres off the high tide mark of the river foreshore.

## Security for Hindu victims

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Association; Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation; and Dr Badiul Alam Majumdar, country director of The Hunger Project, Bangladesh, are among the representatives of the committee.

Dr Fawzia Moslem signed the statement

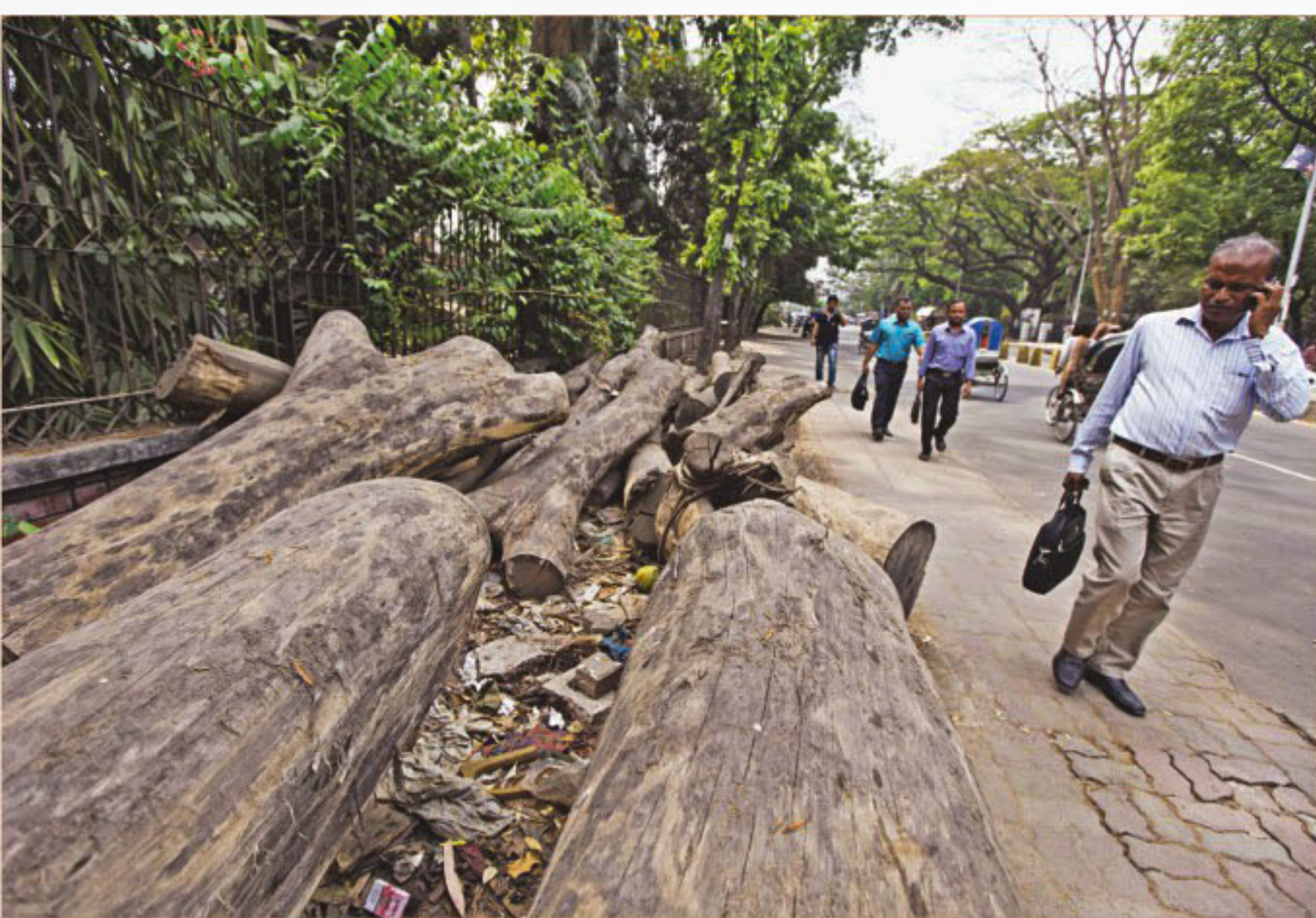
on the committee's behalf.

On March 13, at least nine Hindu families of Chandantala village in Tahtoli were allegedly forced out of their houses by local grabbers eyeing 50 acres of the victims' land. All families were brought back home on Tuesday by police and the local administration.



PHOTO: STAR

Nilufa, a Phantom Apparels Limited worker who survived the Rana Plaza collapse but lost use of one leg and has been left partially paralysed, addresses a human chain organised by Rana Plaza Garment Workers Trade Union Centre near the site beside the Dhaka-Aricha highway in Savar yesterday demanding compensation for the victims, that the victims' families be rehabilitated, the missing be declared dead, and ensuring the arrest of those responsible. The April 24, 2013 incident left 1,136 people dead and hundreds of others injured.



These logs of a large tree have remained on the footpath in front Curzon Hall of Dhaka University for more than three months, hampering pedestrians' movement. The photo was taken on Monday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Catch corrupt high-fliers, gain public trust

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office in the capital, during the closing ceremony of ACC's Corruption Prevention Week, which started on March 26.

Iftekhharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh, said, "It is not possible to check corruption in a country where the parliament is non-functional and parliamentary committees don't

work."

Former information commissioner Muhammad Jamir stressed the need for political will to create accountability in the fight against corruption.

In one recommendation, cultural personality Ramendu Majumdar said the ACC should bring to justice people who made away with crores of taka, instead of wasting its time on petty acts of

corruption.

Giving reference of a book titled "Thieves of State" by Sarah Chayes which showed a link between corruption and the rise of religious militancy in Afghanistan, Badiul Alam Majumdar, Secretary of Shushashoner Janney Nagorik (SHUJON), said, "If we want to curb militancy, we have to eliminate corruption."

Media expert Md Jahangir urged

the ACC to create a cell for providing support to media workers who report on corruption.

Quoting a former secretary whose name he did not disclose, Jahangir said, "No institution in the country is independent. Only the government is independent. Others just pretend to be independent. Whatever happens in Bangladesh happens at the government's will."

## 23 charged with contempt

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He was sentenced to imprisonment "till rising of the court" that day and fined Tk 5,000.

On December 20, 2014, the daily Prothom Alo ran a report titled "50 people express concern over

Bergman's punishment" on the basis of the statement, which observed that the tribunal's order would restrict freedom of expression.

One signatory, Khushi Kabir, later withdrew her name.

On January 14 the tribunal asked the 49 signatories to explain the statement.

"Prima facie it appears that the core content of the 'statement' questions 'transparency and openness' of the judicial

proceedings before the tribunal and also justification of the order sentencing a journalist [Bergman] for the act of scandalising the tribunal constituting the offence of contempt," it said.