



Water hyacinth stretches out as far as the eye can see on the Belua river in Boithakata Bazar area under Nazirpur upazila of Pirojpur.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Water hyacinth clogs riverways

Communication through rivers, canals hampered in two upazilas of Pirojpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Water communication in different areas, especially Nazirpur upazila and some parts of Nesarabad upazila, is being hampered badly for excessive presence of water hyacinths in the canals and rivers.

For three months of the year from November, most of the canals in Nazirpur upazila become blocked with water hyacinths, hampering water communication. Water transport is the main means of communication there, especially in the marshlands.

Malikhali, Kalaroania, Dewlbari-Dobra unions of Nazirpur upazila and some parts of Nesarabad upazila of Pirojpur and nearby Banaripara upazila of Barishal are marshlands where hyacinths grow abundantly.

At the beginning of winter, these water plants are pushed away from the crop fields and spread to different areas through canals and rivers.

"People of my union have to face trouble going to their destinations as the canals get covered with water hyacinths," said Md Waliullah, chairman of Dewlbari-Dobra Union Parishad in Nazirpur, adding that the situation continues for three to four months.

"Water hyacinths become so thick that it is difficult to make space through them for movement," said Ripan Mistry of Gaokhali village, adding that they have to wait for hours while travelling by boat until high tide removes the plants.

Water transport users said motorised boats sometimes stop as water hyacinth gets entangled with their propellers.

Excessive flow of water hyacinth also hampers water communication at nearby areas of Nazirpur upazila, too. The plants enter the canals with the tide and block them.

"If the water hyacinths can be used for making fertilizer or for other purposes, it will be beneficial for us and also make our communication smoother," said Delowar Hossain of Gaokhali village.

College boy's hanging body found

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

The body of a college student was found hanging from a tree beside the Baleshwar river at Chadmari firing spot yesterday.

The deceased was Sabbir Hossain, 23, son of Md Siddikur Rahman Howlader of Bashbaria village in Sadar upazila, and a final year student of degree pass course at Government Suhraward College in the town. He lived with his family in a rented house in CI Para area in the town.

Quoting family members, Sadar Police Station OC SM Ziaul Haque said Sabbir went out of his house early yesterday. Later, locals found his body hanging from a tree.

The OC said it could be suicide, adding that an unnatural death case has been filed with the police station and they have sent the body to Pirojpur Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

"After getting post mortem report, we will be able to say how Sabbir died," he said.

Bumper onion yield fails to make growers happy

Growers in Rajbari faces loss as market prices fall

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Onion growers in five upazilas of Rajbari saw a bumper yield this year due to favourable weather conditions, but poor market price of the item made them unhappy.

According to Rajbari Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) a total of 28,250 hectares of land in five upazilas of the district have been brought under onion cultivation this year, compared to 28,225 hectares last year, with the production target of 2.81 lakh tonnes.

"The district saw a bumper production of onion this year due to favourable weather condition," onion farmer Fazlul Haque of Pakasia village in Kalukhali upazila said.

"I cultivated onion on 25 decimals of land this year spending Tk 20 thousand and got yield of 25 to 30 maunds. I sold the item at Tk 750 a maund on average," he said, adding that poor market price of the item has shattered their dreams as they cannot make any profit from their pro-

duce.

"We would have been able to make some profit if the market price was Tk 1,000 on average," Fazlul said.

"If the onion price does not increase further I will struggle to get my production cost back," another onion grower Ikram Hossain of Baruli village in Baliakandi upazila said.

Babul Akter of the village said onion growers got a bumper yield due to early recession of floodwater this season.

"I have cultivated onion on 40 decimals of land this year," Sonaton Kumar of Sharisha village in Pangsha upazila said, adding that local farmers are not getting good price of their produce as Indian onion has glutted the local wholesale markets.

Rajbari DAE Deputy Director Fazlul Karim said they have provided all out support to the onion growers, but they have nothing to do regarding its market price.



Labourers are seen harvesting onion from a field at Baruli village in Baliakandi upazila of Rajbari.

PHOTO: STAR

12th grader stabbed dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

A college student was stabbed to death centring a trivial matter on Sunday. The deceased, Md Rakibul Hasan Hridoy, 19, son of Mosharaf Hossain of Thanthania area in the town, was a XII grade student at Government Shah Sultan College, Bogura.

Koigari Police Outpost Inspector Horidas Mondal said Maruf Morshed Proloy and his four to five accomplices stabbed Hridoy.

Hridoy's classmate Nasim Ahmed Nayan, 18, said they had an altercation with Proloy and his friends over Nasim smoking a cigarette in front of them. At one stage, Proloy stabbed Hridoy.

Locals took Hridoy to Bogura Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital. His family members were taking him to Dhaka when his condition worsened, but he died on the way.

Shajahanpur Police Station OC Zia Latiful Islam said Hridoy's father filed a murder case the same night against three named and two unnamed people, adding that they have arrested Talha, 17, son of Nazrul Islam of Koigari in Fultala under Shajahanpur upazila.

Main accused Proloy, 24, is son of Faruk Morshed of Bonani.

Once a Chhatra League activist, Proloy recently joined Swetchhasebak League, said district Swetchhasebak League Secretary Zulfikar Islam Shanto.

MONTH OF VICTORY

Tangail tastes freedom on this day

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Today is Tangail free day, a memorable day in the history of the district, as the brave sons of this soil hoisted the flag of independent Bangladesh after freeing the town from Pakistani forces on December 11 in 1971.

During the Liberation War, the brave freedom fighters (FF) of Tangail created history in various ways, and stories of their bravery and heroic role spread not only in the country but also across the world.

The heroism of Kaderia Bahini, led and directed by Abdul Kader Siddiqui, will be remembered in the history of the Liberation War.

Local youths formed Zila Swadhin Bangla Gono Mukti Parishad in the first week of March in 1971 and started organising to fight against the Pakistani army.

The Pakistani army entered Tangail town on April 3 after breaking the resistance of the FFs at Goran-Satiachara in Mirzapur.

Within a few days, then Chhatra League leader Abdul Kader Siddiqui and his group started fighting against the Pakistani army at different places.

Another group of FFs, led and



A file photo shows freedom fighters belonging to Kaderia Bahini, named after its valiant commander Abdul Kader Siddiqui, at a camp in Tangail days before the district was freed from the Pakistan occupation forces on December 10 in 1971.

directed by Khandakar Abdul Baten, also attacked the occupation forces.

On August 11, the FFs of Kaderia Bahini sank two Pakistani warships on the Jamuna river in Bhuapur and seized a huge quantity of arms and ammunition.

On December 10, the morale of the Pakistani army collapsed when around 2,000 paratroopers belonging to Indian allied forces landed at

Poulee near Tangail town. The Pakistani army then retreated to Dhaka.

The brave FFs entered Tangail town on December 11 and the general people came down to the streets and started celebrating.

To mark the historic day, Tangail Municipality organised day-long programmes at Shaheed Smriti Pouro Udyan in the town.

Orphanage hostel foundation laid

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The foundation stone laying ceremony of a new building of Rezaur Rahman Girls' Hostel belonging to Moanoghar, an orphanage in the town, was held yesterday.

Sayyada R. Ghuznavi, chairman of the AF Mujibur Rahman Foundation, and Chowdhury Toyib Mozammel, executive director of the foundation, laid the foundation stone around 10:00am.

AF Mujibur Rahman Foundation will bear the construction cost, estimated at Tk 91 lakh.

Vena Shroddha Lonkar Mohasthobir, vice-president of Moanoghar, Ashok Kumar Chakma, executive director of the institution, and its teachers were present on the occasion, among others.

Kirti Nishan Chakma, general secretary of Moanoghar, delivered the welcome speech at the function.

AF Mujibur Rahman was the first Bangali Muslim in the subcontinent who joined the then Indian Civil Service under the British government. He also got the first class first position with record marks in mathematics from Kolkata University in 1920.

4 cold-affected kids die at Habiganj hospital

Yesterday's lowest temperature at Sreemangal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Sreemangal in the district saw the country's lowest temperature 9.3 degrees Celsius yesterday morning while cold-related diseases including pneumonia and diarrhoea see a rise with the fall of temperature in the north-eastern region.

Four children died at Habiganj Sadar Hospital due to cold related diseases on Saturday, hospital sources said.

"The number of child patients with pneumonia and diarrhoea is on the rise due to change of season and fluctuation of temperature during day and night. It is very difficult for us to serve the increasing number of patients," said Dr Kaisar Rahman of Habiganj Sadar Hospital.

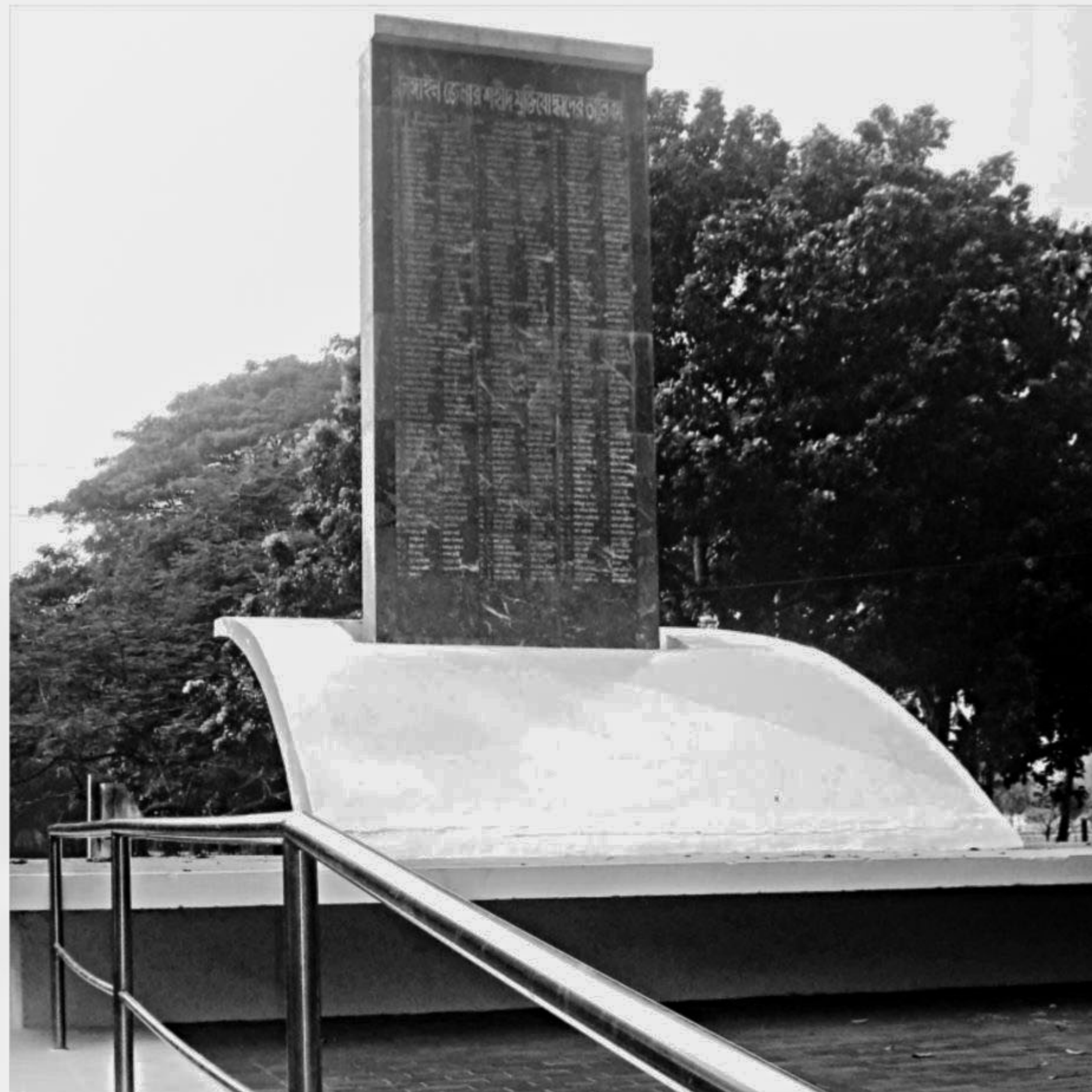
At present around 100 patients are receiving treatment at the 24-bed capacity children's ward at Habiganj Sadar Hospital.

Besides, a large number of cold-affected patients are admitted to upazila health complexes and different clinics in the district while 250 to 300 patients receive treatment at the outdoors of the treatment centres every day.

During a visit to the hospital on Sunday, this correspondent saw many child patients lying on the floor of the children's ward and on veranda.

"I got my pneumonia-affected 14-month-old son admitted to the hospital on Friday morning. We have to stay on the floor due to shortage of space in the children's ward," said Mina Begum of Rampur village under Sadar upazila.

Selina Begum of Katalia village under Sadar upazila, who took her 10-month-old baby to the hospital with symptoms of pneumonia and diarrhoea on Wednesday, is staying on a space beside the staircase.



The memorial plaque inscribed with the names of Liberation War martyrs in Tangail town.

PHOTO: STAR