



Erosion by the Brahmaputra river at Gohat village in Gaibandha Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

EROSION BY BRAHMAPUTRA

A village on the verge of extinction

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Gohat village along the Brahmaputra river basin in Sadar upazila is on the verge of being totally washed away by erosion that has gripped the area for the last five days, rendering 75 families homeless.

Locals said there were about 3,500 people in the village five years ago, but erosion by the Brahmaputra has washed away 75 percent of the village in the last two years.

Erosion has intensified seriously this year and many houses, croplands, tree and plants are being engulfed by the surging water every day.

On visit to the areas on Saturday, this reporter saw villagers removing their houses and belongings to safer places before they got washed away.

"The erosion point was a few yards from my home. We had planned to remove our belongings the next day, but erosion engulfed the area by night and we could not remove anything," said Taposh Kumar, a fisherman of the area.

"We could not even imagine that the area would go into the river. We have lost everything in one night," said Prodip Kumar, a villager.

"As my homestead went into the river and I have no place to take shelter, I was compelled to sell my poultry birds and goat at throwaway prices," said Samiul Islam a farmer.

Locals complained that although Water Development Board (WDB) dumped sandbags at the erosion points, it had little impact on controlling the devastating erosion. The department starts work when erosion hits, but remains silent in the dry season, they said.

The erosion is much more severe than before this year, and if precautionary measures are not taken the remaining areas will go into the river, said Abdus Salam Zakir, chairman of Kamarjani Union Parishad.

Victims of erosion are going to other places after losing their homesteads and croplands, and the remaining families are staying here in utter anxiety, he added.

WDB just dumps sandbags at erosion points, but that is not enough to stop the impact of erosion, the chairman said.

A proposal for controlling erosion has been sent to the higher authorities for approval, said Mahbubur Rahman, executive engineer, WDB Gaibandha.

Man kills wife in Jessore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A woman was killed allegedly by her husband at Kamalpur village in Sadar upazila of Jessore on Sunday night over her husband's love affair with another woman.

The deceased was Sabina Khatun, 25, wife of Shimul Hossain of the village and daughter of Shamsur Rahman of Kaimkhola village in Chowgachha upazila of Jessore.

Shamsur said Sabina was married to Shimul four years ago.

"My daughter told me that her husband was involved in a love affair with another woman and threatened to kill her (Sabina) if she protested," he said.

Shamsur alleged that his daughter was killed by Shimul over his love affair with a woman in Tentulia village at Chowgachha upazila.

There was an altercation between Shimul and Sabina on Sunday night, Shamsur said. At one stage, Shimul strangled Sabina, he added. Later, Sabina's family informed Sajjal police outpost. Police recovered the body and sent it to Jessore Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

SI Mahbubur Rahman, in-charge of the police outpost, said they will know if it was murder or not after they get the autopsy report.

2 injured slow loris rescued, being treated at Sreemangal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Two seriously injured rare primates -- Slow Loris, locally known as lajjaboti banor -- are now undergoing treatment at Bangladesh Wildlife Service Foundation in Sreemangal upazila under the district.

Of the two monkeys, one was rescued from Lamua area on Sunday and another was rescued from Ramnagar area on Monday, said Swapan Deb Sajal, director of Bangladesh Wildlife Service Foundation.

The monkey, which was rescued on Monday, had sustained injuries after coming in contact with a live electric wire while another was physically very weak for not having sufficient food, he said.

The rare animals will be released to Lawacherra forest in Moulvibazar after treatment, said Swapan.

Jabed Bhuiyan, general secretary of Lawacherra Bon O Jibo Boichitro Rokkha Andolon, said this Slow Loris eats fruits and resin of trees.

But, a group of local influential miscreants have been involved with logging 100-year-old trees of various species including teak, he said.

Wildlife experts said Slow Loris is critically endangered in Bangladesh and is the verge of extinction.

They identified it as modest monkey. Its face is like a 'black faced monkey' but the colour of its body is white.

One lakh textbooks seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Gobindaganj upazila nirbahi officer accompanied by police raided the warehouse of a trader at Fakirganj village and recovered over one lakh secondary level government school textbooks for the year 2017 and 2018 on Sunday night.

Mojibur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Gobindaganj Police Station, said acting on a tip-off, they raided the warehouse of Abdur Razzak and recovered the books of class six to nine. However, none was arrested in this connection.

Sensing the presence of police, the trader managed to flee the scene, said the OC.

UNO Abdur Rafiqul Alam seized the books and brought them to the police station.

The drive was accompanied by Mamunur Rashid, upazila education officer, Shafiquzzaman, OC (Investigation) of the police station, Rafiqul Islam, chairman of Katabri Union Parishad.

The UNO said the accused trader collected those government school textbooks from dishonest teachers of schools. However, the matter will be investigated for further action.

A case was filed, accusing six persons in this connection, said the police official.



Teachers, students, officials and employees of Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University at Santosh in Tangail form a human chain on the campus yesterday demanding arrest and punishment of the criminals who vandalised a teachers' car, misbehaved with a teacher and threatened the vice-chancellor of the university on July 4.

PHOTO: STAR

Bullet-riddled body

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Kalu's brother-in-law Suruj Sikder said several plainclothes men, identifying themselves as detectives, handcuffed him and took him away in a white microbus on Friday evening.

"We went to Sadar Police Station to file a general diary but the police refused to register it. Later, after receiving information from locals, we identified his body at the hospital," he said.

"I don't understand who killed my son," said Siraj Sikder, Kalu's father, claiming that his son, an easy bike driver, was not a criminal.

However, Abdul Momen, superintendent of police (SP) in Shariatpur, told our Faridpur correspondent that detectives did not pick Kalu up and police will investigate the murder to find those responsible.

With Kalu, at least 171 alleged drug traders have been killed since the anti-narcotics drive began on May 4. Most of them were killed in "shootouts" with police or Rab.

One injured in 'shootout'

In Rajshahi, police shot an alleged drug peddler during a "gunfight" in Godagari early yesterday.

Abdul Matin, 30, son of Amir of Char Kanapara, was taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital with bullet injuries on his left leg and was undergoing treatment, said Additional SP Abdur Razzak, a spokesperson of Rajshahi district police.

Matin was accused in 10 cases, including eight for drug peddling and smuggling, he said.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the Baliadangi area of Godagari. At around 3:00pm, the group of suspected drug peddlers began attacking the police team with firearms. A few minutes after police retaliated and the "gun battle" ensued, the miscreants fled the scene leaving injured Matin behind, ASP Razzak said.

He also claimed that three police officials received injuries during the gunfight as well.

Police seized 200 grams of heroin, Tk 79,500 in cash and four machetes, among other possessions, from the scene.

It's unethical

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lawyer Amit Das Gupta, the HC on April 1 issued a rule asking the director and a physician of the facility in Chuadanga to explain why they should not be directed to give Tk 20 crore in compensation to the 20 patients.

Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam appeared for the hospital.



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Jute fibre extraction machines to ease retting, improve quality



Lalmonirhat Deputy Commissioner Shafiul Arif, accompanied by officials, hands over jute fibre extraction machines to beneficiary farmers at a function on the premises of NGO RDRS Bangladesh at Saptibari in Aditmari upazila of Lalmonirhat yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Eleven jute fibre extraction machines have been distributed among 11 farmers free of cost in the district.

Deputy Commissioner Shafiul Arif handed over the fibre extraction machines to the beneficiaries at a function on the premises of RDRS Bangladesh, a non-governmental organisation (NGO), in Saptibari area under Aditmari upazila.

For producing quality jute fibres, "Jute Fibre Extraction Machine Distribution" scheme is being implemented by RDRS Bangladesh under Securing Employment and Economic Development at Jute Textile and Light Engineering Sector in North-West Bangladesh with technical support by Practical Action Bangladesh funded by European Commission.

The DC said due to use of the machine, the farmers can produce more quality

jute fibre. It will also reduce labour cost.

The aim of the project is to improve the quality of jute fibre and create its demand in both the national and the international markets, said Kazi Morshed Alam, programme manager of Practical Action Bangladesh.

Each machine can process fibre of jute produced on one bigha of land in a week, he said.

Profullo Chandra Roy, a beneficiary of Sarpukur Chawratari village, said he is very happy getting the jute fibre extraction machine free of cost. He will use the machine in the interest of jute growers in the area.

Deputy Director of Department of Agriculture Extension in Lalmonirhat Bidhubhushon Roy said jute fibre extraction machine has been playing important role for producing quality jute fibres in the district for the last one year.

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