



PHOTO: STAR

Local influential people have erected structures, encroaching upon Badurtali Canal in Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali.

Grabbers choke canals in Patuakhali's Kalapara

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Farmers in Kalapara upazila of the district are facing crisis of sweet water for irrigating their agricultural land as most of the local canals have been grabbed by influential people.

Some people have turned canals into pond or ditches for fish farming, while others have set up illegal structures.

The 5-km long Nilganj canal plays a vital role in cultivation of seasonal vegetables as several hundred farmers irrigate their lands with sweet water of the canal. But influential people have made over 50 fish enclosures along the canal.

Md Sarwar Hossain, a farmer of Uttar Nilganj village, said they cultivate

seasonal vegetables round the year with sweet water from the canal but nowadays, especially in the dry season, they cannot irrigate their fields due to the enclosures at different points.

Abul Hossain of the same village said they requested the upazila parishad (UP) chairman and the upazila agricultural officer to solve the problem by shutting these enclosures, but to no effect.

Over 100 enclosures have been built in the Chakamoiya-Tarikata canal. As a result, the canal has lost its natural flow.

Most of the Kachari canal in Dhulashar union has been grabbed by locals, who have built houses, business establishments and other structures on it, greatly

hampering its flow.

Md Al-Amin Howlader, a farmer of Champapur village, said Shahabuddin, an influential man, took lease of Chalitabuni canal showing it as cultivable khas land and dug ponds and ditches, totally blocking its natural flow.

"We urged the authorities concerned to free the canal after canceling its lease considering the farmers' interest, but nobody listened to us," he added.

Md Masud Mia, UP member of Mithagonj union, said local farmers couldn't irrigate their agricultural land in time as most canals have been grabbed by influential people in the name of fish cultivation.

Md Alauddin Sikder, president of Krishak

Maitree, a local farmers' association of Kalapara upazila, said farmers are facing serious crisis of water for irrigating their lands as most canals that serve as water reservoirs are being grabbed by local musclemen.

Md Moshir Rahman, Kalapara upazila agriculture officer, said the authorities concerned should take immediate steps to free these canals so farmers can use the water for irrigation.

Md Motaleb Talukder, chairman of Kalapara upazila parishad, said they will take steps to free the canal, considering the need of the farmers.

The lease will be cancelled if anybody made enclosures by occupying the canals, he added.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF HSC EXAMINEE

None of 5 accused arrested yet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

No one has been arrested yet in connection with sexual harassment of a female Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinee in Gouripur upazila of the district on Tuesday.

The girl, 18, a student at Shahganj School and College, jumped off an easy-bike as she faced sexual harassment by some youths while returning home after taking the examination.

Teachers and fellow students formed a human chain in front of the college on Thursday, protesting the incident and demanding immediate arrest of the criminals.

They also held a protest rally with college principal Md Abdus Shakur in the chair.

The participants threatened to go for tougher movement if the criminals are not arrested soon.

Locals said the girl boarded an easy-bike to go back home after the exam. She was the lone passenger.

A little later, four youths stopped the bike and got in it. They started harassing the girl, who asked the driver Md Mustafa, 30, to stop the bike, but he did not respond, it was also alleged.

At one stage, the girl jumped off the running bike, sustaining injuries on her face and head, said Mohammad Morshedul Hasan Khan, officer-in-charge (Investigation) of Gouripur Police Station.

Jhathibhanga mass killing day observed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Jhathibhanga mass killing day was observed at Jhathibhanga village in Sadar upazila of the district yesterday.

On April 23 in 1971, thousands of people from Jagannathpur, Gorea, Shukanpokhori, and Balia unions in the upazila left their homes for India to save their lives from the Pakistani occupation army and their local collaborators known as razakars.

As the people, mostly belonging to Hindu community, gathered at Jhathibhanga village, Pakistani army, informed by razakars and Al Badars, rushed to the spot and killed at least 3,000 people and buried them in a mass grave there.

To mark the day, Jhathibhanga Kalyan Trust organised different programmes, including placing of floral wreaths at martyrs' monument at the village and discussion.

The discussion meeting was held on Jhathibhanga High School premises while Additional Deputy Commissioner AFM Fazle Rabbi in the chair.

General Secretary of district unit of Awami League Sadek Quraishi attended the programme as chief guest.

The speakers at the programme demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the killers of the innocent people.

Dealer sued on charge of storing urea illegally

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A fertiliser dealer of Parbatipur upazila in the district has been sued on charge of storing 380 tons of urea illegally.

The accused is Jahangir Alam Babu, proprietor of Babu Enterprise in Natunbazar area under Parbatipur municipality.

Abu Fattah Rawshan Kabir, upazila agriculture officer, filed the case with Parbatipur Police Station against Babu, on Friday afternoon.

Earlier on Wednesday, Executive Magistrate Zahangir Alam, assistant commissioner (land) of Parbatipur, raided the warehouse and sealed off it as he found illegal stock of urea fertiliser there.

Shahjahan Ali, in-charge of the fertiliser association, said he knew nothing about the illegal stock of huge urea.

However, accused Babu claimed that warehouse in charge asked him to store the urea on plea of space shortage.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Tarafdar Mahmudur Rahman said action was taken following the instruction of district officials.

Stolen motorbike recovered, one arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel recovered a stolen motorbike and arrested a youth in this connection from Chapainawabganj municipality area on Friday.

The detainee is Salman Khan, 21, son of Habibur Rahman of Hetem Khan village under Boalia Police Station in Rajshahi district.

A team of Rab-5 in Chapainawabganj, acting on a tip-off, raided Haripur Truck Terminal area under the municipality around 7:30pm.

The elite force arrested Salman along with the motorbike while he was selling it to a local buyer, Rab sources said.

3 forest staff suspended over Sundarbans fire

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

The Forest Department yesterday suspended three employees for their negligence of duties in connection with the three recent fire incidents in the Sundarbans.

The suspended employees are M Nasir Uddin, in-charge of Nangli forest camp of Dhansagar Station under the Chandpai range of the Sundarbans East Zone, and two boatmen of the same camp -- Polash Majumder and Mobarak Hossain.

"The action was taken against the three as they did not carry out their duties properly during the fire incidents in the forest," said Md Saidul Islam, divisional forest officer (Sundarbans east), who issued the suspension orders.

According to UNB, a team of Sharankhola Police Station arrested one Saiful Hawlader, 22, son of Dulal Hawlader of Rajeshwar village, from east Rajapur of the upazila early yesterday for his alleged involvement in the fire incidents, said M Shah Alam Miah, officer-in-charge of the police station.

The Chandpai Range of the Sundarbans witnessed three incidents of fire in three weeks.

A fire broke out in the Dhanshagor station's Nangli forest camp area on March 27, another at Abdullah Shila of the range on April 18 and the third one on April 13.

The fire on April 13 engulfed trees around 8.5 acres under the same forest camp of Chandpai range.

In the last 14 years, there have been 20 fire incidents in Chandpai and Sharankhola ranges of the mangrove forest.

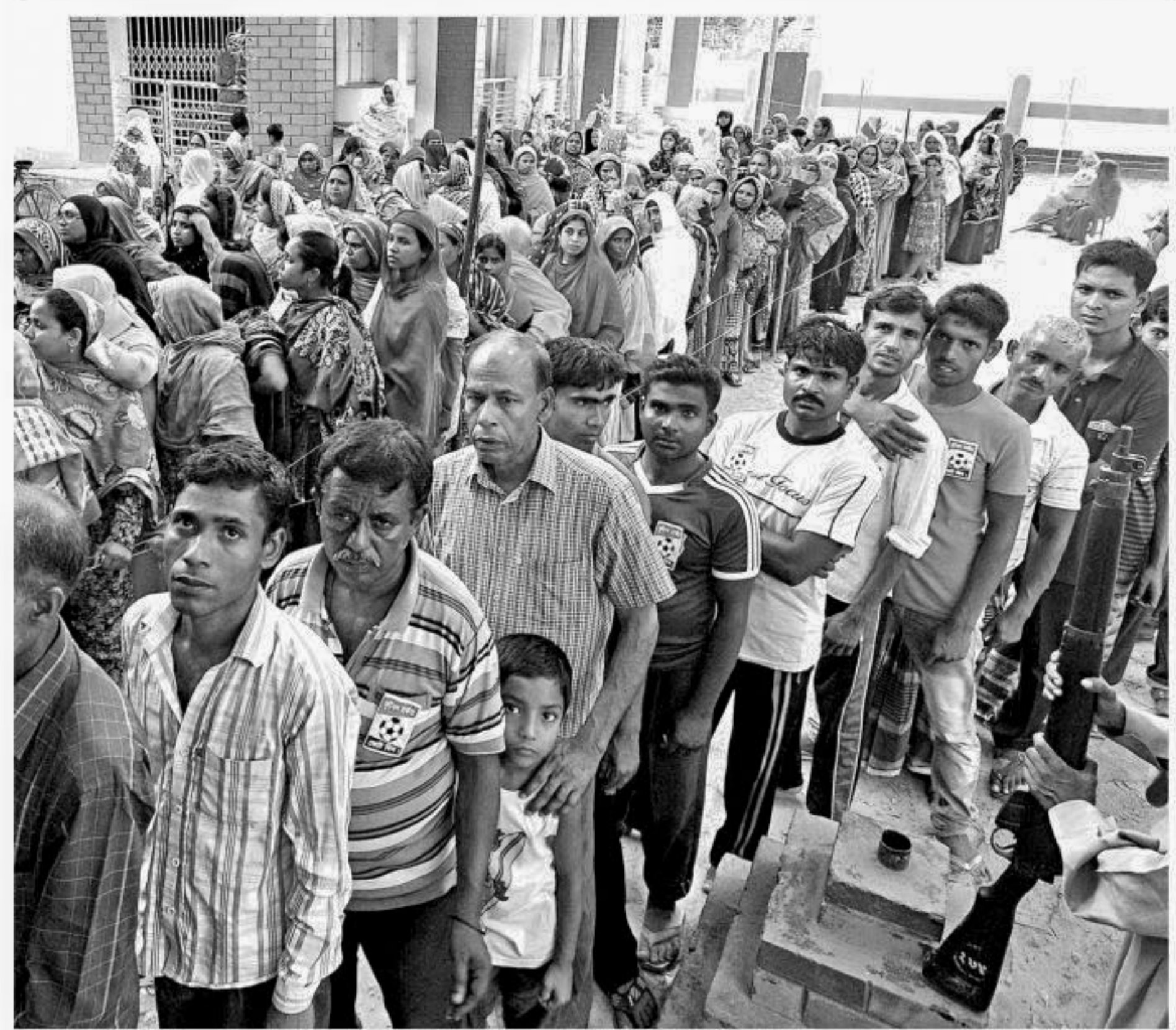


PHOTO: STAR

Voters queue up in front of Chawkbochai Government Primary School centre in Bogra's Gabtali upazila to cast their votes during election to Gabtali Sadar Union Parishad yesterday.

Youth burnt in Naogaon acid attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A young man sustained burn injuries in an acid attack allegedly over pervious enmity in Raninagar upazila of Naogaon district early yesterday.

The victim, Sajal Hossain, 22, son of Dulal Hossain, is a resident of Kaligram village in the upazila.

Sajal is now undergoing treatment at Naogaon

Sadar Hospital with injuries in his back, neck and right hand.

Quoting Sajal's family members, police said unidentified criminals hurled acid at him while he was sleeping in his room around 4:00am, keeping the windows open.

Hearing screams, family members rescued Sajal and took him to the hospital.

Victim's father Dulal

said there had been a long-standing feud between Sajal and his elder brother Julfikar Hossain over a piece of land.

The feud might be the reason behind the attack, Dulal alleged.

Inspector (investigation) Abdullah-Hel-Jaman of Raninagar Police Station said legal action will be taken against the culprits after filing of a case in this connection.

| Pashchimanchal Gas Company Limited (A Company of Petrobangla) Head Office, Nalka, Sirajganj | |
|--|---|
| Invitation for Tenders | |
| 1. Ministry/division | : Energy and Mineral Resources Division. |
| 2. Agency | : Petrobangla. |
| 3. Procuring entity name | : Pashchimanchal Gas Company Limited (PGCL). |
| 4. Procuring entity district | : Sirajganj. |
| 5. Invitation for | : Construction of 5.10 KM Gas Distribution Pipeline Network (60 psgx8"ø, 6"ø&4"ø) including CP System, Upgradation (5 MMSCFD) of existing DRS at Ishwardi EPZ area, Paksey, Pabna & supply of some gas equipments. |
| 6. Invitation Ref No. & date | : Tender No: 77.11.86(IEPZ), Date: 13/04/2016. |
| 7. Procurement method | : Open Tendering Method (OTM). |
| 8. Source of funds | : Depository fund received from Ishwardi EPZ authority. |
| 9. Tender selling date | : From 24/04/2016 to 08/05/2016 during office hour. |
| 10. Name & address of the office(s) selling tender document | : i) Accounts & Finance Dept, PGCL, Nalka, Sirajganj. ii) Dhaka Liaison Office (DLO), PGCL, Petrocenter (Level-13), 3, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215. |
| 11. Name & address of the office receiving tenders | : Dhaka Liaison Office (DLO), PGCL, Petrocenter (Level-13), 3, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215. |
| 12. Name & address of the office opening tenders | : Dhaka Liaison Office (DLO), PGCL, Petrocenter (Level-13), 3, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215. |
| 13. Last date and time for selling tender document | : 08/05/2016 within office time. |
| 14. Last date and time for submission of tenders | : 02:00pm on 09/05/2016. |
| 15. Date and time for opening of tenders | : 02:15pm on 09/05/2016. |
| 16. Eligibility of tenderer | : The contractor shall have recent inclusion certificate from PGCL or recent enlistment certificate from any other company of Petrobangla under both 1.3 & 1.4 Categories and as per the instruction of TDS in tender documents. |
| 17. Brief description of the works | : i) Pipeline Laying, Butt-Welding joint, Tie-in Connection, Road breaking & temporary reinstatement, Valve pit construction, Testing, Commissioning of Pipeline, CP system installation etc. ii) Supply & Fittings of Ball Valve, SSV, Filter Separator, Regulator etc., Radiography, Hydrostatic Testing, Metallic Support, Painting etc. |
| 18. Time of work completion | : 210 (two hundred ten) days. |
| 19. Price of tender document | : Tk. 4000.00 (four thousand) non-refundable. |
| 20. Tender security | : Tk. 2,70,000.00 (two lac seventy thousand only). |
| 21. Designation of official inviting tender | : General Manager, Planning & Development Division. |
| 22. Address of official inviting tender | : PGCL, Nalka, Sirajganj. |
| 23. Contact details of official inviting tender | : Tel: 0751-63825, Fax: 0751-63820. |
| 24. Details terms & conditions will be available in the tender document. | |
| 25. If it is not possible to receive/open the tender on the schedule date for any unavoidable circumstances, the same will be received/opened on the next working day at the same time and same venue. | |
| 26. During submission of tender the bidders are requested to entry their proposal record in the respective register at the office. | |
| 27. For any false/incorrect or forged certificate, tender security money shall be forfeited and shall be declared informal. | |
| 28. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason. | |
| PGPR-17/2015-2016 GD-899 | Engr. Md. Mahub-Ul Hoque General Manager, Planning & Development |

Protest pours

FROM PAGE 16
deeply concerned about Dixit's safety and rights. They called upon the Nepal government to issue a transparent and unequivocal statement on the veteran journalist's detention.

"We condemn all forms of pressure tactics on editors like him and other courageous media figures such as Mahfuz Anam of The Daily Star in Dhaka, who is facing 80 cases of sedition and libel in Bangladeshi courts, as well as other media persons who are committed to the rule of law and justice," reads the statement.

"It is with deep concern that we have learned of the arrest of Kanak Mani Dixit, the widely respected founder-editor of Himal Media and a courageous voice for transparency, freedom of expression and democratic rights in Nepal and across South Asia. The charges are related to alleged corruption but Kanak Dixit says it is part of a vendetta pursued against him by people in Government.

"We have known Kanak Dixit as a true professional, human rights defender and energetic journalist whose credentials are built on robust research and tremendous courage," the statement added.

Himal Media, a pioneer in South Asia journalism, has published Himal South Asia, Nepali Times and Himal Khabar Patrika (in the Nepali language). Dixit has written extensively for international media, including leading newspapers in India, and is the chairman of Sajha Yatayat, a state-run transportation company, which he has been turning around from a loss-making entity.

The eminent personalities said Dixit's detention

came at a time of increased pressure on free media across South Asia.

"We call upon all national and international media organisations, individual journalists and editors, defenders of media under pressure, on those who believe in the freedom of expression, to seek Kanak Dixit's immediate release and a fair and transparent trial, free of bias," said the statement.

Signatories of the statement are: Sanjoy Narayan, editor of The Hindustan Times, New Delhi; Rajdeep Sardesai, chief editor of India Today TV Group, New Delhi; Siddharth Varadarajan, founder editor of The Wire, New Delhi; Karan Thapar, president of ITV and TV anchor; TN Ninan, chairman of Business Standard Pvt Ltd, New Delhi; Swaminathan S Anklesaria Aiyar, consulting editor of The Times of India Group; James Astill, political editor of The Economist; Maja Daruwala, director of Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, New Delhi; Sevanti Ninan, editor of The Hoot, New Delhi; Salil Tripathi, journalist and author, London; Imtiaz Ahmed, executive director, RCSS, Colombo; Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, Dhaka; Sara Hossain, lawyer at Bangladesh Supreme Court; Zafar Sobhan, editor of Dhaka Tribune; Afsan Chowdhury, senior journalist and academic, Bangladesh; Naila Zaman Khan, professor of child neurology and development, Bangladesh; Shahidullah Khan, publisher of Daily New Age, Bangladesh; Lubna Mariam, cultural activist, Bangladesh; Kalpana Sharma, independent

journalist, Mumbai; Sanjib Baruah, professor of political studies, Bard College, New York, US; Bina D'Costa, Australian National University; Pradip Phanjoubam, editor of Imphal Free Press; Patricia Mukhim, editor of The Shillong Times; Seema Mustafa, editor of The Citizen, New Delhi; Akum Longchari, founder-editor of Morung Express, Dimapur; Subir Bhowmick, senior editor of BD24news, Kolkata; T Monalisa Chankija, editor of The Nagaland Page, Dimapur; Teesta Setlavad, lawyer in Mumbai; Sandhya Srinivasan, Infoexchange News & Features, Mumbai; Lalita Panicker, senior associate editor of The Hindustan Times, New Delhi; Laxmi Murthy, consulting editor of Himal Southasian; Seema Guha, senior freelance journalist, New Delhi; Sangeeta Barooah Pisharoty, The Wire, New Delhi; Teresa Rehman, managing editor of www.thethumbprint.com; Aruni Kashyap, writer and asst professor of English at Ashoka University, Haryana; Nalaka Gunwardene, columnist, Sri Lanka; Xonzoi Barbor, TISS, Guwahati; Sanjeeb Kakoty, associate professor at Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Management, Shillong; Catherine Masud, filmmaker, US-Bangladesh; Rubana Haq, writer and business, Bangladesh; Anjuman Ara Begum, Forum-Asia, Katmandu; Sanjoy Hazarika, independent columnist, New Delhi; Kamayani Bali Mahabal, blogger and human rights activist, Mumbai; Geeta Seshu, journalist, Mumbai; and Anusheh Anadil, musician and cultural activist, Bangladesh.