



Bhabadah, often called the "Sorrow of Jessore", where water is a symbol of suffering, hunger, disease, and death. The perennial waterlogging triggered from Bhabadah point affects mainly three upazilas -- Abhaynagar, Manirampur and Keshabpur -- home to some 10 lakh people. This year, almost six lakh inhabitants were affected when the flood situation was at its worst during the rainy season. Five months later, things have improved but many farmers won't still be able to grow crops. But what's the cause of Bhabadah's woes? Is there no solution? There is. Why is it not happening then? In this two-part story [the last part today], WASIM BIN HABIB and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY chronicle Bhabadah's saga at a time when, with much of the vast land still under this year's floodwaters, many beel people are wondering how they will prepare for the next rain.



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Dead fish floating on the stagnant water of Beel Bakar in Jessore's Abhaynagar upazila. Fish died due to contamination of water. The photo was taken in late October.

## SORROW OF JESSORE

# REMEDY IS THERE

*But fish farmers stand in the way as they feast on waterlogged Bhabadah*

After most of the Bhabadah rivers silted up, things turned real bad in 1983. Several villages and much of the low-lying area went under water after a heavy rain. It was the worst waterlogging since the embankments were built in the 1960s, and the water stagnation lasted several months.

As a quick solution, people opened channels in the embankments. They hoped, firstly, the waters would drain out to the rivers, and secondly, flooding rivers would leave sediments and raise the beel floor every year, which won't go under water easily.

It worked. The stagnated water gushed out to the rivers. Within weeks the navigability of the rivers improved.

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**"To these people, Bhabadah is the proverbial goose that lays golden eggs since they can pocket hefty sums from various projects."**

IQBAL KABIR JAHID, A CAMPAIGNER, ABOUT SOME CONTRACTORS AND PROJECT OFFICIALS.

## EC FORMATION JP hands 5 proposals to Hamid

RASHIDUL HASAN

President Abdul Hamid has said it is necessary to enact a law in line with the country's constitution for appointment of election commissioners, according to JP leaders.

The president apparently said this when a Jatiya Party delegation met him and submitted a five-point proposal, including enactment of a law on forming the next Election Commission.

"The honourable president agreed to our

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# 55 garment units shut 'over unrest'

*Owners say they will go for 'no work, no pay' as workers remain absent for nine days*

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

With labour unrest continuing for nine days, 55 Ashulia-based garment factories were shut down yesterday apparently to prevent a spillover of agitation to neighbouring units.

The closure was announced at a hurriedly called press conference at the office of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

The owners closed down their units for an indefinite period as per provision 13(1) of the labour law which provides for "no work, no pay", said BGMEA President Siddiquir Rahman at the press conference.

Considered one of the important indus-

trial hubs, Ashulia houses most of the compliant and bigger factories. The factories here mostly supply high-end products to upscale customers.

More than 350 factories are located in the area and their contribution in FY2015-16 was over 20 percent of the \$28 billion garment export, according to industry insiders.

A factory owner said over 1.5 lakh workers will be in trouble following the closure of the 55 units.

"Three of my factories have been shut down due to the unrest. More than 12,000 workers are employed in the three units," he said, asking not to be named.

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## TRUCK CARNAGE AT BERLIN XMAS MARKET

# Suspect still at large

*Fear police; detained Pak asylum seeker released; death toll rises to 12; IS claims responsibility*

AFP, Berlin

A Pakistani asylum-seeker suspected of ploughing a lorry into a Berlin Christmas market, killing 12, was released yesterday for lack of evidence, leaving investigators to pursue their hunt for the real perpetrator of the massacre.

Meanwhile, the IS-linked Amaq news agency in a statement posted online yesterday said, "A soldier of the Islamic State carried out the Berlin operation in response to appeals to target citizens of coalition countries."

"The accused, detained over the attack on the Berlin Christmas market on December 19, 2016, was let go on this evening on the orders of the federal prosecutor," the prose-

cutor's office said in a statement.

"The forensic tests carried out so far did not provide evidence of the accused's presence during the crimes in the cab of the lorry."

The Pakistani man was arrested after Germany daily Die Welt said a witness saw the suspected driver jump out of the vehicle's cab and trailed the individual for about two kilometres (1.2 miles), tipping off police about his location.

But doubts had grown throughout the day over whether the suspect held in custody overnight actually committed the atrocity, sparking fears of a killer on the run.

Berlin's police chief Klaus Kandt had earlier said "we may have a dangerous

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ENVOY KILLING: RUSSIA SEEKS ANSWERS -- PAGE 8

## Trafficking gang busted in Malaysia

*59 Bangladeshis rescued from transit house*

STAR REPORT

Malaysian Immigration Department yesterday rescued 59 Bangladeshi victims from a human trafficking syndicate during raids at two condominium premises in Desa Petaling, Kuala Lumpur, reports Malaysian newspaper, The Star.

A team raided the premises around 4:30pm. The victims were kept in crowded conditions.

Director-general Datuk

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জীবন তো একটাই।  
এক জীবনে কতোই না স্বপ্ন।  
বিন্দু থেকে শুরু হয়ে  
ছোট বড় অর্জনেই জীবন পায় পূর্ণতা।  
অবিরাম সৃষ্টির সম্ভাবনায়  
চলো জেগে উঠি উচ্ছ্বাসে।

# জাগো উচ্ছ্বাসে



ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল প্রমোশন এন্ড ডেভেলপমেন্ট কোম্পানি অব বাংলাদেশ লিমিটেড (আইপিডিসি) এখন

**আইপিডিসি ফাইন্যান্স লিমিটেড**

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