



This century-old house belonging to a Hindu family on Maharaja Road in Mymensingh town faces threat of collapse as a local influential person is constructing a high-rise building, allegedly after illegally occupying the adjacent land, also belonging to the same family. PHOTO: STAR

Grabber's eye on century-old home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A century-old home on Maharaja Road in Mymensingh town trembles as the foundation for a 15-storey building is being laid on the ground under the same boundary.

Within their boundary, a Hindu family lives on in fear. Nine decimals of their ancestral property of 12.32 decimals have already been grabbed by a local influential person.

The house was built by Rai Bahadur Jogodish Cahndra Guha, who served as chairman of Mymensingh municipality in 1921-26, and passed it on to his son late Shishir Kumar Guha.

In 1962, Shishir willed the property to his wife late Khana Rani Guha, three sons -- Sukhomoy Guha, Subinoy Guha and Biplob Kumar Guha -- and only daughter Mira Rani Guha in 1962.

He later passed away in 1965 and his sons took his will to the court to get a probate the next year.

The family's eldest son Sukhomoy moved to India in 1975. He returned in 1998 to give power of attorney over his portion of the land to his

brothers. "He left the country immediately after," said Biplob.

"Without informing us, Sukhomoy visited Bangladesh in April last year with an Indian passport under the name of 'Bablu Guha'. Sukhomoy then gave power of attorney of the whole 12.32 decimals of land to a local real estate developer," added Biplob.

Meanwhile, a pile driver is working full fledged for two months now on a high rise -- China Tower 2 -- under orders from Shah Md Abdullah Al Mamun, 42, a real estate developer from Kalibari Kaborkhana Road.

"When the pile driver is operational, our two-storied old building at a corner on the land shakes," Biplob said.

"Since receiving the contract, Mamun and his men have been threatening us to vacate the house so that they can take over the total land, he added.

The grabber and his men ransacked their house on April 6 and looted valuables, land documents and Tk 60,000 in cash, alleged Biplob. "We took the matter to the court in May

and got an order to stop work."

The court order was submitted to the additional district magistrate in Mymensingh on June 12 and the court ordered police to take step to maintain law and order between the two parties, he added.

Sub-inspector Anwar Hossain of Kotwali Police Station served the notice on June 20 asking the parties concerned to stop all activities on the disputed land, but the construction work is on, said the victims.

Refuting the allegation of any attack on the Hindu family, Mamun said he took power of attorney as all documents supported Sukhomoy's ownership over the land.

The project will have 42 apartments, while eight have already been sold; two were sold for Tk 42 lakh and the rest five for Tk 31 lakh, he added.

An 80-year-old Snehashish Chowdhury, a relative of the family who knows them for 55 years now, said the house was once a centre for many cultural activists, artists and political leaders of the Mymensingh region.

Abducted tea trader rescued

Six alleged kidnappers arrested in Moulvibazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Law enforcers on Wednesday rescued an abducted tea trader and arrested six alleged abductors in Kulaura upazila.

Kulaura Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Md Shamim Musa said this to reporters at a press conference at Kulaura Police Station premises on Wednesday night.

Tea trader Javed Mia, 45, a resident of Sadar upazila, was abducted allegedly by Mizanur Rahman, 24, Faisal Ahmed, 23, Md Imran, 22, Akul Mia, 24, Alauddin, 21, and Rupon Mollik, 23, of the upazila.

The arrestees called tea trader Javed over cellphone and asked him to come to Bramonbazar area at about 5:00pm on Tuesday for selling 200 kg of tea to him, the OC said.

When Javed met them there, the abductors snatched Tk 55,000 from him and demanded Tk 20,000 from his family. After getting the money, the abductors left him in Gazipur tea garden jungle area on Tuesday night.

Later, locals informed the police, who rescued him the same night.

Tipped off, a team of Kulaura police conducted a daylight raid on Wednesday and arrested the six alleged abductors from different areas, the OC said, adding that a case has been filed against the six arrestees.

Tripura traders refuse to take Bangladeshi goods

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Fish worth Tk 22 lakh rotted on Wednesday after traders at Agartala Land Port in the Indian state of Tripura stopped receiving Bangladeshi goods following a feud between the Indian businessmen.

As a sequel, Bangladesh traders also stopped fish export to India yesterday and decided to suspend export of all types of goods from Saturday.

Meanwhile, travelling of passport holder passengers from both the countries will remain operational.

Shahnawaz Mia, clearing and forwarding (C & F) agent at Akhaura Land Port said the situation occurred due the ongoing conflict between two groups of traders, one backed by India's ruling BJP and the other by opposition Congress in Agartala.

As a result, 10,490 kg of fish worth Tk 22 lakh, which directly affected the Bangladeshi traders.

Crab farming takes over shrimp in Bagerhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Crab cultivation is replacing shrimp cultivation in the district because shrimp and prawn are frequently attacked by virus.

"Regular attacks by viruses has caused us losses and we got discouraged to cultivate shrimp. Some shrimp cultivators had to leave their area for not being able to pay off their debts. Moreover, the demand for shrimp has decreased in the overseas market. So the farmers are cultivating crab to overcome the losses incurred in shrimp cultivation and to earn profit," said Moazzem Hossain, a farmer of Shreefaltala village under Rampal upazila.

"In the last few years, the price of shrimp has decreased by almost 50 percent. As a result, the farmers had to give up shrimp cultivation and start cultivating crabs," he added.

"I am cultivating crabs in 10 ponds on three acres of land, using the box and girdle method," said Arindom

Mondol of Sadar upazila.

"We buy crab weighing around 100 grams each from nearby warehouse for Tk 200 to Tk 250 per kg. They bring the crabs from the Sundarbans," he added.

"After making the land ready we release the small crabs into the ponds and feed them small fish like puti, tengra, mola," the farmer said.

"I was a shrimp cultivator but now I am cultivating crabs as they are not attacked by diseases like shrimp. We can collect crabs at least five times in a year," he said.

"Although we sell crabs all the year round, the prices are higher in January and February. We sell about 2.5 tonnes and make a profit of around Tk 10 lakh," he added.

"There is a huge demand for crabs in February, and we can sell them for Tk 2,400 to Tk 2,500 per kg," said farmer Asgor of Rampal.

District Fisheries Officer Zia Haider Chowdhury said about 3,500 crab enclosures have been set up in

1.5 thousand hectares of land in different upazilas of the district since 2015. Most of the farms are in Rampal upazila, where 1,500 farmers are cultivating crabs on 450 hectares of land.

The fisheries officer said attacks by diseases have increased and the prices of shrimps have also declined in foreign countries, as a result, many cultivators of the district have started cultivating crabs.

Rampal Upazila Senior Fisheries Officer Ripon Kanti Ghosh said the price of crabs is very high in the world market, adding that farmers earn good profit with little investment.

"Farmers started cultivating crabs in 2015 under the Kuchia and Crab Farming and Research Project. With the help of the project, we train the farmers on cultivation of crabs in demonstration farms. At present, there are about 3,500 crab enclosures in Bagerhat," he added.

Woman dies after tree branch falls on her

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

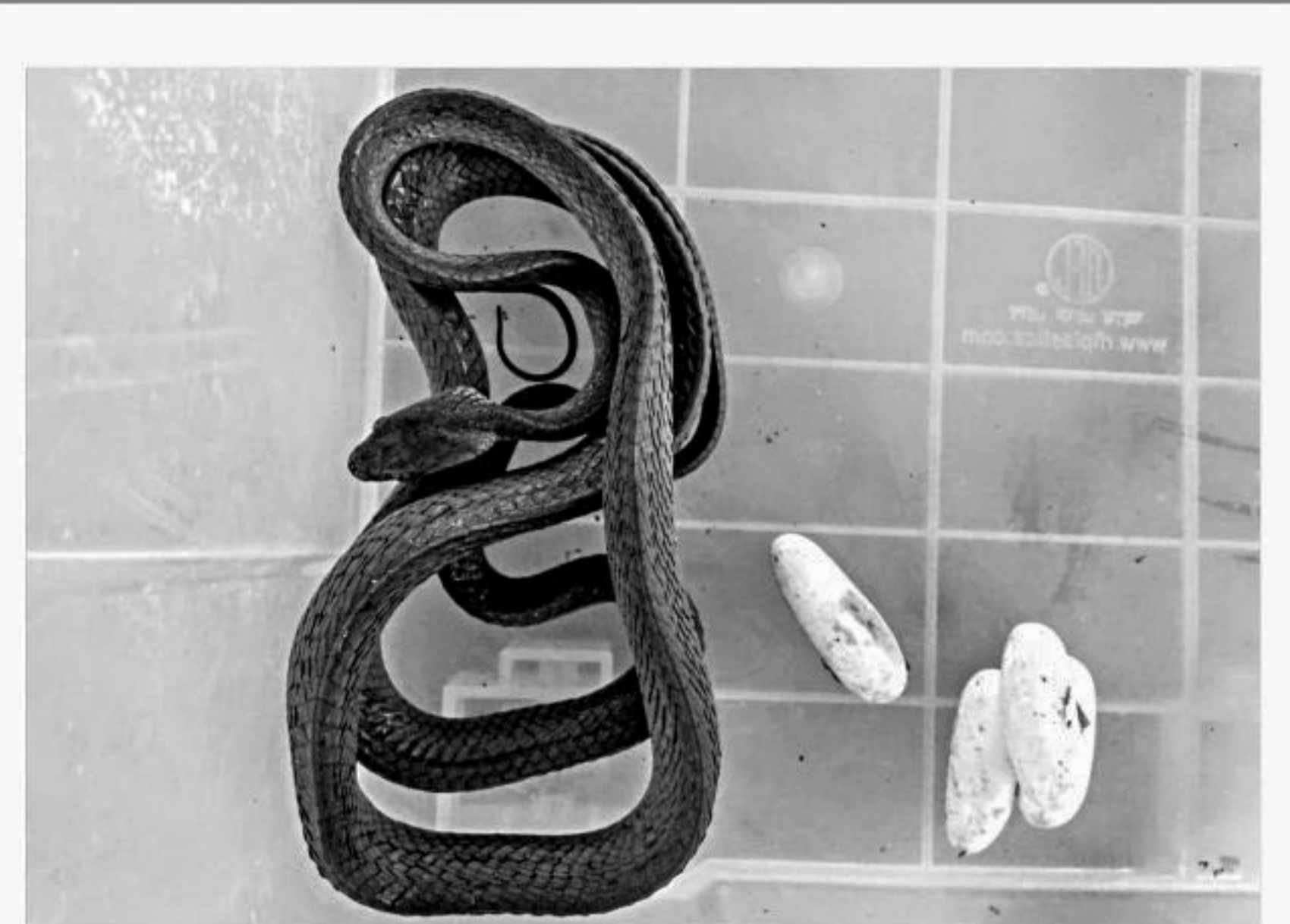
A housewife at Kotchandpur road under Kaliganj upazila died yesterday when a branch of a century-old rain tree fell on her.

The deceased was Fahmda Khatun, 38, wife of Abdur Rauf, deputy general manager of Kaliganj Palli Biddiyut Samity.

Kaliganj Palli Biddiyut Samity Assistant Engineer Shahidul Islam said Rauf joined a rally arranged by the upazila administration yesterday at around 10:00 am.

His wife went shopping at the kitchen market in the town. She was standing by the side of Kotchandpur road when a branch of a rain tree fell on her head, leaving her dead on the spot, he said.

They have one son and one daughter, he added.



Green cat snake lays eggs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

An endangered green cat snake, sheltered at Bangladesh Bonyo Prani Sheba Foundation in Sreemangal upazila of the district, laid four eggs there on Monday, much to the enthusiasm of foundation officials as well as locals.

"It's very rewarding that our efforts bore fruits. Experts are providing special care to the snake family to ensure safe hatching of the eggs. We are keeping watchful eyes," said Swapan Deb Sajal, director of the wildlife care foundation.

"The snake with its eggs is doing fine. If hatched, they can become valuable breeders of the endangered species in future," he said.

After hearing the news of laying eggs by the snake, many people are thronging the zoo. As some people were leaning forward to get a better look at the eggs, the mother cautiously guarded the eggs.

"The snake was rescued from Shishirbari area in Sreemangal upazila one month ago when it could hardly move. The zoo officials took special care of the snake and provided it proper treatment," Swapan said.

As the zoo director with this correspondent approached near the cage of the snake, it was seen nuzzling the eggs.

"This is the first incident of laying of

eggs by a snake in our zoo," he said.

The snake nurtures the eggs with great care, showing motherly affection, said Rajdip Deb Dip, an animal keeper at the zoo.

"These snakes feed mainly on lizards. Besides, they take frogs, birds, rodents and other snakes and have a unique way of capturing their prey," said Tabibur Rahman, former assistant conservator of wildlife at the forest department in Moulvibazar.

Its family identity is colubridae, scientific name Boiga Cyanea and Bangla name Sobuj Fomionosha.

The hatchlings are usually 35-cm-long.

It grows up to 1.86m. The dorsal surface is green or greenish and ventral surface is pale greenish or yellowish. The young ones are brownish or reddish often with green head, which is distinctly broader than the neck.

Large shield-like scales at top of the head helps one to distinguish it from pit viper, which have small granular scales.

Green cat snake is a nocturnal creature and lives mostly in bushes and trees.

Usually solitary, it spends the day time in shady and dark area.

The mildly venomous snake breeds during March to June and lays four to ten eggs that hatch within 80 to 90 days, Tabibur Rahman said.



A crab enclosure in Shreefaltala village under Rampal upazila of Bagerhat. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PARTHA CHAKRABORTY

First 1,000 days of child crucial for growth

Speakers tell Thakurgaon workshop

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Two three-day workshops on 'Early Childhood Care and Development' (ECCD) and 'Parenting Education' concluded at Eco Social Development Organisation's training centre in the town on Wednesday afternoon.

Institute of Child and Human Development (ICHD) organised the programme under 'Early Brain Development Skill Enhancement Program' of the Women and Children Affairs Ministry.

The programme aimed at building capacity of government officials and other relevant actors by enhancing their scientific knowledge and raising awareness about early brain development as well as overall development of children for creating a ground for the implementation of the government's Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development Policy.

Thirty participants including officials of district administration, different government departments, teachers of government and non-government schools, colleges and madrasas, representatives from NGOs and journalists took part in the workshop on ECCD.

The first 1,000 days of a child is very important for his or her physical and mental development, when utmost importance is to be given for nutrition and stimulation intervention, said speakers at the workshop on ECCD.

Twenty-five participants from Thakurgaon municipality, including councillors and officials, participated in the workshop on 'Parenting Education' where a key speaker highlighted the fact that a child starts learning from six-month pregnancy through hearing the mother's words.

There were elaborate discussions on children's development, care, health, nutrition, language and other necessary issues including how parents should behave with children.

Thakurgaon Deputy Commissioner Md Akhteruzzaman distributed certificates among the participants.

'Punish attackers of FF Gafur'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

People from all walks of life, specially freedom fighters, yesterday formed a human chain in Islampur upazila headquarters, protesting the attack on fellow freedom fighter Abdul Gafur Pradhan, 70, by the members of a Rajakar's family.

The participants at the rally, organised by Islampur upazila command of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangsad, also demanded punishment of the culprits, who beat Gafur while he was on his way to Gangapara Bazar around 10:00am on September 1.

Freedom fighter Gafur openly criticised roles of Rajakars, including Matiur Rahman Chowdhury, member of peace committee, Islampur upazila unit, during the Liberation War, at a public gathering marking the National Mourning Day on August 31, speakers said.

Being aggrieved by the criticism, relatives of the late rajakar led by his nephew, also Islampur Union Parishad Chairman, Shahin Chowdhury launched the attack, they alleged.

Critically injured Gafur was first admitted to Jamalpur General Hospital and later took treatment at National Heart Foundation in the capital.

Gafur lodged a written complaint with Islampur Police Station against UP Chairman Shahin and 10 to 12 others on Wednesday night.