



Like this one on Station Road in Lalmonirhat town, most of the staff quarters of Lalmonirhat Railway Division have remained under illegal occupation for years.

PHOTO: STAR

Muggers stab Hindu devotee in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Muggers stabbed a Hindu devotee at Pathartola in the district town early yesterday.

The victim, Bashanto Kumar Das, 35, son of Akil Sutro Das, of Dakkhin Nagar village of Dinajpur, is a volunteer serving a Dinajpur temple of Satsangha Bangladesh.

"After collecting money for the Dinajpur temple, from the devotees in Chittagong, he came here by train on the way to Dinajpur early Saturday. To spend the rest of the night, he started for the temple here," said Topon Sarkar Hory, caretaker of Satsangha Bangladesh temple at Pathartola of Pabna.

"Around 4:00am, four to five criminals stabbed him near the temple and snatched his bag containing the collected money. Locals and temple men took him to Pabna Medical College Hospital," he said.

He is now out of danger, said doctors at the hospital.

"It seems Bashanto was stabbed only for mugging," said Abdulla Al Hasan, OC of Pabna Sadar Police Station.

Earlier on June 10, unidentified criminals hacked Nitta Ranjan Pandey, 60, a devotee of Hemayetpur Satsangha Ashram, and later IS claimed the responsibility of the incident.

700 rly quarters under illegal occupation

Flats safe haven for anti-social elements in Lalmonirhat

S DILI ROY, Lalmonirhat

At least 700 of 1050 railway staff quarters under Lalmonirhat Railway Division of West Zone Railway went under illegal occupation during the last three decades, thanks to the negligence of the authorities concerned.

Anti-social and criminals activities occur in the illegally occupied quarters in Babupara, Station Road, Driver Para, Saheb Para, Surkimit Colony, Wireless Colony, Store Para, Hospital Road, Down Yard Para and New Colony areas in Lalmonirhat town but there is hardly any action, said locals.

Now only 350 staff quarters are legally used by railway employees, said sources at Lalmonirhat Divisional Railway Engineer's Office.

Of the 700 other flats, 250 are under illegal occupation by railway officials, 200 by political party men and 250 others by general people, said officials seeking anonymity.

Most of the illegal occupiers have rented the quarters for Tk 1000 to 2,500 a month each, they said.

Local people alleged that drug peddling, gam-

bling and prostitution are conducted in most of the grabbed staff quarters.

Several people living in the railway staff quarters at Saheb Para said they took the flats from railway officials and political party men on monthly payment basis.

They admitted that unwanted incidents frequently occur at many quarters.

Abul Kashem, officer in charge of GRP Police Station in Lalmonirhat, said, "Our duty is to ensure security of train passengers at the stations and trains. If the officials call us, we will conduct drive against alleged anti-social activities in the occupied quarters."

Ariful Islam, divisional engineer of railway in Lalmonirhat, said, "As many of the railway staff quarters remained unused for long, those went under illegal occupation. I have sent letters to the higher authorities seeking decision about these grabbed staff quarters but no response till now."

"I will call railway police to conduct drive against anti-social activities at these grabbed quarters soon," he said.

BSF hands over bodies of 3 more fishermen

A CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Bodies of three more Bangladeshi fishermen, who drowned when a trawler was caught in a storm and sank in the Bay on August 15, were handed over to Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) yesterday.

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) handed over the bodies at Bhomra border in Satkhira, said Subrata Sarker, officer-in-charge of immigration of Bhomra port.

Bodies of seven fishermen, who drowned in the same incident, were handed over to Bangladesh authorities through the same border on Thursday.

Subedar Sirajul Gani of BGB 38-Battalion received the bodies and later handed those over to the police.

Over two weeks ago, a Bangladeshi fishing trawler carrying 17 fishermen sank in the Bay of Bengal.

Aurangajeb new MD of Barapukuria mine co

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Ltd (BCMCL) got its new managing director (MD).

Petrobangla, the parent organisation of BCMCL, appointed engineer SMN Aurangajeb as the MD of the country's lone coal producing company in Parbatipur upazila of Dinajpur.

Aurangajeb started his career with BCMCL in 1998.

In 2013, he was promoted as a general manager of BCMCL.

Petrobangla appointed him as managing director of the company on August 4. He joined his office on Thursday.

SNIPPETS

Lightning kills 2 cousins

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Two cousins were killed by lightning at Shibnagar village in Damurhuda upazila of Chuadanga on Friday. The deceased were Tamim Hossain, 12, son of Atiar Rahman, and his cousin Mamun Hossain, 13, son of Motiar Rahman of the village. Officer-in-Charge Fakhrul Alam of Damurhuda Police Station said thunderbolts struck the two while they were fishing in a local water body nearby their houses around 8:30pm. They died on the spot.

Man held with firearm

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a man with a pistol and bullets from Ghoraghat upazila of the district yesterday. The arrestee is Abdul Hakim, 55, son of late Abdul Latif of Bhootgari village in the upazila. ASP Dolon Mia of Rab-13 in Rangpur said a team of the law enforcers, acting on a tip-off, raided a husking mill around 12:30pm and arrested Hakim with a pistol and six bullets.

1500 Phensidyl seized, 2 held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Police arrested two alleged drug peddlers with 1500 bottles of contraband Phensidyl syrup from Bhabanipur area in the town yesterday. The arrestees are Sentu Mia, 42, son of Mofiz Uddin of Jatrabari, and Farid Ali, 27, son of Abu Taher of Jurain in the capital. Officer-in-Charge Mazharul Islam of Sadar Police Station said on information, police intercepted a Dhaka-bound covered van around 12:15pm and seized the drugs from the vehicle. They later seized the vehicle and arrested its diver and helper.

Clinic owner fined

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

A mobile court here yesterday fined a private clinic Tk 2 lakh for not complying with rules and not maintaining hygienic environment. A court led by Executive Magistrate Jahangir Alam fined Shahidul Islam, owner of Ekota Clinic in the town. ASP Mizanur Rahman of Rab-5 said the authorities have been running the 56-bed clinic for a long time although it has approval of 36 beds. Besides, environment of its operation theatre was also found unhygienic, he added.

Youth found murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Police recovered the body of a young man from Jhoptari area in the town yesterday. The deceased, Haridas Chandra, 35, who used to run a barber shop in Bogra town, was a resident of Raninagar upazila in Naogaon. Sub-Inspector Abdul Aziz of Upashahar Police Outpost said unidentified criminals might have killed Haridas over previous enmity while he was on way back home on Friday night.

Risky bamboo bridge only means

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

About 50,000 people of two unions in Madarganj upazila have been facing immense sufferings for want of a concrete bridge over the River Kharka for years, thanks to the indifference of authorities concerned.

Commuters have managed shortcut journey to reach their destinations by crossing a 300-foot bamboo bridge over the river that connects Gabergram Bazar and Paschim Tartapara village since 2001.

The villagers with the help of local representatives join hands to make the bamboo bridge on yearly basis spending about Tk 1 lakh in order to facilitate communication for the thousands of commuters, said locals.

On the onset of every rainy season, the villagers build new bamboo bridge there as the old one became very vulnerable for frequent uses by the inhabitants of 15 villages.

Especially students and patients of the areas are the worst sufferers due to the situation.

"We are very tired of making the bamboo bridge over the river for long 16 years," said Pulok Parvez, president of Gabergram Bazar Committee.

As the upazila headquarters, upazila health complex, child and mother care centre, schools, colleges, banks, government and non-government offices and Gabergram bazar are located on another side of the river, a large number of villagers, who cross the bamboo bridge with risk of accidents, have to face immense sufferings daily, said commuters.

Contacted, Jugal Krishna Mandal, engineer of Local Government Engineering Department in Madarganj upazila, said they informed the higher authorities about the matter six months ago but to no effect yet.

Addict kills baby girl in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A baby girl was hacked to death by an addicted youth in Chhoto Tengra area under Sadar upazila of the district yesterday.

Police said the youth entered the girl's house and started hacking her with a spade. Hearing the screams of the mother of the girl, locals rushed to the spot and caught the youth.

They gave him a severe beating and handed him over to the police.

The child was rushed to Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital in Bogra, where she was succumbed to her injuries.

The deceased was identified as Moly Khatun, 2, daughter of Azizar Rahman of the village.

The youth is Paplu, 25, of the same area.

Assistant Superintendent of Police (A Circle) of Bogra Moshirur Rahman said police have detained the addicted youth.



Illegal lifting of sand by shallow machines from Laghata River in Potonushar union under Kamalaganj upazila of Moulvibazar is going on unchecked, posing a threat to agriculture and the people of the area.

PHOTO: STAR



Winners of the 5th Inter School Math Olympiad pose for a photograph with the guests on Karim Uddin Public Pilot High School premises in Kaliganj upazila of Lalmonirhat yesterday. The school authorities organised the mathematics festival.

PHOTO: STAR

Teenager dies as Habiganj villagers clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A teenage boy was killed and at least 20 others were injured in a clash between two groups of rival villagers over a disputed land in Bahubal upazila of Habiganj yesterday.

The deceased, Ompu Sutradhar, 18, was a resident of Shampur village in the upazila.

Quoting witnesses, police said two groups of villagers one led by Subal Sutradhar and another led by his neighbour Paritosh Sutradhar clashed over the ownership of a disputed land. Twenty one were injured in clash.

Of the injured, Ompu succumbed to his injuries at Habiganj Sadar Hospital.

ILLEGAL SAND LIFTING FROM LAGHATA Threat to agriculture

Locals blame ruling AL leaders

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Illegal lifting of sand from Laghata River in Kamalaganj upazila of the district has been posing a threat to the riverside people and agriculture.

Due to lifting of sand, large areas of cultivable land on both sides of the river have become barren and infertile, said Abdul Karim Kim, general secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa), Sylhet chapter.

Marginal farmers in the upazila are unable to cultivate crops by using the water from the Laghata River, he added.

When this correspondent visited the area on August 27, he found a huge quantity of sand being lifted from the river. A lot of water is also being wasted during the process.

A sand worker seeking anonymity said Towfiq Ahmed, chairman of Potonushar Union Parishad (UP) and Abul Bashar, general secretary of the Potonushar Union unit of Jubo League, are lifting sand from the river.

Every day, 10/12 trucks carrying sand are

posing a threat to a section of the road from Jugibeel area, said local farmers Ahad Mia, Delwar Mia and Burhan Mia. Locals dare not protest the sand lifting activities as the lifter is an influential local elite, they added.

Each truckload of sand is sold at Tk 700 to Tk 1,000, sources said.

Upazila AL General Secretary Rafiqur Rahman said they could not repair the Potonushar union main road due to shortage of sand, so he asked Abul Bashar to lift some sand for the work.

Abul Bashar said, "I don't know about this matter. The sand workers gave you wrong information."

Towfiq Ahmed said, "I am not involved in sand lifting, but I know some villagers are lifting sand."

Mohammad Mahmudul Haque, upazila nirbahi officer of Kamalaganj, said "We conducted mobile court drives and fined several sand lifters. We will take immediate steps to stop illegal sand lifting."