



Land grabbers demolished newly built tin-shed shops at a government-approved market on the leased land at Gokarna Ghat in Brahmanbaria municipality on October 8 while the illegal structure earlier built by the perpetrators has remained intact. PHOTO: STAR

# Admin helpless before land grabbers!

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Over a week after land grabbers demolished some newly built tin-shed shops at a government-approved market on the leased land at Gokarna Ghat in the municipality area on October 8, no legal step has been taken against the perpetrators although the assistant commissioner (Land) of Brahmanbaria Sadar upazila visited the spot next day.

On the other hand, the structure earlier built by the illegal occupiers has remained intact as the administration has not evicted them yet.

After demarcation of the area of Gokarna Ghat market, it was ratified by the district administration on April 15, 2017, said sources at Brahmanbaria Sadar Upazila Assistant Commissioner's (Land) office.

The administration at that time decided to build 44 shops in three rows on 12 decimals of land on the south-east corner and lease them out. The deputy commissioner approved the proposal of lease on March 15 this year.

But an influential syndicate of land grabbers comprising a few ruling party leaders, local ward councillor and village leaders erected a brick-built structure at a portion of the 12-decimal land under the plan of the administration.

Later, the administration built tin-shed shops on another portion of the said land under the government plan, and handed over those shops to 19 lessees on August 9.

But on the night of October 8, the land grabbers demolished the tin-shed shops while the authorities are yet to evict the illegal occupiers.

Brahmanbaria Sadar Upazila Assistant Commissioner (Land) Sohel Rana said, "We ordered them to remove their illegal structure again and again but they did not comply."

Contacted, ward councillor Md Ferdous Miah said, "The allegation of my involvement in the demolition is baseless. If I am involved in the demolition, why have I been moving to offices for approval of our plan for the last two months?"

## BNP man killed by drug addict

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A BNP activist was killed allegedly by a drug addict at Sadipur village of Benapole on Monday night.

The deceased was Hasanuzzaman, 50, an activist of Benapole poura unit BNP and a resident of the village.

The victim's son Alif-uz-Zaman said when his father was returning home, he saw local drug addicts Akter, Sumon, Muktar, Raihan, Sohel and Rony beating a hawker.

As his father protested the incident, Akter kicked him on the right side of the chest. After returning home, Hasanuzzaman became seriously ill from chest pain due to beating.

He later died on way to Jashore General Hospital.

## KALAPARA KHEYA GHAT

# People count extra toll

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Bidders of Baliatali kheyra ghat (boat landing station) in Kalapara upazila under the district force the passengers to pay four to five times extra toll for crossing the Andharmanik river on engine-run and ordinary country boats.

Around 1.30 lakh people of five unions under the upazila use the kheyra, situated on Kalapara-Kuakata alternative road, to go to the upazila headquarters as well as Patuakhali district town.

Around 3,000 people cross the river through the point daily.

Kalapara Upazila Parishad leases the kheyra ghat through an open bid every year.

The stipulated rates for crossing the river are Tk 4 for each person, Tk 10 for each motorbike, Tk 4 for each bicycle, goat or sheep, Tk 10 for cow or buffalo, Tk 6 for rickshaw or rickshaw-van and Tk 3 for

up to 40-kg goods.

But lessee's men collect Tk 10 to Tk 15 from each passenger, Tk 30 to Tk 40 for a motorbike, Tk 20 to Tk 30 for a goat or sheep, Tk 30 to Tk 40 for a cow or buffalo, Tk 10 to Tk 15 for a bicycle, Tk 20 to Tk 30 for a rickshaw or van, said the stakeholders.

"We have to pay extra toll to cross the river by boat. The leaseholder's men misbehave if we decline to meet their demand," said Babul Molla of Lalua area.

Abul Kalam of Bablatata Bazar, who often takes goods from Kalapara, said, "The lessee's men at the kheyra ghat take extra toll from us forcibly, especially at night."

A good number of tourists use the kheyra ghat to go to Kuakata from Kalapara town.

"I crossed the river through the point with a motorbike and the lessee's men took Tk 30 from me. Later I learnt that the official rate

is Tk 10 for a motorbike," said Ataur Rahman from Barishal town.

A man named Mukul took lease of the kheyra ghat for Tk 73 lakh for the current Bangla year 1425 but his brother Musa operates the matter.

Asked about taking extra toll from passengers, Musa said, "I don't take extra money from passengers but at the night time I take Tk 10 from each person to maintain workers."

"I give free ride to upazila level officials, so I have to recover the loss. I take Tk 25 to Tk 30 from each motorbike as there are two or three people with the vehicle," he added.

Md Tanveer Rahman, upazila nirbahi officer of Kalapara, said, "I will see the matter. If the lessee takes extra charge from passengers, lawful step will be taken."

## KISHOREGANJ DOUBLE MURDER

# Four to die, 21 get life

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A Kishoreganj court yesterday sentenced four people to death and 21 others to life term imprisonment in a double murder case in 2012.

The Third Additional District and Sessions Judge Md Abu Taher delivered the judgment in presence of the all convicts, said Court Inspector Tofiq Ahmed of Kishoreganj.

The convicts with death are Al Amin, Mizanur Rahman, Nazmul and Swapon Mia of Lakhpur village in the upazila.

The lifers are Didar, Giasuddin Sarker, Habibur Rahman Hobi, Dulal, Israil, Jasimuddin, Kanchan, Rafiqul Islam Member, Islam Uddin, Shahabuddin, Ashraf Uddin, Kanchan Mia, Alam, Selim, Lokman, Harun, Sohel, Azad, Rukun Uddin, Ratan and Shamim of the same village.

According to the prosecution, the convicts beat up farmer Md Kubed and his nephew Jakarul, also a farmer, of the village over theft of a mobile phone at Lakhpur village in Karimganj upazila of the district on August 24 in 2012, said Public Prosecutor advocate Shah Azizul Haque.

Critically injured Kubed and Jakarul were admitted to Kishoreganj General Hospital where Kubed died in the evening and Jakarul was shifted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital where he died after two days of the incident, said Azizul.

Kubed's wife Sujata Akhter filed a case with Karimganj Police Station accusing 27 people the following day, he said, adding that police pressed a charge sheet against 25 people after investigation on August 21 in 2014.

After examining witnesses and evidence, the court delivered the verdict against them.

## Help serve people

New Tangail DC urges journalists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The newly appointed deputy commissioner (DC) in the district on Monday vowed to work for people's interests with the support of the local journalists.

"We will work together as our goal is common -- people's welfare," DC Md Shahidul Islam said while exchanging views with the newsmen of Tangail Press Club at his conference room in the morning.

Journalists should use discernment while publishing news as their writings address the people's issues, which helps the administration to take steps for solution, he said.

A journalist can get several news items in a day but he has to scrutinize which of the items he will deliver, considering whether those will go in favour of the general people, the DC added.

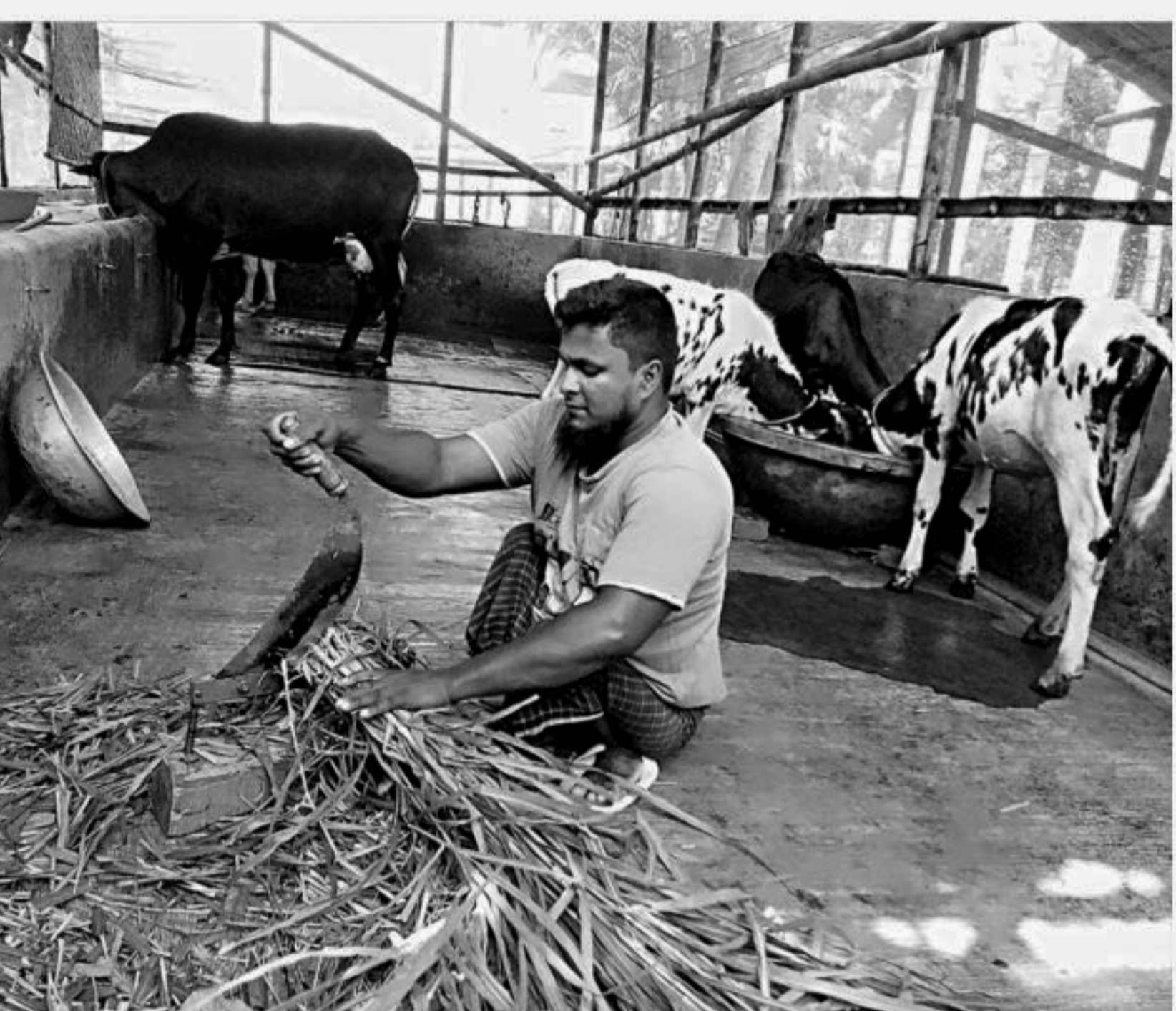
The local journalists' leaders in their speeches assured the DC that they will remain administration-friendly till the administration remains people-friendly.

Mosharaf Hossain, additional deputy commissioner (General) of Tangail, Kazi Golam Ahad, senior information officer in the district, Jafar Ahmed, president of Tangail Press Club, and its former president Khan Mohammad Khaled addressed the meeting, among others.

Shahidul Islam was a deputy secretary of the Local Government Department before joining as DC of Tangail.

## An indomitable Ruhul Amin

Physically challenged man in Faridpur gains solvency rearing cows



Physically challenged Ruhul Amin at his cow farm at Char Magchami village in Madhukhali upazila of Faridpur. PHOTO: STAR

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A physically challenged man has achieved self-reliance through cow rearing in Madhukhali upazila.

Ruhul Amin, 32, son of Bilal Hossain of Char Magchami village in Magchami union, was attacked with typhoid at the age of seven and lost the strength to stand on his legs. But he was determined to make a life for himself.

"After studying a little at a local madrasa, I opened a grocery store. Finding the business unprofitable, I started poultry farming in my house with the help of my wife. But it was not profitable, so I started rearing goats, which turned out unprofitable too," Ruhul said.

"Then I began cattle farming with one cow two years ago. Now I have five

cows in my farm. This year, I have built a cattle shed spending Tk 70,000," he added.

"We need to spend Tk 600 to Tk 700 for five cows daily. We get 25 litres of milk daily, which we sell for Tk 1,200. We also get a handsome amount by selling calves. Now we are happy," said Ruhul's wife Jorna Begum.

"I always help my husband as he cannot walk, but he can cut grass for the cows," added Jorna.

"We need help from the government to expand my cattle farm. I also want to start a turkey farm," Ruhul said.

"I have come here a few days ago, so I have no idea about Ruhul Amin's cattle farm. I will take necessary steps after visiting the farm," said Madhukhali Upazila Livestock Officer Protis Kumar Das.

## GANG-RAPE OF GIRL

# None held yet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

No one has been arrested as yet in connection with gang-rape of a 15-year-old garment worker in Sadar upazila, six days into the incident.

The girl was gang-raped in Binpara area. Locals rescued her when she tried to commit suicide by jumping into the river after the incident.

She was admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) the same night.

Police said the girl was on way to her home at Char Bhawanipur village from Dhaka and reached Mymensingh city on Wednesday night.

The girl crossed the Brahmaputra river on a boat with Rahul, whom she met on the way.

They rented a motorcycle of one Bappi Mia, 22, of Char Ishwardia village, to go home.

Bappi went to a lonely place at Binpara instead of the girl's house, police said.

Three other youths joined Bappi there and raped the girl. They threatened her and Rahul not to disclose the matter.



A farmer shows his paddy that has been badly damaged by toxic gas emitted from a brick kiln at Dhuldi Gopalpur village in Ambikapur union under Faridpur Sadar upazila. PHOTO: STAR

## Toxic gas from kiln damages paddy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Toxic gas emitted from a brick kiln in Ambikapur union of Sadar upazila has badly damaged ripe paddy on nearly 10 acres of land around it.

Locals said a brick kiln named Osman Auto Brick was set up on 3.63 acres of land at Dhuldi Gopalpur village in 2010 and started production in 2017. Since then, the kiln has been emitting toxic gas, burning the paddy fields and significantly reducing the yield of paddy.

Farmer Ramjan Kha, 45, of the village, said he cultivated paddy on three bighas of land near the brick kiln this year, but it was damaged by the toxic gas.

Abbas Kha of the same area said the farmers of the area have not been cultivating any crops for one and a half years due to the gas.

Rajaul Kha said they informed Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ommy Salma Tanzania and the environment department about the problem last year.

"The DC visited our fields and said she would take necessary steps, but no step has been taken as yet," he said.

Jimna Mandol, former member of Ambikapur Union Parishad, said onion seeds, jute and paddy on 10 acres of land in that area were damaged by the gas last year.

Jahangir Alam, general manager of Osman Auto Brick, said, "Local people complained to different government departments against this brick kiln. Officials from the environment and agriculture departments came and examined the crops of this area, but they did not find any toxicity here."

The DC said farmers of that area came to her and told her about their suffering and she visited the area.

"I then told the environment department to solve the problem," she added.

"We did not give that brick kiln any environment certificate, so the district administration can take steps against the kiln. We will cooperate if they want," said Lutfor Rahman, deputy director of Faridpur environment department.