

Lying broken for 18 months

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

Around 50 thousand people of 20 villages are suffering as a bridge over the Sanchai river on Narikelbaria-Tikaribazar road in Jhenidah Sadar upazila has been lying broken for the last one and a half years.

Locals have made a bamboo bridge which pedestrians, motorcyclists and bicyclists can use by paying money. But larger vehicles going from Jhenidah to Magura via Narikelbaria-Tikaribazar road have to use longer route as the bridge constructed by local LGED 22 years back over the Sanchai river in 1994 broke down on June 6, 2016.

The farmers are incurring losses as they cannot easily transport their produce to markets.

People of different villages including Jitore, Miakundo, Kushobaria, Dhananjoypur, Muktarampur, Marninda, Narikelbaria, Tikari, Dahkhola, Dighirpar, Laxmipur, Malanchi, Bangsha and Behul use the bridge.

Besides, this road runs to Magura district via Narikelbaria-Tikari Bazar from Jhenidah district town.

Visiting the bridge on Friday morning, this correspondent found people crossing the bamboo bridge set with wooden planks. Each individual and non-motorised rickshaw and rickshaw-van has to pay Tk 3 while small motorised vehicles like motorcycles and CNG-run three-wheelers Tk 10.

"We are incurring loss due to problem in carrying vegetables after the bridge broke," said vegetable trader Abdus Salam.

Abir Hossain, a student of Tikari High School, said it is a bit burdensome for students to pay regularly for crossing the river on the bridge.

Abdul Malek, LGED executive engineer in Jhenidah, said, "We have invited tender and the construction work of the bridge will hopefully start soon."



A bamboo bridge serving as makeshift arrangement is much less than enough for the commuters' requirement as the concrete bridge over the Sanchai river on Narikelbaria-Tikaribazar road in Jhenidah Sadar upazila has not been rebuilt 18 months after its collapse.

PHOTO: AZIBOR RAHMAN

517 grams of gunpowder seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Police recovered 517gm of gunpowder during a drive in Basudevpur area under Hakimpur upazila of the district on Tuesday night.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Hakimpur police raided Hakimpur Women's College area at Basudevpur on late Tuesday night and seized the gunpowder that police suspect was brought into the country from India.

Police could not arrest anyone as the criminals managed to flee sensing presence of the law enforcers, said Officer-in-Charge of Hakimpur Police Station Abdus Sabur. The OC, however, confirmed the seizure of the gunpowder.

JAMALPUR SCHOOLGIRL RAPE Accused yet to be held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

The accused in a schoolgirl rape case, filed with Melandah Police Station in the district on November 26, is yet to be arrested.

The accused is Muzammel, 38, son of Nobai Sheikh of Megharbari village in Melandah upazila.

Muzammel, father of two children, used to stalk the girl, 14, a Class IX student of a local school. Her father, a day labourer, and mother, a domestic help, stayed in Dhaka for earning. The girl lives with her maternal grandparents at Nayanagar village for continuing her schooling, her family members said.

Around 7:00am on November 22, Muzammel along with his cohorts waylaid the girl on way to her private coaching, made her unconscious by applying drug, took her to an unknown place and raped her.

On November 25 afternoon, the severely sick and feeble girl found herself at Durmuth railway station in the upazila, after regaining sense.

Police rescued the girl and admitted her to Melandah Upazila Health Complex from where she was shifted to Jamalpur General Hospital, said Rafiqul Islam, sub-inspector of the police station and investigation officer (IO) of the rape case filed by victim's father.

Muzammel and 2-3 unnamed people were made accused in the case filed on November 26.

The traumatized girl remained under treatment at Jamalpur General Hospital for five days and a judicial magistrate's court recorded her statement on November 30, said the IO.

Mazharul Karim, OC of the police station, said they are conducting drives to arrest the rape accused.

Elderly woman found killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The wife of a former upazila parishad chairman was found murdered in Naogaon town yesterday.

The deceased was Mini Chowdhury, 60, a resident of Post Office Para and wife of late Moshir Alam Chowdhury, a former chairman of Raninagar Upazila Parishad.

Neighbours found her dead in her home and informed the police, who sent the body to Naogaon General Hospital. Police recovered a blood-stained knife from the spot.

Police said Mini employed three labourers for renovating her residence three days ago. The workers had been working since morning, but they were missing when the body was discovered.

They might be behind the killing, police suspected.

Officer in Charge of Naogaon Police Station Tariqul Islam said a case was filed and police are investigating the incident.

Drone seized from launch in Sundarbans

A CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Forest officials seized a drone from a launch carrying 12 foreign nationals in Dublar Char area of the Sundarbans on Tuesday noon.

"The process is on to bring the drone to Bagerhat. We have informed Bagerhat superintendent of police of the matter," Mahmudul Hasan, divisional forest officer of the Sundarbans (East), said yesterday.

A case will be filed with Sharonkhola Police Station against Mavana Tours, a company that arranged carrying the 12 citizens of Malta of Europe in their launch, he said.

Contacted, Md Nantu, director of Mavana Tours, said, "A Chittagong-based company named Didar Echo Tours arranged the 12 foreigners' visit to the Sundarbans and they were sent there following forest rules."

"The tourists were asked more than once whether they had anything forbidden.

They said they have nothing except normal cameras. I heard about recovery of the drone after it was caught by forest officials.

"The foreigners took the drone secretly in a bag. They have left Mongla this afternoon," Nantu said.

Bagerhat Superintendent of Police Pankaj Chandra Roy said, "The divisional forest officer of the Sundarbans (East) said the drone will be handed over to me tonight. Then I will investigate the matter."

A millionaire turkey farmer

SHYKH SERAJ

Food is one of the most important sources of energy for humans. Becoming self-sufficient in producing food is not the end of all, but nutritious food is most needed to ensure the balance of food. According to UN's FAO, proteins should contribute 10-15% to the energy of a human body. And, in this protein amount, animal protein must comprise at least 20% of inputs. However, in the developed world, the contribution of animal protein is 50%. In Bangladesh, to meet up

diverse source of protein in our country. Meanwhile, many entrepreneurs and farmers have started turkey farms. In a short time, they're making good profit out of it. Turkey depends on natural grass for food. You do not need to pay extra money to get their food. And, turkeys are hardy birds with low susceptibility to disease. The meat quality is great and since it's mostly cholesterol-free, it's well accepted worldwide. Considering all these factors, many entrepreneurs have started their turkey farms. I have introduced couple of

6:15am. When they opened the main gate of the farm, I found large L-shaped shades, covered with big clothing to save the turkeys from winter cold. Amir Hossain greeted me and as the day passed, I found people getting busy every minute. The turkeys have started making sounds of their own. In a couple of minutes the whole farm starts buzzing with activities.

"I started my farm with only 21 turkey chicks, now I have more than thousands of them," says Amir. Passion turned into commercial success, that's

Many of them already had taken turkey chicks from Amir and they're also rearing it to make a better future for their farm. These success stories reminded me of the poultry campaign I ran on BTV during 90s. That poultry industry went over many hurdles to become an industry worth Tk 30,000 to Tk 40,000 crore. Many of them battled against bird flu, excessive feed and medicine price and that's why many of those affected farmers switched to turkey farming. Although Amir Hossain is a very new turkey farmer, I'm quite sure he's going to bring in a big commercial market of turkey in the coming four to five years. Let's check out in brief what Amir Hossain has done with his turkey farm in just one year.

"I've invested Tk 7 lakh to build a 6000 square feet shed where you can rear at least 2000 turkeys," says Amir.

"I bought 21 turkey chicks for Tk 35,000 and that was my investment," adds Amir. The most surprising thing is that Amir has already sold turkeys worth Tk 7 lakh. Now, he's looking ahead because the turkeys that he has in farm will give him Tk 14 lakh. It's unimaginable, I mean the success is so rapid that it amazed me like anything.

Dear readers, a turkey can lay eggs when it's six-month-old and it can continue up to four years. However, the price of eggs and day-old chick (DOC) of turkey is quite high. There should be some sort of mechanism where small farmers can also grow turkeys. Four eggs cost Tk 800 taka. A 15-day-old turkey costs Tk 700 to Tk 800. There are

varieties of turkey inside this farm. One named, Carbon Red is the priciest. Two of those cost Tk 70,000.

"If they're well reared in one year they may weigh up to 10 kg," says Amir. Each turkey eats only 150 grams of food. As I said earlier, they prefer, natural grass, herbs etc. Food is not at all a problem in growing turkey chicken. Those who are in trouble with their poultry farms, can start small-scale turkey farms and gradually expand it, because it's really profitable.

Amir Hossain learned about turkey farming from online, to be specific, from YouTube. He has chosen Facebook to market his product. So, social media has helped him a lot. To remind you all, we still don't have a large commercial hatchery for turkey. Entrepreneurs have their own and very small incubators, which can't meet the demand anyway.

"The day-old turkey chicks imported from India do not have the standard we look for; many of those die," said Amir. If this goes on, a booming industry may fail at the very beginning. The government's strict monitoring and other assistance would help turkey farming extension fast and make it more profitable in future. I also stress that livestock department should have more information on turkey and organize training for turkey farmers across the country.

Dear readers, the farming sector is becoming target-oriented, business and profit oriented sector. Any farmer can experiment with investing in small, medium and large scale. I have seen many small entrepreneurs becoming commercially successful. Amir Hossain's farm is a great example, I would say. The speed of the entrepreneurs must match with that of the livestock department and extension officers. This is where we often face the obstacles. I would demand growing turkeys adaptable to our weather and climate, availability of DOC of turkeys - this is what we need and livestock department can assist the turkey farmers, in this regard with specific planning. I'm sure through this, the entrepreneurs will be greatly helped, unemployed youths will come forward, the livestock sector will benefit even more and turkey farming will have a huge positive impact on the overall economy of the country.

Gaibandha freed on this day in 1971

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

On this day in 1971, the district was freed from the Pakistani occupation forces.

To observe the day, people from all walks of life will hold rally and discussion in the district.

On December 7 during the Liberation War, the valiant freedom fighters and Indian allied forces captured Gaibandha sub-division after the Pakistani soldiers fled the area in fear of bombing by the Indian air force and mortar shelling from western belt.

Indian air force destroyed all the vessels, including ferry and tug boats, at Teestamukh ghat on the river Jamuna. It was the torture, rape and killing ground for the occupation forces. Earlier, freedom fighters snapped road communication by damaging the bridges connecting Gaibandha.

On December 6, allied forces marched towards Gaibandha sub-divisional headquarters through western border and captured the area. Under attack by both Indians and freedom fighters, the occupation force fled the areas.

On the morning of December 7, 1971, Commander Mahub Elahi (Bir Pratik) with his troops entered the district headquarters. Thousands of people welcomed the brave freedom fighters and arranged a mass reception at the then sub-divisional office ground, now named as Shawdhinata Prangon.

Meanwhile, local freedom fighters have chalked out various programmes on the occasion.



The writer with Amir Hossain at the latter's turkey farm in Ashulia of Savar.

PHOTO: Hridoye Mati O Manush

the demand of animal protein, pungas fish and poultry chicken have great contribution. Especially, for the marginal and poor people these protein sources play a pivotal role. In recent times, I have observed some vegetables cost Tk 150 to Tk 160 per kg, whereas, the poultry chicken, per kg price was Tk 130 to Tk 140. Although, we know that there are some dishonest poultry traders who are trying to ruin this poultry market. I have already featured many documentaries on Hridoye Mati O Manush (HMOM) regarding these obstacles and prospects of poultry.

The positive news is, at present, turkey chicken is becoming the alterna-

them to you through HMOM and newspaper articles. What I assume, the problems farmers are facing with poultry chicken can be resolved with successful turkey farming.

It was 5:00am in the morning on November 19. I started from Dhaka for Dosaid village, located in Savar's Ashulia, to meet a successful turkey farmer. He is Amir Hossain. It was November, but there was hardly any sign of winter in Dhaka. Although the foggy weather on the rural landscape gave me some sort of cold from inside, when I got out of the car, it wasn't that cold that we generally expect from November. I reached Amir's farm at

what I felt.

"I'm following scientific methods with progressive planning to grow them up in cages; different varieties, of course," added Amir.

The different varieties have different colours. Amir Hossain's labour, intelligence, and investment worked like magic. In just one year, he has turned into a commercial turkey farmer.

"If you know where and why you're investing, then you must be able to reap the profit," confidently says, Amir Hossain.

Many people from Dosaid village came to visit Amir's farm that morning.

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