

## Elderly man's body found floating in Someshwari river

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police recovered the body of an old man from the Someshwari river in Netrakona Sadar upazila yesterday.

The victim was identified as Abdul Matin, 80, hailing from Sreeram Khila village in adjacent Durgapur upazila.

Locals found the body floating in the river at noon and informed the police.

"The victim, a mentally disordered man, had been missing since Friday.

He might have fallen into the river and drowned," Md Borhan Uddin Khan, officer-in-charge of Netrakona Model Police Station, quoted family members and local people as saying.

## Youth electrocuted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A youth was electrocuted in Rajbari Sadar on Sunday.

The deceased was Mofijul Islam, 28, son of Aman Ullah Mia of Bathulia Munshipara village.

The victim's elder brother Mukter Hossain said Mofijul went to their fish enclosure at night. He came in contact with the fox killing trap and died on the spot.



Blooming lotus in Padmo Beel in Baniachong upazila of Habiganj offers a soothing sight.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

# Padmo Beel, a little known tourist spot

MINTU DESHWARA, back from Baniachong

Padmo Beel, a natural water body adorned with innumerable lotuses, adds to the tourist attraction in Baniachong upazila of Habiganj, a district noted for a wide range of natural beauty, including extensive tea gardens, Laksmibawar Jolarbon and famous Kamalarani Dighi.

Until recently, the water body near Murar Abda village under Pukra union of Baniachong had very little familiarity outside the locality.

"Padmo Beel is now one of the most fascinating tourist spots in the district. The surrounding areas are mostly under water," said Tofazzal Sohel, general secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon, Habiganj unit.

"Unfortunately, many tourists pluck lotuses while visiting the spot. If it continues, this place will lose its lustre. The government should take necessary measures to conserve natural environment of Padmo Beel," he added.

The area has some special characteristics with availability of some aquatic trees and animals, locals said during this correspondent's recent visit to the area.

Hundreds of visitors including students from across the region come to enjoy the beauty of the wetland, appropriately named Padmo (lotus) Beel, as blooming flowers on a vast area offer a captivating sight.

"I learned about Padmo Beel from a Facebook post, but seeing it with my own eyes makes this trip worthwhile. The beauty of these lotuses cannot be expressed in words," said Swapon Nayek, a student of Asian University in Dhaka.

"Taking a boat ride to Padmo Beel was an exciting way to enjoy the natural beauty with my family. The blooming lotuses amid the beautiful environment made the journey even more memorable," said Sumona Rani Das, a visitor.

Habiganj Deputy Commissioner Mahmudul Kabir Murad said he recently visited the area and the district administration is taking necessary measures to conserve the Padma Beel.

Monir Mia, an auto-rickshaw driver at Habiganj bus stand, said, "This beautiful place is yet to get enough familiarity among tourists in Habiganj. And so, we get only a small number of passengers."

The spot is about six kilometres from Habiganj town. After reaching Balikhali river area beside Habiganj-Baniachong Road, visitors can hire a local boat that needs 20 to 25 minutes to reach Padmo Beel, he added.

## 11 shops looted in Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Robbers looted valuables worth Tk 10 lakh from 11 shops, including Tk 4.5 lakh in cash, after tying up three night guards early Monday in Parbatipur upazila.

Police detained the night guards for interrogation.

Police said about 25 robbers equipped with sharp weapons came to Chowpathi bazar around 3:00am in a mini-truck and gagged the guards after tying them with rope.

They broke the locks of 11 shops, including mobile phone shops, flexiload shops, medicine shops, bKash shops and cosmetic shops, and looted the valuables and cash.

The night guards informed Mokshed Ali, panel chairman of Habra union, about the incident around 4:20am on Monday.

## Kid drowns in Jashore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A kid drowned in a pond at Shahjadpur village in Chowgachha upazila of Jashore on Monday.

The deceased was Abid Hossain, 7, son of Abu Taleb of the area.

Family members said Abid accidentally fell into the pond near their house and drowned while playing on its bank.



Chandpur fishermen bring out a boat procession on the Meghna river yesterday to create awareness about protecting mother hilsa.

PHOTO: STAR

# 8 more fishermen jailed, 11 buyers fined

## Chandpur fishermen bring out boat procession to protect mother hilsa

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A mobile court in Nagarpur upazila on Tuesday sentenced eight fishermen to 10 days' imprisonment each for defying a 22-day ban on netting hilsa till October 28.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Asma Shahin passed the order against Sanwar Hossain, Ibrahim Miah, Ramzan Ali, Mohammad Ali, Lutfar Rahman, Osman Gani, Ali Azam and Abul Kalam Azad. The convicts were later sent to jail.

The court also realised a total of Tk 8,200 from 11 people for buying hilsa.

Earlier, the mobile court conducted the drive beside the Jamuna river in Char Solimabad area and seized around 10 maunds of hilsa and two thousand metres of current nets.

Later, the seized fishes were distributed among different orphanages in the upazila while the current nets were burnt, said UNO Asma.

The drive will continue till the ban ends, she added.

Meanwhile, River Police in

Bhuapur upazila conducted drives at different places near the Jamuna on Tuesday night and seized seven thousand metres of current nets.

Yesterday, the seized current nets were burnt in front of the upazila parishad premises in presence of UNO Jhoton Chanda.

Away in Chandpur, over 5,000 fishermen and local people in the district yesterday joined a boat procession on the Meghna river to create awareness about protecting mother hilsa, reports our corre-

spondent.

More than 200 fishing boats went along the 10-kilometre area of the river, from Katakhal to Char Bhairab, as part of the procession organised by Haimchar Upazila Parishad.

Earlier, the upazila parishad organised a discussion on 'protection of the mother hilsa' in Katakhal.

Lawmaker from Chandpur-3 constituency Dipu Moni and Deputy Commissioner Mazedur Rahman spoke at the programme.

## Missing launch passenger still traceless

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

The missing passenger of launch Hirashiko-1, who fell into the Dhaleshwari river after a sand-laden bulkhead hit the launch near Munshiganj launch terminal on Tuesday night, remained traceless till yesterday.

The identity of the passenger is yet to be known.

"We along with fire-fighters started searching for the missing passenger yesterday morning. But we are facing problem due to the strong current in the river," said Aminul Islam, in-charge of Muktarpur River Police Outpost in the district.

Md Mehedy Hasan, a passenger of Munshiganj-bound Hirashiko-1, said after the man fell into the river, he cried for help but the driver did not stop the launch.

Meanwhile, family members of a garment worker named Khorshed Bapari of Munshiganj town informed local police that he has remained missing for the last two days.

Khorshed, who regularly goes by launch to his workplace in Narayanganj, might be the ill-fated launch passenger, it is suspected.

## Fish poisoned to death in Habiganj

The water body owner took Tk 25 lakh as loan from NGOs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Fish worth Tk 25 lakh were poisoned to death by unknown criminals in Habiganj's Nabiganj upazila on Friday night.

Aminur Rahman, who took lease of the water body of Chandipur area about six months ago, said he released various species of fish taking loans worth Tk 25 lakh from different NGO's.

Local people found the fish floating dead in the water body on Saturday morning and informed the lessee.

Lessee Aminur said criminals might have poisoned the water as some empty packets of pesticide were found near the water body.

"As I had to borrow a huge amount of money for the fish farming, now I am passing anxious time thinking about how I am going to recoup the loss and return the debt," he said.

Sub-inspector of Nabiganj Police Station Mohammad Shamsuddin Khan said they were trying to nab the culprits behind the heinous crime.

## Man killed under train wheels

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A man was crushed under the wheels of a running train at Ibrahimabad Railway Station near the Bangabandhu Bridge early yesterday.

The identity of the deceased, aged about 45 years, could not be known.

Stationmaster of Ibrahimabad Railway Station Sabdul Mannan said the victim got down from a Lalmonirhat-bound train from Dhaka around 2:30am.

While he was crossing the rail tracks hurriedly a Dhaka-bound train from Rajshahi ran over him, leaving him dead on the spot, he said, adding that the victim's relatives later took away the body.

## Woman drug peddler held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Detective Branch (DB) of police arrested a woman drug peddler with 20 Yaba tablets in Haatchandra area of Jamalpur municipality on Tuesday night.

The arrestee, Nureja Begum, 30, wife of Abdul Sattar, is resident of Ghughrakandi village in Sherpur.

DB police conducted a drive in the area around 7:30pm.

At one stage, they managed to capture Nureja with 20 Yaba tablets, said Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Jamalpur DB Salemuazzaman.

Later, Nureja was sent to jail through a court, the OC said.

# Growers eye good profit from early variety bean

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Most of the growers in Dumuria upazila of the district cultivated early variety of bean on a vast tract of land and are expecting to get a good profit from their produce this year.

Due to favourable weather condition, cultivation of Ruposhi Bangla, an early variety of bean, has become a profitable venture for farmers of nearly 50 villages in the upazila.

About 3,000 bean growers in those villages are cultivating bean on lands around fish enclosures and getting benefits.

Subash Chandra Kundu, 58, a farmer of Bhubaria village, first started early variety of bean cultivation in his locality in 2008.

Seeing Subash's success many local farmers gradually followed his footsteps and started early bean cultivation in the following years.

"I cultivated bean on five bighas of land around my two fish enclosures and am getting about 22 maunds of the vegetable every week. Now one maund of bean is being sold for Tk 2,800 to Tk 3,200 in the local markets," Subash said.

"I spent Tk 10,000 for seed, irrigation, labour cost

and other purposes on each bigha of land. I already sold bean worth Tk 2.46 lakh and am expecting to earn Tk 3 lakh to Tk 4 lakh in the coming days," he said.

Another grower Shariful Islam Molla, 48, of the village, said a few years ago he was struggling to maintain his family by pulling rickshaw-van and he started early bean cultivation four years ago, which has changed his fate.

"I took lease of three bighas of land and started cultivating early variety of bean. I have already sold bean worth Tk 87,000 and am expecting to get Tk 1 lakh in the next two months," Shariful said.

Vegetable vendor Sobhan Gazi said he buys 40 to 50 maunds of bean from Bhubaria, Baniakhali and Bittir Beel area every day.

"Usually cultivation of early variety of bean starts in July and farmers get harvest from early September," said Upazila Sub-Assistant Agriculture Officer Dhrubojoyti Sarker.

Over 160 hectares of land in the upazila have been brought under early variety bean cultivation this year and farmers are expecting 1,920 tonnes of bean production, which is about 80 percent of the total production in Khulna.

Dumuria Upazila Agriculture Officer Mohammad Nazrul Islam said farmers usually prefer to cultivate Ruposhi Bangla, Mohadeb, L.C. or Rupban variety of early bean.



Farmers look after their bean field at Bhubaria village in Khulna's Dumuria upazila as they eye a good profit from early variety bean this season.

PHOTO: STAR