



PHOTO: STAR

This site at Matasagar in Dinajpur municipality, earlier serving as officially sanctioned waste dumping ground for over 50 years, went under occupation of land grabbers in December last year.

DINAJPUR MUNICIPALITY

Dump land grabbed, solid waste has nowhere to go

KONGKON KARMAKER with ANDREW EAGLE

Dinajpur town's solid waste has nowhere to go. The site of municipality's only designated waste dump was grabbed in December last year. Since then, waste has been dumped at various other locations, posing a risk to public health.

The municipal authority has been using 8.6 acres of land in the Matsagar area of Sadar upazila as a waste dump for more than 50 years, but with forged land documents and misinforming Dinajpur land office, the site has now been grabbed by influential parties, says advocate Meherul Islam.

Municipal officers say that on 11 November 1961 local authorities paid for 5,188 taka to buy the land parcel under the Emergency Requisition of Property Act 1948. A subsequent gazette

notification was published on 29 August 1963.

For nearly a half century thereafter, there was no dispute raised regarding ownership of the site; then, in 2011, the land was grabbed, says Dinajpur's mayor, Jahangir Alam.

Subsequently citizens groups from Dinajpur town reoccupied the land, according to the mayor. A case was then filed with a Dinajpur court by Nirod Mohon Das, Abu Hossain and Sontosh Kumar Biswas, claiming the land.

Then last year just prior to the municipality election the land was grabbed once more, at the end of December. "In the absence of a mayor and councillors during the municipality election," says Alam, "the land grabbers erected a brick structure on the land."

Dinajpur municipality and civil society representa-

tives jointly called a meeting over the issue on 5 March this year. Civil society advocates proposed further action including a daylong hartal to demand the removal of the land grabbers, but lawmaker Iqbalur Rahim requested such action be postponed.

The Citizen group "Dinajpur Moyla Gadda Dokholmukto Committee" again met in the Dinajpur Press Club auditorium last Saturday, where the committee urged the local administration to remove the land grabbers as early as possible. They also demanded the land grabbers' immediate arrest.

Speakers and attendees at the meeting included AK Azad of Nagorik Udyog, Mosaddek Hossain, the president of Dinajpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry, former mayor Mosaddek Hossain Labu,

Sultan Kamal Uddin Bachchu of Sammillito Sangskritik Jot and local Jatiya Party president, Ahmed Safi Rubel.

The speakers expressed concern that Dinajpur's municipal authority is facing severe problem to accommodate the solid wastes produced by city dwellers every day due to the grabbing of the waste dump's land, which poses a public health risk.

The Daily Star found that Dinajpur Municipality is dumping waste at different places including along the verges of different highways and beside Dinajpur Government College. Mayor Alam says he currently has no alternative.

"Is this the right place to dump waste?" asks Dinajpur Government College student Jannatun Sultana. The Daily Star asks the same.

BSF picks up cattle trader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Border Security Force (BSF) of India picked up a Bangladeshi cattle trader from Sonapatila Bariapara border in Atwary upazila of Panchagarh early yesterday.

The detainee is Akhter Hossain, 35, son of Shamsul Haque of the area.

Major Abu Nayem Md Salahuddin, acting commanding officer of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) 18 Battalion, told this correspondent over cellphone that BSF personnel of Attakia camp picked up Akhter Hossain around 1:00am when he went to the barbed wire fence near border Pillar No 413 to bring cattle.

On information, BGB officials contacted their BSF counterparts and asked them to return Akhter through a flag meeting.

Responding to the call, BSF officials attended a company commander-level flag meeting on the same border around 11:00am, where they said they handed Akhter over to Islampur Police Station in Uttar Dinajpur district of West Bengal, India.

Abducted girl rescued in Natore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

A five-year-old girl, who was abducted on Sunday from Ashulia in Dhaka, was rescued in Natore yesterday.

Munshi Sahabuddin, additional superintendent of police in Natore, said the child was identified as Munni Akhter, 5, daughter of Abdul Jalil of Tenguri village in Ashulia.

Police arrested two alleged abductors. They are Aslam Uddin of Natore and Ismail Hossain of Sirajganj.

Ismail, who used to stay at a house owned by Jalil in Ashulia, kidnapped Munni and demanded Tk 6 lakh as ransom from the victim's father, who informed the police about the matter.

Later, police raided Aslam's Patkandi village home in Singra upazila of Natore and rescued Munni from there.

40kg venison seized

UNB, Bagerhat

Coastguard members seized a trawler carrying 40 kg of venison from Katlar Canal in Supti area of the Sundarbans in Sharankhola upazila of the district on Sunday night.

Tipped off, a team of coastguard conducted a drive in the area around 8:00pm and recovered the venison and two heads of deer from the boat, said operation officer of Coastguard's Mongla West Zone Lieutenant M Fariduzzaman Khan.

However, the coastguard members could not arrest anyone as the poachers managed to flee the scene sensing their presence.

Madrasa student flees confinement

Shackled by teacher, he suffered ordeal for months

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Police rescued a 10-year-old madrasa student from Magura bus stand area on Monday night, with his left leg still tied up with an iron shackle and a piece of wood.

The victim is Abujar Rahman, 10, son of Abdul Alim of Indra village under Bagharpara upazila of Jessore district.

Abujar was admitted to Bagharpara's Darilakur Madrasa three years ago but his teacher Jahangir Hossain physically tortured him from the beginning.

For this reason he fled from the madrasa several times, but his father returned him there.

Four months ago, Jahangir bound the boy with iron shackles and a piece of wood so that he could not escape, police and the victim said.

The boy's family allegedly consented to Jahangir's inhuman act.

Finally Abujar fled with



PHOTO: STAR

Abujar on the premises of Magura Sadar Police Station, after fleeing with shackles from his madrasa in Bagharpara upazila on Monday night.

the shackle and got on a Magura-bound bus.

"A local journalist brought the shackle-bound boy to the police station on Monday night and we informed his father," said Ajmal Huda, officer-in-charge (OC) of

Magura Sadar Police Station.

Later Magura police handed over Abujar to Bagharpara Police Station, and preparations are on to take necessary legal actions, said Sairuddin Ahmed, OC of the police station.

UP POLLS

Sylhet AL suspends 12 rebel chairman aspirants

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Sylhet district unit of Awami League (AL) has suspended 12 rebel candidates for the posts of chairman of 10 union parishads in Kanaighat and Jaintapur upazilas of the district.

Voting in the unions will be held on April 23.

The district unit took the decision on Monday as per the directive of central AL. Eight of the suspended candidates are from Kanaighat upazila while the rest from Jaintapur upazila.

In Kanaighat, the suspended rebel candidates are Sirajul Islam of Sadar union,

Sayesta Mia, Tarek Hasan and Radhika Ranjan Nath of Rajaganj union, Abdul Mohin Chowdhury of Dighirpur Purbo union, Faruk Ahmed Chowdhury of Laxmiprashed Paschim union, Alauddin Morai of Laxmiprashed Purbo union and Jalal Ahmed of Jhingabari union.

In Jaintapur, the rebel candidates are Aminur Rashid of Chiknagul union, Hanif Mohammad of Haripur union, Saiful Alam of Darbasth union and MA Haque Lion of Charikata union.

Shafiqur Rahman Chowdhury, general secretary of the district unit, said

the rebel candidates have been campaigning in their respective unions, ignoring instructions of the central committee.

Nine unions in Kanaighat upazila and six unions in Jaintapur upazila are busy preparing for the third phase of the UP elections.

Joyal Abedin, deputy commissioner of Sylhet district, said the district administration and the Election Commission are preparing to hold peaceful elections to 15 union parishads in the two upazilas. "We believe the voters will cast their votes without fear," he added.

Murder of 3 cattle traders sparks protest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Parbatya Sramik Oikya Parishad, a platform of Bangalee settlers, held a rally at the press club in the district yesterday, demanding exemplary punishment of the killers of three cattle traders who were abducted on Saturday.

The speakers at the rally alleged that the cattle traders were brutally murdered after abduction by one Tripura group on Monday.

The victims are Abu Bakkar, 30, Absar Ali, 28, and Md Shabuddin, 29, of Obaidur Hakimpara in Alikadom upazila of the district.

A gang abducted the cattle traders from remote Tong Pue Para on Saturday noon when they went there with Tk 2.5 lakh to buy cattle, said police.

On information, the law enforcers recovered the bodies from remote Rombetpara

area in Thanchi upazila on Monday. The bodies were blindfolded and their limbs tied.

Police arrested four men of the Tripura community in connection with the incident.

The arrestees are John Tripura, 23, Robert Tripura, 24, Joshin Tripura, 25, and Jibon Tripura, 27, of the upazila.

Meanwhile, the daylong hartal, enforced by the Bangalee settlers, protesting the killing of three cattle traders, passed off peacefully in Thanchi upazila yesterday, said Sirajul Islam, officer-in-charge of Thanchi Police Station.

Vehicular movement on the upazila roads was almost normal in the morning. Most of the business establishments kept their shutters down.

No long-route buses passed through the upazila headquarters, said locals.

Yesterday evening, local agitating Bangalees torched the house of a man of Tripura community in the area, said police.

SNIPPETS

Outlaw hacked to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

An alleged outlaw was hacked to death at Bhainapara village in Ataikula upazila yesterday. The deceased is Ibrahim Hossain, 35, an operative of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP), Nakshal faction, and a resident of the village. Officer-in-Charge of Ataikula Police Station Md Abdur Razzak said a gang of armed criminals killed Ibrahim when he stayed at a field near his house. He might have been killed over internal party conflict, said the OC.

Lawyer electrocuted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Gobindo Roy Choudhury, 58, president of Pirojpur Bar Council, was electrocuted yesterday. Family sources said after returning home at Royerkathi village from Pirojpur Judges' Court, Gobindo was electrocuted when he went to disconnect the switch of a refrigerator at the house around 4:30pm. He died on the spot.

17 Jamaat women held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Police arrested 17 female activists of Jamaat-e-Islami from Bhabanipur village in Kotchandpur upazila of the district yesterday. On information, the law enforcers arrested them from one Mohsin Ali's house at the village when they were holding a meeting there, said Ahmed Kabir, officer-in-charge of Kotchandpur Police Station.

Two jailed for child marriage

UNB, Barguna

A mobile court here on Monday sentenced two women to one month's imprisonment each for arranging marriage of a Class VIII girl student at Bawalkar village in Sadar upazila. On secret information, Ibrahim, upazila nirbahi officer, with a team of police raided the house of the girl at the village in the afternoon, when her marriage was set to be solemnised. Then the family members concealed the girl. Later, police detained the bride's two aunts - Pakhi and Sakhina. They were later produced in the court, led by the UNO, which punished them.

BNP leader arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Police arrested a local BNP leader from the party office at Chelopara in the district yesterday. The arrestee is Porimal Chandra Das, 48, joint secretary of the district unit of BNP, and councillor of Bogra municipality. He was accused in three cases.

Lightning kills 6 in 3 districts

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Six people, including two schoolgirls, were killed by lightning in Habiganj, Sylhet and Panchagarh districts yesterday and on Monday evening.

A thunderbolt struck two siblings when they were harvesting paddy at a field at Kaliabhanga village in Nabiganj upazila of Habiganj district on Monday evening.

They later died at a hospital, reports our Moulvibazar correspondent.

The deceased are Abdul Alim, 40, and his brother Wali Miah, 34, sons of Buddu Miah of the village.

Meanwhile, a youth was killed by lightning during a storm at Kamalkhani village in Baniachong upazila the same day.

The deceased is Jewel Miah, 20, son of Abdul Wadud of the village, said police.

In Sylhet, two schoolgirls

were killed and another was injured as a thunderbolt struck them during rain at Laxmiprasad village in Jaintapur upazila of the district around 4:00pm on Monday.

The deceased are Doly Malakar, 10, daughter of Patan Malakar of the village, and Ishita Rahman Tarin, 7, daughter of Abdur Rahman of the same village.

Doly and Ishita were Class V and II students of Laxmiprasad Government Primary School, said Binoy Roy, sub-inspector of Jaintapur Police Station.

Away in Panchagarh, a rickshaw-van puller was killed and another injured by lightning at Sakoya village in Boda upazila of the district early yesterday, reports our Thakurgaon correspondent.

The deceased is Hasibul Islam alias Rafiqul, 46, of Marea village in the upazila.

3 criminals arrested after gunfight

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Three alleged criminals, including one bullet-injured, were arrested after a gunfight between police and their cohorts in Bakura Beltala area under Sharsha upazila of the district early yesterday.

Maniruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Sharsha Police Station, said acting on a tip-off, a gang of criminals, including top terror Kamrul Islam and his aides Mostafa

Kamal and Chanchal Miah, were staying in the area, police conducted a drive there around 5:00am.

Sensing the presence of police, the criminals opened fire at them, prompting the law enforcers to retaliate with gunfire. Kamrul sustained bullet injuries during the gunfight.

Police arrested bullet-hit Kamrul and his aides Chanchal and Mostafa while others managed to flee the scene.



PHOTO: STAR

JOY OF HARVEST: Chatmohar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Begum Shehly Laila inaugurates paddy harvesting in Bilkuralia, a low lying land under Chalan Beel in Pabna district on Monday. Fragrance of ripe paddy now fills the air of the area where a large number of landless people cultivate the crop on khas lands, taking long-term lease from the government authorities.