Mindless encroachment squeezes once flowing Majhgram canal in Kalikapur area of Patuakhali municipality. PHOTO: **STAR**

Grabbers feast on canal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

Majhgram canal grabbing is going on randomly although once it played a vital role in the lives of the people of Kalikapur area in the town.

At present, a group of local influential people have built multi-storied buildings grabbing five km of the seven-km-long canal while others are trying to build more structures there.

Many built cross closures on the canal that totally stopped natural water flow.

Meanwhile, the area is being polluted too as the nearby residents dump household wastes into the closed canal, said local people.

Local influential person named Md Forkan Talukder built a three-storied building in the middle of the canal.

During a recent visit to the area, this correspondent found that a section of local influential people are building some structures by occupying the canal in front of the Baitun Nayeem mosque.

Local resident Golam Mostafa Kamal filled up a portion of the canal in front of his house by setting up bamboo fence.

"I am the original claimant of the portion of the canal as it is front side of my land that I bought about 15 years ago," he said.

Forkan Talukder said he built the building on his own land, not grabbing the canal.

He declined to make more comments over the matter.

Abdul Goffar, neighbour of Talukder, said 25 years ago, large country boats and trawlers ran through the canal as it linked with the Lawkathi river to Halatia canal. Local farmers cultivated their land by using its water but the canal has been occupied by the local grabbers.

SM Motin Mahmud alias Jahid, councillor of Patuakhali municipality, said like Majhgram canal, at least 25 canals in the municipality area faces serious grabbing.

Many big canals turned into drains as local residents built structures by grabbing them.

Md Eunus Mia, surveyor of the municipality, said local people are building structures occupying some canals but they will take step after preparing a list of grabbers.

Despite repeated calls, this correspondent could not reach municipality Mayor Shafiqul Islam as he didn't receive the phone.

Md Hasanuzzaman, executive engineer of Water Development Board, said they have already prepared a list of 22 canals in the municipality. They will take steps to re-excavate them to ensure water flow.

'Arrest killers of FF'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Around 200 freedom fighters joined a rally at Trishal upazila headquarters yesterday demanding immediate arrest of the killers of their fellow Abdul Matin.

Ex-commander of Mymensingh Muktijoddha Sangsad Anwar Hossain and several freedom fighters addressed the rally.

The speakers warned that they will go for tougher agitation if the killers are not arrested within one week.

Police recovered the throat-slit body of freedom fighter Abdul Matin, alias Matin Master, 69, of Khagati village on July 4, said Md Jakiur Rahman, OC of Trishal Police Station.

Family members had found Matin's body in a pond of his fish farm adjacent to his house that day.

The victim's son Mahmudul Hasan Mamun lodged a case with Trishal Police Station the same day, accusing unnamed people.

Students' 'red card' to drug, stalking, child marriage

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Manikganj*

Students of a college in the town yesterday took an oath to create a society free of drugs, eve-teasing and child marriage at a meeting in the college auditorium.

Eleventh graders of Khan Bahadur Awlad Hossain Khan College showed red card to drugs, eve-teasing and child marriage at the meeting.

Additional District Magistrate in Manikganj Kazi Shahidul Islam administered the oath.

The meeting was organised by Lal Sobuj Unnayan Sangha, an organisation of students in Comilla, with assistance from the district administration.

In-Charge of Manikganj Town Police Outpost Hasmat Ullah, former general secretary of Manikganj Press Club Zahangir Alam Biswas, General Secretary of district Rover Scouts Ayub Khan, Scout Leader Ruhul Jamal Sujon, Manikganj district correspondent of the daily Prothom Alo Abdul Momin, and founder president of the organisation Kawser Alam Sohel, addressed the meeting.

The students also showed green card to truthfulness, humanity and love for the country.

The founder and President of Lal Sobuj Unnayan Sangha Kawsar Alam is a Masters student at a college in Comilla. He founded the organisation in 2011.

Kawsar announced that the organisation will hold such programmes in all districts of the country to create awareness among the students about various issues. Starting in March 8 this year, he has already held programmes in 43 districts.

The organisation meets the expenses with tiffin money saved by its members.

Couriers of misfortune

FROM PAGE 16

person there. He claimed he did not know what was inside the shoe, but was promised Tk 2,000 for the journey.

The above scenario is a snapshot of a growing drug business in Cox's Bazar, involving, often unwittingly, the services of women and children in exchange for money.

The drug trade offers a way for refugees -- who are not allowed to work legally in Bangladesh -- to earn money which they can spend on other desires apart from those provided to them in the form of relief.

To meeting simple demands such as for fish and meat to desires such as lipstick and chocolate, the Rohingyas are turning to running ways as a way to make a quick buck.

Apart from using children, law enforcers said drug traders were taking advantage of a shortage of female law enforcers, which allowed women drug couriers to move freely without being checked.

Hamida Begum (not her real name), lives in a crowded camp in Balukhali. "I carried yaba twice for cash," she whispers while chewing betel nut.

Hamida, a tall woman with black hair, is wearing a white hijab. Her husband was killed in front of her in Myanmar by the army there in August last year.

The 30-year-old, along with her two sons, crossed the border and took shelter in the camp.

"I do not have any income source. I have already sold my jewelleries'. We cannot go out of the camp. Dodging the law enforcers, I went to Cox's Bazar twice carrying 500 pieces of yaba."

Hamida said she was paid Tk 2,000 for each trip, a small fortune for her.

Recounting one of the trips, Hamida said she put on a burqa and then took a small package wrapped in polythene from Balukhali camp. She walked a distance and then hailed a CNG auto rickshaw. Seeing a police check post, she got off the CNG and walked for a while before hailing another auto rickshaw. After a place called Reju Khal, someone stopped her and took the drug.

Hamida, though, claims she had stopped being a drug mule. "If I am sent to jail, who would take care of my kids? I made mistake but no more," she says, her voice tinged with fear.

Law enforcers say there are around 55 yaba factories in Buthidaung, Maungdaw, and Rathedaung townships in Myanmar.

They added they have filed 75 cases over drug peddling since August 25 and arrested 114 accused in those cases. According to police, the Rohingyas usually carry small amounts of Yaba like 500 to 2,000 pieces.

MAPPING THE MENACE

Bangladesh and Myanmar share a 270km border, much of it along the Naf River. Every day, some three lakh vessels of different kinds, from small wooden boat to trawlers, ply this waterway, often unregulated. This makes it the ideal route for trafficking yaba.

Explaining the business, BGB Battalion Commander Lt Col Asaduzzaman Chowdhury told The Daily Star, "Basically the locals are agents and the Rohingyas are the carriers. [Some of the] locals invest to bring yaba from Myanmar and the Rohingyas are used as carriers. They carry yaba during the night and then it is repacked in Rohingya homes. Then those are sent to different parts of the country," Chowdhury said.

"You will be surprised to hear that now the stomachs and rectums of Rohingyas are being hired to carry yaba," Asaduzzaman said.

"Smugglers also hide the pills inside watermelons, jackfruits, tyres, petrol containers, inside mobile phones and even in holy books," Afrujul Haque Tutul, assistant superintendent of Cox's Bazar Police, told The Daily Star.

He said local brokers had been taking advantage of the Rohingyas' poverty and allured them to the drug trade with promises of money.

While police officials and locals claim the presence of Rohingyas has intensified the yaba problem, the Rohingyas say they are compelled to peddle the drugs, having no other means of earning money.

Didarul Alam Rashed, executive director of Nongor, a non-profit organisation working for Rohingyas, said more than a thousand Rohingyas are involved in the taba trade.

"Most of them are carriers. Although the job is risky, Rohingyas are getting lured to it using cash as an incentive."

For big consignment, they use the sea route from Saint Martin- Sabrang-Moheskhali-Kutubdia-Anwara-Kornuli-Sundarban.

He said there are around 926 BGB men deployed in Cox's Bazar district. "It is really tough to check all movements with this small manpower. But we are trying."

There are 13 police check posts on the road from Teknaf to Cox's Bazar while BGB has seven.

Tigresses

FROM PAGE 1

of 125 for six, and that was followed by miserly bowling from all-rounder Rumana Ahmed who took two wickets for 10 runs from four overs to help restrict Scotland to 76 for seven in 20 overs.

The Tigresses join Ireland, who beat Papua New Guinea in the day's earlier semifinal, as the two teams from eight hopefuls to qualify for the biennial global tournament to be held in the West Indies in December this year. The two sides will contest the final in Utrecht tomorrow.

All through the qualifying event the Tigresses rode on excellent bowling performances, not once allowing their opposition to cross 100 in the 20-over tournament. They had bowled first in each of the group stage matches, which made for early finishes as they kept Papua New Guinea to 84 for six and bowled out Netherlands and UAE for 42 and 39 respectively.

In the semifinal, however, they made full use of their chance after being asked to bat first. Apart from Nigar's 36-ball innings which included two fours, there were useful contributions from openers Shamima Sultana (22 off 16) and Ayasha Rahman (20 off 27).

The total was always going to be too much for Scotland, for whom no one apart from Sarah Bryce (31) and skipper Kathryn Bryce (21) reached double figures. Besides player-of-the-match Rumana, Nahida Akter took two wickets while skipper Salma Khatun and Fahima Khatun took one wicket apiece.

The Tigresses had previously participated in World T20s in 2014 at home and in 2016 in India, but failed to make it out of the group stage on either occasion.

The 39-kilometre-long road from Khan Jahan Ali shrine in Bagerhat to Patgati of Tungipara upazila of Gopalganj remains in an awful condition for long. The photo was taken near the shrine recently. PHOTO: **STAR**

Sorry state of Bagerhat road

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bagerhat*

Although it is one of the busiest roads in the district, the 39 km long road from Hazrat Khan Jahan Ali's shrine in Bagerhat via Chitalmari upazila to Patgati in Tungipara upazila of Gopalganj has been in deplorable condition for the last three years.

People of Chitalmari-Mollarhat and some places of Bagerhat Sadar upazila use this road to communicate with the district headquarters.

"Hundreds of potholes, stagnant water and mud in many places make vehicular movement on the road highly risky and time consuming, much to the suffering of the people of three upazilas," said Asaduzzaman, a teacher of Mukkait area in Sadar upazila.

Huge numbers of trucks, buses, three-wheelers and vans carrying passengers and goods, especially crops and vegetables, use the road regularly, he added.

"It is the only road to go the district headquarters directly from Chitalmari. Bus owners are running their buses on this route with risk out of consideration for the commuters. If the road is not repaired quickly, it will become impossible to move on it," said bus driver Sudhangsu Das.

"It is very difficult even to walk on the road. We are always worried that an accident will occur. Moreover, the road becomes dusty in the summer and muddy in the rainy season," pedestrian Ruhul Sheikh said.

District Roads and Highways Department Executive Engineer Anisuzzaman Masud said work of upgrading the 39-kilometre road will be started soon under a project approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council.

"Meanwhile, tenders were invited, a contractor has been selected and work orders have been given. We expect to start the work within a month," he added.

Indian

FROM PAGE 2

between Bangladesh and India. Home ministers of the two states will co-chair the 6th meeting to be held at Bangladesh Secretariat at 10:30pm on Sunday. The last talks were held in New Delhi in July 2016.

Issues related to fake currencies, border killings, cattle smuggling, movement of illegal immigrants and Rohingya issues are likely to be discussed.

Rajnath will depart at 1:00pm on Sunday.

The last of the Hoolocks

FROM PAGE 16

each sex is coloured differently -- the males black with striking white brows and females grey-brown with a darker chest and neck -- and have rings around their eyes and mouths giving them a masked look; characteristics that make them a popular attraction for park visitors.

They are found in eastern Bangladesh and north eastern India, said Tabibur Rahman, former assistant conservator of wildlife management and nature conservation department in Moulvibazar, adding that a Hoolock has a lifespan of around 17 years and looks after its offspring for up to five years.

However, these primates are now considered critically endangered in Bangladesh.

According to a 2014-15 survey by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), only 250 Hoolock gibbons, also called western Hoolocks, are now found in Bangladesh.

This dwindling number is attributed to an acute lack of food, along with their shrinking habitat.

"Even just 10 years ago, the gibbons were found in large numbers and their calls could be heard frequently throughout the forest," Saju Marchiang, a forest guide, told this correspondent.

He added that due to deforestation, the Hoolocks' sources of food -- various fruits, leaves and flowers -- have depleted, pushing them to the brink of extinction.

Md Nurul Mohmain Milton, general secretary of Environmental Journalists' Forum, said illegal logging and other human activities have reduced the number of large trees, which the gibbons use for travelling and food, adding that there was a risk that gibbon populations would soon become isolated and restricted to only a few areas with tall trees.

A rainforest must be kept in its natural state and not be used for "gardening", he said, also claiming that the existing forest management's approach was still colonial.

Turning a blind eye to the hoolock's predicament and not taking action soon would result in the extinction of Lawachhara's most famous habitant and ultimately add another blow to its formerly illustrious list of megafauna.

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology

Directorate of Planning and Development

BUET

e-Tender Notice

No. P&D/LP(S-3)/REC-12/17/EEE-01/DR-16(2) Date: 11 July 2018

This is to notify all concerned that the following tender has been published through e-GP Portal.

Tender ID, Package No. & date of publishing	Name of goods	Last selling and closing date & time
Tender ID: 210480 Package No: GD-21/REC/EEE Publishing date: 11/07/2018	Supply and Installation of Personal Computer for the Dept of EEE	26/07/2018 10:42am 29/07/2018 15:00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/had copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Director
Directorate of Planning and Development
BUET, Dhaka

GD-1735