

SHARP FALL IN JAMUNA WATER LEVEL

Ferry services hampered as waterways lose navigability

KM REZAUL HOQUE, Gaibandha

Drastic fall of water level in the Jamuna River badly hamper movement of ferry boats from and to Balashi ghat of Gaibandha district.

At the beginning of the dry season this year, over 200 big and small shoals have emerged in the riverbed in around 50 square kilometre area from Jigabari to Mannar Char in eastern channel and Kamarjani to Jamira in western channel and the ferry boats often run aground in the areas.

"Boats plying from Balashi ghat to Bahadurabad ghat have to move cautiously to avert

grounding on hidden shoals. It requires additional fuel cost and time to reach the destination through alternatives routes," said Nuruzzaman, a boatman at Balashi ghat.

In the rainy season, it takes only two hours to reach Bahadurabad ghat in Jamalpur district from Balashi ghat in Gaibandha district, but in dry season, it required up to four hours, said Mokbul Hossain a passenger of Golner char in Fulchhari upazila.

Losing navigable depth, 17 river routes including Balashi-Fulchhari, Gajaria-Golna, Singria-Jhanjhair, Goonvari-Kalasona, Balashi-Gutail, Sayedpur-Rajibpur, Balashi-Amtoli

and Balashi-Sariakandi are facing closure.

On October 17, the railway shut down ferrying wagon barges from Balashi ghat due to sharp decrease of water level and emergence of huge shoals along the ferry routes, said Mosiur Rahman, marine inspector of Balashi ghat.

It needs at least five feet deep water for smooth plying of wagon loaded barges, but now Jamuna channel at many points has only two to three feet deep water. If a barge runs aground on the shoal, it became difficult to free it, he said.

At least ten inter-union river routes in Fulchhari, Gajaria, Fazlupur and

Arendabari unions in Fulchhari upazila are on the verge of closure, as water level at many points has come down to knee-deep, said Joydul Abedin Jalal, chairman of Fazlupur union.

"We appealed to the authorities concerned for dredging the silted riverbed, but to no response yet," said Habibur Rahman, chairman of Fulchhari upazila parishad.

This season the Jamuna riverbed got silted by three to four feet layer of sand and sediments, making dredging all the more necessary, said Abdul Awal Mia, executive engineer of Water Development Board in Gaibandha.



PHOTO: STAR

Large chars have emerged in different areas of the Jamuna River in Gaibandha district at the beginning of the dry season, hampering plying of ferryboats.

Three boys rescued hours after abduction

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Three boys, abducted from Electric supply road area in Sunamganj town on Wednesday, were rescued three hours into abduction.

Police rescued them from Jawabazar area under Sunamganj-Sylhet road in Chatauk upazila of Sunamganj district at around 9:00pm.

Abdul Hye, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Sunamganj Police Station,

said, law enforcers, acting on secret information, raided the area and rescued the boys.

He said a gang of seven unidentified criminals picked up Emon, 13, son of Ubayer Miah, Akash, 12, son of Kadnas Miah, and Rana, 13, son of Ershad Ali, after making them senseless by using chloroform at around 6:00pm.

The kidnapers fled the scene, sensing the presence of law enforcers, the OC added.

SNIPPETS

Farmer electrocuted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A man died from electrocution in Akkelpur upazila of Joypurhat district yesterday afternoon. The deceased, Helal Sardar, 55, son of late Abdus Sattar, was a farmer of Boar village in the upazila. Quoting witnesses, police said Helal came in contact with an overhead power line while cutting branches of a tree beside his house at noon and died instantly. Being informed, police recovered the body and sent it to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

2 youths held with pistol

UNB, Rajshahi

Police in a drive arrested two youths with a pistol and a bullet from Guripara area in the city on Tuesday night. The arrestees are Kamrul Islam Moon, 27, son of Anwar Hossain of Zinnanagar area, and Atiqur Rahman Rony, 28, son of Abul Hossain of Christianpara under Boalia Police Station. Maznu Mia, assistant sub-inspector of Rajpara Police Station, said law enforcers, acting on a tip-off, raided the area and arrested the duo along with the gun and bullet around 8:30pm.

Kid drowns in canal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

A four-year-old boy drowned in a canal at Charakhali village in Zianagar upazila of the district yesterday. The victim is Baizid, son of Sohag Mia, a day labourer of the village. Quoting victim's family members, police said Baizid went to take a bath in the canal near their house on Wednesday afternoon and went missing. Around 10:30am yesterday, locals spotted his body floating in the Baleshwar Canal.

Ex-Shibir leader held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Police arrested a former leader of Islami Chhatra Shibir from Newmarket area of the town on Wednesday night. The arrestee, Mosharruf Hossain, was a former president of Shibir's district unit. Tariquul Islam, officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station, said a police team arrested Mosharruf in connection with subversive activities.

Rally to mark sanitation month

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

A colourful procession was held at Kawkhali upazila headquarters yesterday to mark the National Sanitation Month 2015. Kawkhali upazila administration in cooperation with the Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) jointly organised the procession, followed by a discussion meeting held at the upazila parishad's hall room. Among others, Kawkhali Upazila Chairman SM Ahsan Kabir, Kawkhali Upazila Nirbahi Officer Shahidul Islam and DPHE Sub-assistant Engineer Mostafizur Rahman addressed.

Illegal structures on rly land demolished in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Around 50 illegal structures on railway land at Mogholhat Railway gate, BDR gate and Station Road in Lalmonirhat town were demolished yesterday noon.

The railway authorities launched the drive to remove the illegal structures in different areas under Lalmonirhat Railway Division.

M o h a m m a d Ohidunnabi, divisional estate officer, said the drive for demolishing illegal structures on railway land in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Bogra, Dinajpur, Panchagarh and Thakurgaon under the Lalmonirhat Railway Division would be continued.

"We will demolish all kind of structures built illegally on railway land," he added.

These structures had been demolished four times in the last three years, but were rebuilt only three or four days later, railway sources said.

The owners of the illegal structures alleged that the railway authorities removed the structures on the footpaths only and never conducted drives for demolishing illegal structures on railway land.

Some unscrupulous

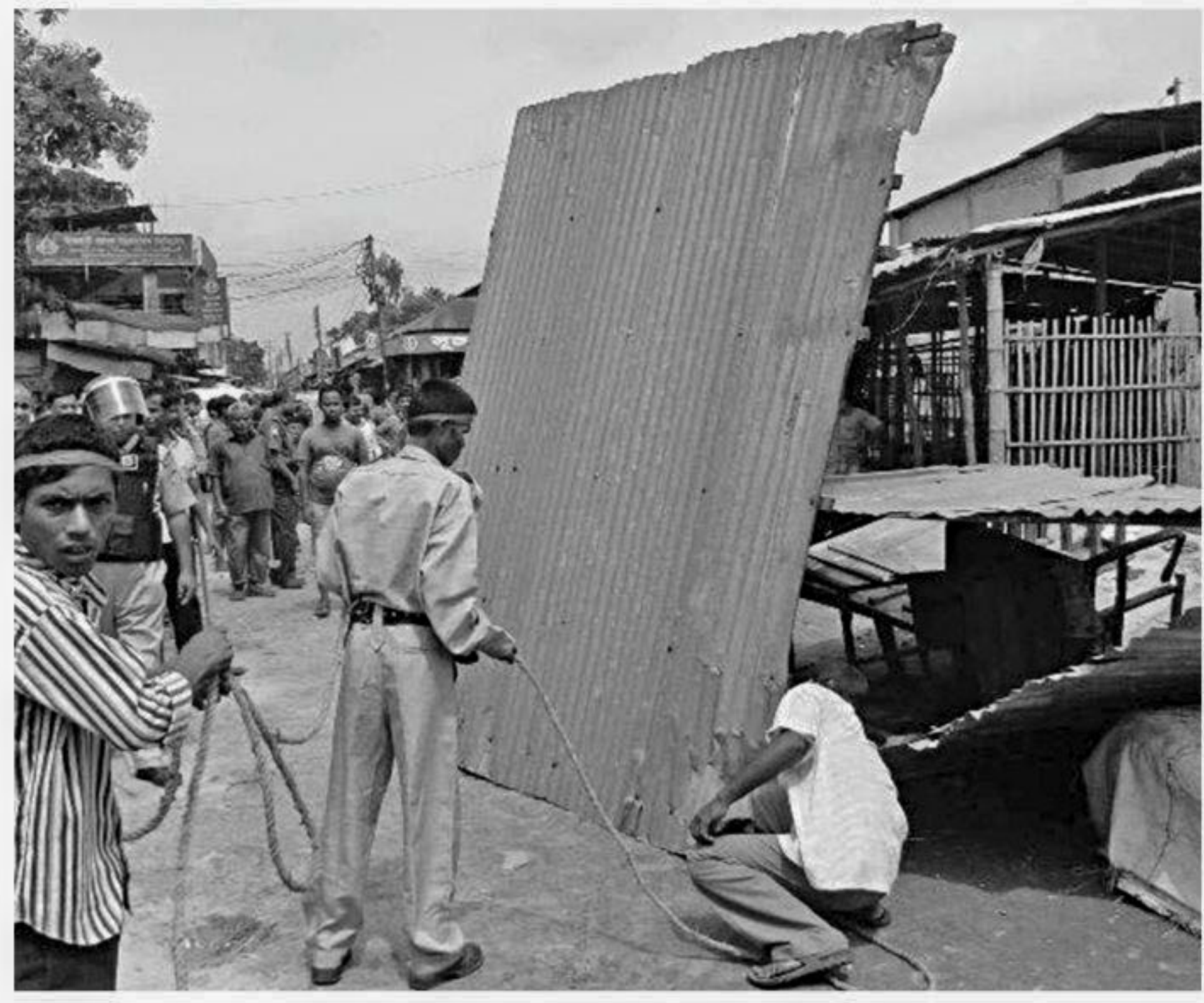


PHOTO: STAR

Authorities demolish 20 illegal structures in Mogholhat rail gate area of Lalmonirhat town yesterday.

railway officials get regular bribe from the owners of illegal structures but they don't get any money from the owners of structures on footpaths, that is why such structures are demolished, they claimed.

Arshad Hossain, a fruit trader and owner of a shop on the footpath on railway land at Mogholhat Rail Gate, said "I tried to get lease

for a portion of railway land but in vain."

Mafiz Miah, a tea stall owner on railway land at BDR Gate in the town, said there are many illegal structures on railway land in the town, but those are never demolished. "Our footpath shops are demolished," he said, adding that they rebuild their shops on railway land again as they have no

alternative.

Hafizur Rahman, head assistant of Railway Divisional Estate Office (DEO) under Lalmonirhat Railway division of West Zone Railway, said they can't lease the railway land beside the railway track. The illegal structures beside the railway track in different areas were demolished by the authorities, he added.

MADARIPUR DOUBLE MURDER

Four to die, one gets life, 9 others 10 yrs

UNB, DHAKA

A tribunal here yesterday sentenced four people to death, one person to life imprisonment and nine others to 10 years' imprisonment for killing two siblings in Rajoir upazila under Madaripur district in 2003.

The death penalty awardees are Muhiuddin Hawlader, Sohagh Hawlader, Habi Hawlader and Halim Hawlader. The first three were tried in absentia. The lifer is Shamsul Haque Hawlader. The court also fined him Tk 50,000, in default, to suffer one year more in prison.

Those who got 10 years in prison are Hiru Sarder, Rafique Hawlader, Kaiyum Shikder, Jahangir Shikder,

Tutul Hawlader, Mostafa Hawlader, Zinnat Khan, Idris Sheikh and Sekandar Sheikh. The court also fined them Tk 30,000 each, in default, to serve six months' more imprisonment.

According to the prosecution, the convicts opened fire on the supporters of Sirajul Haque Mollah, chairman candidate in the local union parishad election, after the Eid-ul-Azha prayers at Paschim Sharmangal village in Rajoir upazila under Madaripur district, on February 12 in 2003, which left Syed Ali Mollah and Soleman Mollah dead and 34 others injured.

A case was filed with the Rajoir Police Station in this connection.

Police submitted charge

sheet against 28 people on 30 August in 2003.

The trial started on October 11, 2005.

After examining the records and statements of 28 witnesses, judge of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 Shahed-Nur-Uddin handed down the verdict.

The judge acquitted 14 of the accused as charges brought against them could not be proved.

Our M y e n s i n g h Correspondent adds: A mobile court awarded three months' imprisonment to a stalker at Teluari village in Ishwarganj upazila under the district yesterday.

The convict is Kajal Islam, 18, son of Abdul Berek of Sreefholata in Ishwarganj.

"Kajal used to tease a girl of a local high school for long. As Kajal did the same with the girl on Wednesday, the girl cried for help. Locals rushed to the spot and caught Kajal red-handed," Md Borhan Uddin, officer-in-charge (OC) of Ishwarganj Police Station, quoted locals as saying.

Later they handed over Kajal to police after giving him a good beating in the evening.

Kajal was produced before a mobile court led by Rajib Kumar Sarker, upazila nirbahi officer and executive magistrate, at his office around 11:00am yesterday.

The court sentenced him to three months' imprisonment and he was sent to jail, the OC said.

Advertisement for Ymuna Ayeel Koshpashani Limited, featuring a logo and text in Bengali. It includes details about their annual report and contact information.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Railway, featuring a logo and text in Bengali. It includes details about recruitment and job opportunities.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Railway, featuring a logo and text in Bengali. It includes details about recruitment and job opportunities.