

# Erosion threatens country's largest seed farm

*Over 100 acres of land devoured by the Tentulia River in Dashmina upazila of Patuakhali in two and a half years, recurrent flooding hampers cultivation*

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

River erosion threatens the country's largest seed farm covering 1,044 acres of land in Dashmina upazila under the district.

Over 100 acres of land of the farm set up by Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) as well as its office building and godown there went into the bed of the Tentulia River in last two and a half years, officials said.

Cultivation is also greatly hampered as saline water from nearby Tentulia River regularly floods the area in absence

of flood control embankment.

The farm meant for producing salinity tolerant and hybrid varieties of crop seeds covers 1,044.36 areas of land at Char Botham, Char Fatima, Char Hyder, Char Shahjalal, Char Saimon, Char Borhan and Char Bashbaria in Dashmina upazila, BADC sources said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the Tk 250 crore project on March 19 in 2013 and the authorities concerned started cultivation to produce seeds there.

They set up several permanent structures like

godown building, office, and residential house for employees and bought a good number of agricultural tools for the farm, BADC sources said.

But serious river erosion soon affected the farm, said officials.

With the help of Bangladesh Navy, the river was dredged in 2014 to change its course but in vain, they said.

"We are very anxious as the whole farm is facing extinction due to the erosion by the Tentulia River, said Meser Howlader, a resident of Bashbaria village, also a farmer of the farm.

Flood control embankment and necessary sluice gates and outlets should be constructed in the farm area to check the erosion, said Abul Hossen Mridha, another farmer.

Md Mirajul Islam, assistant engineer of the farm, said, "Most of the farmland is flooded by saline water from nearby Tentulia River during high tides influenced by the new moon and the full moon. We have informed our higher authorities to take immediate steps for constructing a flood control embankment with concrete blocks to protect the farm."



PHOTO: STAR

The Tentulia River, which reached the temporary office building of the BADC seed farm in Dashmina upazila under Patuakhali district last week, has fully devoured the structure by now.

# Gang storms school, assaults teacher in classroom

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Teachers and students of North Bengal Paper Mills High School at Paksey in Ishwardi upazila of the district formed a human chain and held a rally on the school premises yesterday, protesting attack on a teacher of the institution by a gang the day before.

They also boycotted their classes, said school sources.

A group of local youths, allegedly led by one Sourav Hasan Tuntuni, stormed the

school and assaulted Assistant Headmaster Nittananda Dhar in classroom around 2:30pm on Tuesday.

Soon after the incident, the teachers and students boycotted their classes, protesting the attack.

The speakers at the rally demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the attackers.

They also sought security and congenial atmosphere in the educational institution, said Md Fazlur Rahman, headmaster of the

school.

On Tuesday, eighth grader Md Tafsir Ahmed, younger brother of Tuntuni, came to school with a plastic snake and frightened a female teacher with it.

Being informed, the assistant headmaster punished Tafsir.

Tuntuni along with his some associates entered the school while Nittananda Dhar was conducting a class.

The gang then assaulted Dhar, creating panic among the teachers and students,

the headmaster said, adding that they immediately informed local police.

Contacted, AKM Mohiuddin, president of the school managing committee, and managing director of Paksey Paper Mills, said a three-member probe committee was formed yesterday to investigate the incident.

The committee was asked to submit report within next two days, he said, adding that punitive action will be taken against the culprits after getting the report.



PHOTO: STAR

Students of North Bengal Sugar Mills High School at Paksey in Ishwardi upazila under Pabna district join a human chain on the school premises yesterday demanding punishment of the criminals who assaulted the assistant headmaster of the institution the day before.

# Land dispute leaves one dead, 3 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A schoolgirl was killed and three others were injured in an attack by their rivals over a land dispute at Balia village in Phulpur upazila of the district on Tuesday.

The victim was identified as Sajeda Akhter, 13, a Class VII student at Balia High School, and daughter of Abul Kashem of the village.

Quoting locals, Mazharul Haque, officer-in-charge (OC) Phulpur Police Station, said there had been a long-standing dispute between Abul Kashem and his sister Julekha Khatun over the ownership of a land.

As Julekha's son, Jamal Uddin along with hired goons went to the disputed land in a bid to capture it at noon, Kashem and his family members locked in an altercation with them, said the OC.

At one stage, the gang attacked them with sharp weapons, leaving Kashem, 45, his daughters Sajeda, 13, and Mousumi Akhter, 15, and Kashem's younger brother Abul Hashem, 40, injured, the OC added.

The injured were taken to Phulpur Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared Sajeda dead around 1:00pm. Three other injured were shifted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital for



PHOTO: STAR

Burnt office room of BKB College at Balashpur in Mymensingh town.

# College in Mymensingh town torched

*Vengeance by evil doers!*

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A devastating fire, allegedly set by miscreants, destroyed important office documents, laboratory equipment and furniture of BKB College at Balashpur in the town early yesterday.

Informed, a team from Mymensingh Fire Service and Civil Defence rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control after trying for an hour.

Some local youths, who used to tease the college girls on their way to college and

home, were earlier warned of legal action if they continue the evil deed, said a college teacher requesting not to be named.

The youths might have torched the college to vent their grievance, said sources.

Some 170 first and second year students of the college could not sit for their pre-test and semester examinations yesterday as 60 benches of the college got burnt, college sources said.

Protesting the incident, college students blocked Balashpur road for an hour,

disrupting vehicular movement on the road at noon. The students also formed a human chain in front of their college demanding immediate arrest of the culprits.

Later police went to the spot and helped ease the traffic.

Abdul Jalil, principal of the college, filed a general diary with Kotwali Police Station.

The incident is under investigation, said Md Mazharul Islam, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station.

# Missing woman found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Police recovered the decomposed body of a woman, who went missing ten days ago, from a bush at Prodhanpara Shalmara village in Sadar upazila of Panchagarh district on Tuesday.

The dead is Nurani Akhter, 30, daughter of late Kashem Ali of Dhangipukur cluster village in the upazila. She worked at a clinic in the district town.

Police and family sources said Nurani and her husband Babul Hossain, a tea worker, used to live at Moidandighi village in Boda upazila.

On September 4, Nurani went to her father's house. The following day, she came out of the house to visit her elder sister Rokeya at Fulpara village in Sadar upazila and since then she went missing.

On Tuesday afternoon, locals found the body in the bush and informed the police.

# Youth beaten to death in Shibganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

A young man was beaten to death yesterday at Tokna village in Shibganj upazila of the district over extramarital affair.

The deceased was Gazlur Rahman, 25, son of Abul Hossain of Sahapara village in the upazila.

Moinul Islam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Shibganj Police Station, said Gazlur went to Bashir Uddin's house at neighbouring Toknapara village at around 2:00am to meet Bashir's wife Naima Khatun. Gazlur and Naima were having a love affair, he added.

Gazlur was trying to enter the house when Bashir intercepted him. Gazlur fired one round, but no one was hit.

Hearing Bashir's shouts, locals surrounded the house and caught Gazlur. They beat him up mercilessly.

On information, police rushed to the area and rescued Gazlur. They seized one pistol, one magazine and eight bullets from his possession. Later, they took him to Shibganj Upazila Health Complex.

As his condition deteriorated, the doctors referred him to Chapainawabganj Adhunik Sadar Hospital, where he died at around 9:15am.

# Criminals poisoned to death fishes of a pond at Gopalpur Apuchagari village in Thalta Majbari union of Nandigram upazila under Bogra district early Wednesday.

# One to die, two get life for murder in Sylhet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A Sylhet court yesterday sentenced a man to death and two others to life imprisonment for killing their neighbour in Bianibazar upazila in 2011.

The death penalty awardee is Moiz Uddin, son of Manjir Ali of Kasba village in the upazila. The lifers are Jalal Uddin and Safiq Uddin. Both are cousins of Moiz Uddin.

Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court fined the two Tk 50,000 each, in default they are to suffer one year more in prison.

According to the prosecution, the victim, Kamrul, and his neighbour Moiz Uddin locked in

an altercation over positioning a day oven on a disputed land on August 21, 2011. At one stage, Moiz along with Jalal and Shafiq stabbed Kamrul, leaving him death on the spot.

Kamrul's father Abul Kalam lodged a murder case with Bianibazar Police Station the following day, accusing Moiz and his cousins Jalal and Shafiq.

Sub-Inspector Nazmul Huda, also the investigating officer of the case, pressed charges against Moiz Uddin and his cousins on February 27, 2013.

After examining case record and 18 witnesses, Additional District and Sessions Judge Monir Ahmed Patway pronounced the verdict.

# Train tickets vanish in hours

FROM PAGE 16

Hundreds of people thronged the station. Many returned empty-handed even after standing in queues for hours.

Some of them alleged that a huge number of tickets had been grabbed by some dishonest traders for selling those in the black market.

However, the railway authorities said the demand for tickets was much higher than the number of seats available, leading to the crisis of tickets.

Solaiman Hossain, who was looking for a Silk City Express ticket to Rajshahi on September 21, said he had gone to the station around 5:30am yesterday.

"There were some 50 people ahead of me in my line. But before my turn came, a railway employee around 12 noon announced that all the tickets had been sold out," he said.

Ticket-seekers, who wanted to go to other districts in different trains, shared similar experiences with this correspondent.

Of them, Jahangir, a university student from Chittagong, said, "My friend

and I couldn't get tickets although there were only 30 to 35 people ahead of us in the line. Where did all the tickets go?"

According to him, tickets were unavailable as a large number of tickets had already been collected by some traders involved in black market. Some other passengers echoed him.

Yesterday, Railway police arrested three people at the station on charges of selling tickets in the black market. The law enforcers said 17 tickets for different destinations were found with them.

Bangladesh Railway (BR) Additional Director General (operations) Habibur Rahman said there was no scope for committing the crime because of their strict monitoring.

He said around 14,000 tickets were sold daily at Kamalapur while the demand was over 50,000.

BR started selling advance train tickets on Tuesday to facilitate a hassle-free journey for holidaymakers ahead of Eid which is to be celebrated on September 25.

Tickets for only September 21 were sold yesterday. Those who had joined the queues at the Kamalapur Railway Station on Tuesday night or in the early hours of yesterday managed to secure tickets.

Tickets for September 22, 23 and 24 would be available today, tomorrow and Saturday.

Return tickets for September 27, 28, 29, 30 and October 1 will be sold on September 23, 24, 25, 26 and 27 respectively at Rajshahi, Khulna, Rangpur, Dinajpur and Lalmonirhat railway stations.

A person can buy maximum four tickets.

BRTC The state-run Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) started selling advance bus tickets yesterday.

Visiting the Motijheel bus depot yesterday noon, The Daily Star saw a few ticket-seekers before a counter there.

However, there had been huge rush of passengers before the ticket counters of private bus operators in the capital.

BRTC will operate around 500 buses across the country during the Eid rush, its chairman Mizanur Rahman