PHOTO: STAR

A section of local influential people have continued illegal sand lifting from the Teesta riverbed at Parulia in Hatibandha upazila under Lalmonirhat district, posing threat to Lalmonirhat-Burimari highway as well as the nearby railway connecting the same route.

Sand lifting from Teesta threatens road, railway

S Dilip Roy, Lalmonirhat

Some influential people are illegally lifting sand from the Teesta riverbed at Parulia village in Hatibandha upazila under the district, posing threat to the nearby highway and railway, both connecting Lalmonirhat town and Burimari land port.

Local people alleged that six to seven local activists of ruling Awami League (AL) have been doing the sand trade there for the last few months but the local administration is not taking any step.

Even the influential people have removed stone boulders of the protection embankment to construct a road for movement of sand carrying trucks, said Mansur Ali, a local trader.

If the gang continues the sand lifting from riverbed, the highway and railway routes will face erosion in the coming rainy season, he said.

"Some identified Awami League men threatened us as we tried to stand against the illegal sand lifting from the river," said Hazrat Ali, another local.

At least 150 truckloads of sand is lifted from the Teesta River daily and each truck of sand is sold for Tk 1000 to 1100, said several daily wage basis labourers seeking anonymity.

Shafiar Rahman, chairman of local Patikapara union parishad, said he has already informed the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Hatibandha about illegal sand lifting from the Teesta.

The erosion protection embankment at Parulia village is under the threat of collapse due to illegal sand lifting from the Teesta River, said Shibendu Dastagir, executive engineer of Lalmonirhat Water Development Board.

Expressing concern over the illegal sand lifting from the river beside the highway, Suruz Miah, executive engineer of Lalmonirhat Roads and Highways Department said the local administration is expected to take necessary step in this regard.

Hatibandha UNO Mahbubur Rahman said stern action will be taken against illegal sand and lifters from the Teesta River at Parulia village soon.

Ringleader shot dead by rivals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

An alleged ringleader of a local criminal gang was shot dead by his rivals at Gonashympur village in Sadar upazila of Laxmipur district on Tuesday night.

The deceased is Md Hanif Momo, 30, son of Abdus Salam of the village.

Sub-inspector Jamal Hossain, in-charge of Chandraganj Police Outpost, said a gang, led by Jasim, leader of 'Jasim Bahini' picked up Hanif while he was going to a local marker around 9:30pm.

They took him to a betel-nut garden and shot him from a close distance, leaving him dead on the spot around 11:00pm.

On information, police went to the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Laxmipur Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Humayun Kabir, officer in-charge of Chandraganj Police Station, said Hanif was accused in a number of cases filed with the police station, including for murder.

Police quoting locals said Hanif was a member of Jasim Bahini but recently he formed a separate gang that enraged Jasim.

Abducted kid rescued, kidnapper held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A three-year-old boy, abducted from Shivalaya upazila of Manikganj on Saturday, was rescued from Santahar Railway Station under Adamdighi upazila in Bogra on Tuesday night.

The law enforcers also arrested the abductor, Mintu Pramanik, 26, son of Nuru Pramanik of Sheldukhari village in Shajahanpur upazila of Bogra.

Quoting victim's family members police said Mintu picked up Al-Rafi, 3, son of Rustom Ali of Chowbaria village in Ghior upazila of Manikganj, from in front of his maternal grandfather's house at Falsatia village in Shivalaya upazila on Saturday afternoon.

Later, Mintu phoned Rustom and demanded Tk 2 lakh as ransom for his son's release.

Rustom filed a general diary (GD) with Shivalaya Police Station the same night, said Abdul Hannan, sub-inspector of the police station.

Following the filing of the GD, police arrested Mintu and rescued the kid from Santahar Railway Station in Bogra on Tuesday night, by tracking his cell phone number, added the SI.

Shops gutted in Habiganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

At least six shops were gutted when a fire broke out in Bahubol upazila of Habiganj district on Monday night.

Azizur Rahman, station officer at Habiganj Fire Services Station, said the fire originated from an electric short circuit at one of the shops in Hospital area around 11:00pm and soon engulfed adjacent five shops, including a rice godown.

Being informed, a fire fighting unit from Habiganj Fire Service Station rushed to the spot and doused the blaze. The affected shop owners claimed the losses caused by the fire could go up to Tk 50 lakh, said the OC.

PHOTO: STAR

People of Pal community are passing busy time, making their traditional pottery at a village in Baufal upazila under Patuakhali district yesterday, ahead of Bangla New Year Pahela Boishakh.

SNIPPETS

Abducted schoolgirl rescued
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Police rescued a seven-year-old schoolgirl from Pakarmatha area in Pirgachha upazila of the district yesterday afternoon, hours after her abduction. Locals said an unidentified woman picked up the victim of Purbo Debu village from the school premises at around 10:00am. Family members then informed the law enforcers about the matter. Later, police in a drive rescued the second grader from the area at around 3:00pm. However, the abductor managed to flee from the scene, sensing the presence of the policemen.

Youth commits 'suicide'
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A youth allegedly committed suicide at Kanil Railgate village in Sadar upazila early yesterday. The deceased is Shahinur Rahman, 26, son of Phulmahmud of the village. He was a mental patient. Police and family sources said Shahinur had been undergoing treatment at Shahin Diagnostic Centre and Hospital in Mymensingh district under Dr Abul Mansur, psychiatric (consultant) of Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, for the last two years. Family members found him hanging from a mango tree in the area and informed the police.

Two kids drown
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Two children drowned in a canal at Kalidashpur village under Daulatput upazila yesterday morning. The deceased are Genius, 5, son of Rafiqul Islam, and his cousin Lamia Khatun, 4, daughter of Idrisul Islam of the village. Family sources said the two accidentally fell into the canal near their house while playing on its bank at around 11:30am and drowned.

Rly ticket black marketeer held
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a ticket black marketer at a tea stall near Jamalpur railway station in the town yesterday. The arrestee is Raju Miah, 30, son of late Afsar Ali of Shahapur area in the town. A team of Rab-14, acting on a tip-off, raided the area at around 2:30pm and arrested Raju along with four tickets of Dhaka-bound two intercity trains--Teesta and Brahmaputra Express--from Bhandari. A case was filed in this connection, said police.

PHOTO: STAR

Once mighty Karotoa River in Shubil area of Bogra Sadar upazila has reduced to a narrow canal while its dried up bed is being used for cultivation. Several others rivers in the northern region face the same fate during this time of the year due to drastic reduction of the flow from the upstream.

17 BNP, Jamaat, Shibir men held in 3 districts

STAR COUNTRY DESK

At least 17 BNP and Jamaat-Shibir men were arrested in Rangpur, Jhenidah and Chapainawabganj districts yesterday and the day before.

Eight activists of Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir were held in Hauderper area under Pirgachha upazila in Rangpur early yesterday on charge of sabotage, reports our correspondent.

The arrestees were produced before a court which sent them to jail, said Md Aminul Islam, OC of Pirgachha Police Station.

Away in Jhenidah, police arrested eight activists of BNP and Jamaat-Shibir in different upazilas of the district early Tuesday, reports our correspondent.

Superintendent of Police Altaf Hossain said the law enforcers arrested the eight suspecting that they might have created anarchy in the areas, in reaction to the death sentence of Jamaat leader Kamaruzzaman.

They were later produced in a court in the afternoon that sent them to jail.

In Chapainawabganj, the law enforcers in a drive arrested a Shibir activist along with five crude bombs in Selimabad area under Shibganj upazila on Tuesday afternoon, reports our correspondent.