

# Canal turns fish gher

Water flow stops, farmers face irrigation problem

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A local influential man has turned a canal into a fish gher (enclosure) in Itabari village under Kalapara upazila, hampering free flow of water and creating problems for the local farmers.

Locals said the two-kilometre-long Itbaria canal was connected with the Andharmanik river. Water Development Board (WDB) built a dyke on the river bank about 20 years ago, but another mouth of the canal was still open, allowing water to flow through it.

Asabbar Khan, 65, a local farmer, said natural water flow continued through another outlet after the dyke was built. "We used the water for cultivating land, irrigation, bathing domestic animals and for household work," he said.

Three years ago, Jamal Ahmed, an influential local man, set up a fish gher on the canal, saying that it is situated on his inherited land, he added.

Jamal has turned the canal into several ponds for cultivating fish. He also has a farm in which he raises goats, sheep and ducks.

"We cannot cultivate our lands in time as the collected water cannot flow out and water from the nearby river cannot enter the fields as the canal has been blocked. Jamal said the canal is on his land and we cannot protest about blocking it," said Chan Mia, 60.

Contacted, Jamal said he set up a fish gher on his inherited land. He refused to make any further comment.

Upazila Assistant Commissioner (Land) Md Robiul Islam said he will ask the surveyor to investigate the matter.

"If the allegation is found true, we will take legal steps over the matter considering local people's interest," he added.



An influential man has turned a canal into several ponds to cultivate fish in Itabaria village under Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali. The photo was taken a few days ago.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN

## 5 get life for killing garments trader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

A court here on Monday sentenced five people to life imprisonment and six others to three years imprisonment for killing a garments trader in 2010.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Moazzem Hossain pronounced the verdict. Three other accused in the case were acquitted.

The convicts are Akram Hossain, 34, Razib Ahmed, 32, Rifat, 30, Imtiaz Shahin Jony, 35 and Maksudul Hasan, 33.

According to the prosecution, the convicts killed Zonaid Monir alias Zonu, a garment trader, after calling him out of his house on August 4 in 2010 and dumped the body in Dariapur canal.

Two days after the incident, the victim's brother Masud Mia of Kandipara in the town filed a murder case with Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station.

Later, accused Akram made a confessional statement under Section 164 to the court. According to his statement, they murdered garment owner Zonaid as he was not willing to give them the money they demanded.

## Grocer hacked to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A grocer was hacked to death in his residence at Narayanpur village in the district headquarters early yesterday.

The deceased was Shahed Hasan Shuvo, 25, son of Arshad Alam of Narayanpur village.

Shuvo returned home from his shop late at night. Later, his body was found there, said the victim's brother Rashed Ali Sohel.

The body was sent to Pabna Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy, said Md Obaidul Haque, officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station.

Criminals might have killed Shuvo over previous enmity, said the OC.

Shuvo was involved with Chhatra League politics but recently, he started business leaving politics due to family pressure, said his brother Sohel.

## 'Robber' killed in 'gunfight' with Rab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

An alleged robber was killed in a 'gunfight' with Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Amberia area near Shala river under Sharankhola range of Sundarbans East Forest Division yesterday.

The identity of the deceased could not be known immediately but locals confirmed that he is a member of Sattar Bahini, said Rab-8 Patuakhali Company Commander Additional Superintendent of Police Surat Ali.

Seeing a patrol team of Rab-8, a gang of robbers opened fire, triggering a gunfight, he said.

Later, the bullet-hit body was found in the area. The elite force also recovered three firearms and 29 bullets from the spot, said the Rab official.

The body was sent to Bagerhat Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy, said Officer-in-Charge of Sharankhola Police Station Kabirul Islam.

Two cases were filed in connection with the incident, said the OC.

## 2 JMB men held in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two members of banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) in Sirajganj's Kamarkhand upazila yesterday.

The arrestees are Rakibul Hasan, 22, son of Abdul Mannan Sheikh of Matikora village in Raiganj upazila, and Jewel Rana, 20, son of Joyanal Abedin of Mamudakhola village in Kamarkhand upazila of Sirajganj.

Assistant Superintendent of Police Rawshan Ali of Rab-12 said a team of the elite force, acting on a tip off, raided a madrasa around 2:00pm and detained the two when they were holding a secrete meeting and seized nine books on Jihad from them.



Jatun Mayee Barmoni, an 88-year-old widow at Rajpur village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, is yet to get government's elderly allowance, although she lives a miserable life in a hut on a relative's land, having lost all the landed property to the Teesta river. Inset, Mayee with her daughter Josna Bala, 63, also a landless widow. They described their plight to the deputy commissioner and the upazila nirbahi officer during their visit to the place on Monday.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

## Stalker beaten

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A stalker was beaten by angry mob for sexually harassing a schoolgirl at Pashchim Tengri village in Ishwardi upazila on Monday night.

Police arrested injured Badsha Mondol, 49, president of Ishwardi upazila Rickshaw Samik League, and admitted him to Ishwardi Upazila Health Complex, from where he was shifted to Pabna General Hospital yesterday for better treatment.

Badsha allegedly tried to grab a schoolgirl forcibly while she was returning home from her private tuition around 7:00pm, said Ishwardi Police Station Officer-in-Charge Azim Uddin.

As the girl cried for help, local people caught Badsha red-handed and beat him mercilessly, leaving him critically injured, he said.

## Dredgers burnt to stop sand lifting

Mobile court conducted in New Dhaleswari river

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A mobile court on Monday burnt ten dredgers, locally called Bangla dredgers, as they were used for lifting sand from the New Dhaleswari river in Kalihati upazila.

The court also damaged an excavator and broke plastic pipes that were used to lift sand from the river.

The court seized 8.37 lakh cubic feet of sand, worth about Tk 25 lakh, which the sand traders had lifted from several spots on the river.

Influential people have been illegally lifting sand with dredgers from Gohaliabari and Doshokia unions in the upazila for long, causing erosion of the river banks and damaging the local environment.

Kalihati Assistant Commissioner (AC-Land), Nafisa Akter, along with police, launched a drive on the day and seized the dredgers, excavators, pipes and sand from several spots, including Beltia area, confluence of the Jamuna and the New Dhaleswari rivers.

The sand lifters, however, managed to flee after sensing presence of the mobile court.

The AC told this correspondent that the seized dredgers were burnt and the pipes were broken in front of the local people.

Such drives will continue until illegal sand lifting in the areas is stopped, she added.

## 8 schoolboys expelled for stalking

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Eight students of a secondary school in Moheshpur upazila were expelled yesterday for stalking girls.

The boys are students of Class X of GHGP Poura Secondary School.

Headmaster Matiar Rahman said 17 girl students of the school submitted written complaints to him, the upazila nirbahi officer and the police on Monday.

Following the allegation, Upazila Nirbahi Officer Kamrul Islam conducted a mobile court.

After hearing both sides, he asked the headmaster and the school managing committee chairman to expel the students permanently.



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