



A ferryboat moves with caution to land at a terminal on the Kacha river in Pirojpur as large shoals emerging in the river badly affect navigability on Tagra-Charkhali route across the river on Barishal-Bhandaria-Pirojpur highway. The situation, which continues for around four months from January to April every year, seems to have worsened this year in absence of dredging.



Body recovered from hotel

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Police recovered the body of a transport worker from a residential hotel in Goalchamot area in Sadar upazila on Sunday.

The deceased, Uzzal Sheikh, 31, son of Abdul High of the area, used to work as a transport worker at Faridpur Bus Stand.

Uzzal rented a room on Saturday midnight. Manager of Al-Beig Residential Hotel Mohammad Rahman said adding that finding no response till 4:00pm on Sunday they informed local police of the matter.

Sub-Inspector (SI) of Sadar Police Station Akhil Chandra Biswas said they went to the spot around 4:30pm and recovered Uzzal's body by breaking open the door of one of the rooms of the residential hotel.

The body, which did not have any injury marks, was sent to Faridpur Medical College Hospital for autopsy, the SI said.

AL men lone chairman candidates in two upazilas

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Yesterday was the last date for withdrawing nomination papers for chairman posts in different upazilas in the upcoming upazila parishad elections to be held on March 18.

After withdrawal of nomination papers of three independent candidates, Awami League (AL) candidate Shanea Alam is going to be uncontested chairman of Khagrachhari Sadar upazila.

Joynal Abedin is the lone AL candidate of the Manichhari upazila parishad.

Lone independent candidate Tajul Islam is going to be uncontested vice chairman of Manichhari upazila parishad.

BARISHAL-PIROJPUR HIGHWAY

Shoals in Kacha river hamper ferry services

HABIBUR RAHMAN, Pirojpur

Ferry services between Tagra and Charkhali terminals in Pirojpur on Barishal-Bhandaria-Pirojpur highway are taking a heavy toll as the perennial problem of hidden shoals in the Kacha river has worsened this dry season.

For almost five years, shoals in the Kacha -- nearly two kilometres wide between the two terminals -- have been affecting movement of vehicles that ply 13 different routes on the highway. Thousands of people, especially from Mathbaria, Bhandaria and Barguna, use the ferry

services on the river every day.

The situation starts to get worse in January every year and it remains that way for nearly four more months when sufferings of passengers know no bounds, said people frequenting the highway.

Kabir Hossain, supervisor of a bus service on Mathbaria-Dhaka route, said, "Soon after boarding a ferry, everyone gets filled with apprehension about getting stuck on a shoal."

"On a regular day, it usually takes a maximum of 15 minutes to cross the river. But if the ferry runs aground, we may need to wait several hours for

high tide when it can resume operations," he also said.

Besides, during dry season as well as during low tide, the river's water level recedes so sharply that the ramps of pontoons at both the ferry terminals become too steep for vehicles to get on and off ferries safely, said Masum Billah, who is a bus driver of Banaful Paribahan.

He also said after experiencing immense stress while getting on board, the next main concern of the ferry passengers sets on whether or not the ferry would run aground on the shoals.

A crew member of a ferry, Jasim Uddin, said, "We

are unable to maintain schedule of ferry service due to the shoals mostly on the Tagra side of the Kacha river under Indurkani upazila."

Shoals have been disrupting ferry services for around five years, but it has become severe this year, Jasim added.

After this correspondent reached Fakhruul Islam, sub-assistant engineer of Roads and Highways Department in Pirojpur, for his comments over the issue, he said the river has to be dredged for smooth movement of ferries and that the higher authorities were already informed of the situation.

UPAZILA PARISHAD POLLS

Four BNP candidates withdraw candidacy

3 AL-backed chairmen aspirants set to be elected unopposed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Four BNP-backed candidates, who filed their nominations for chairman posts in different upazilas in the upcoming upazila parishad election, withdrew their candidacies yesterday, terming the election environment not suitable for their party men.

The announcement came at a press conference at Dinajpur Press Club where Mamunur Rashid Chowdhury, chairman aspirant of Kaharol upazila, Bazlur Rashid of Biral upazila, Mokarram Hossain of Sadar upazila and Rezwanaur Rahman of Birganj upazila were present.

They submitted their withdrawal letters to the district election office in the afternoon, Mamunur said.

Police are harassing the BNP men by filing false cases against them which is hindering their election campaign, Mamunur alleged, adding that, "The environment here is not in favour of holding a free and fair election."

Meanwhile, three ruling Awami League chairman candidates in Ghoraghat, Parbatipur and Hakimpur upazilas are set to be elected unopposed in the upcoming elections, District Election Officer Mahmud Hasan said.

They are Khandakar Shahan Shah in Ghoraghat, Hafizul Islam Pramanik in Parbatipur and Harunur Rashid in Hakimpur upazila.

Election to 13 Dinajpur upazilas is scheduled for March 18.

Teenager killed over cricket match

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

A teenager was beaten to death over playing cricket in Fulbaria area of the town on Tuesday.

The victim was battery-run easy-bike driver Md Faruk, 18, son of Ali Akbar of the area.

Habibur Rahman, sub-inspector (SI) of Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station, said Faruk locked in an altercation with some local youths over cricket match at a playground near his house.

At one stage, the youths started beating him mercilessly. Seriously injured Faruk was later taken to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital where on-duty doctor declared him dead, said the SI.

Preparation to file a case was going on in this regard as of filing of this report around 6:00pm yesterday.



Mirzapur upazila administration demolishes one of the three roads, built illegally by an influential quarter across the Louhajang river in Bohuria area, for movement of earth-laden trucks to nearby brick kilns.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Louhajang river freed from occupiers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A mobile court in Mirzapur upazila yesterday demolished three illegal roads, constructed by a local influential syndicate across the Louhajang river, to carry illegally extracted earth to nearby brick kilns on trucks.

The roads, built in Bohuria area in the upazila, had stopped the water flow of the river into the downstream.

However, the illegal earth traders and their men fled the scene, when the court led by Executive Magistrate and Mirzapur Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Abdul Malek in cooperation with Mujahidul Islam, deputy director of Directorate of Environment in Tangail, conducted the drive.

Later, the same court raided two nearby brick kilns in Mirzapur municipality and

fined its owners Tk 2 lakh each for baking bricks by burning logs.

After the drive, UNO Malek said a local syndicate, who had been running their illegal earth trading business, constructed the roads across the river for carrying earth-laden trucks, restraining the water flow of the river and destroying nearby cultivable lands as well aquatic lives.

"A couple of months ago, the owner of a nearby brick kiln was fined and warned for the same offence, but the influential syndicate has recently started the ill practice again," the UNO said, adding that they will continue such drives in future.

Mentionable, the upazila administration at their monthly law and order meeting a few days ago took the decision not to permit construction of any new brick kiln in the upazila.

Youth found dead beside border fence

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

A youth was found dead along the India-Bangladesh border fence in Kasba upazila of the district on Tuesday night.

The deceased, Mazharul Islam Tanim, 30, was son of late Abdu Mia of Austajangal village.

Tanim was accused in at least two criminal cases, including for robbery and smuggling, filed with Kasba Police Station, Officer in Charge (OC) of the police station Abdul Malek said.

Being informed by the victim's family members, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) recovered the body from Khadla village under Bayek union in the upazila around 8:30pm.

OC Malek said relatives found Tanim's body lying beside the barbed wire near the pillar no 2049 and sought help from the BGB personnel in recovering the body and later took it home.

On information, they took the body under police custody, conducted its inquest report and sent it to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital for autopsy, he said, adding that the body bore injury mark near the left eye.



CHARITY SHOW FOR AILING JOURNALIST: Tong Aesthetics Media and Bangladesh Marma Students Council's Rangamati district unit jointly arrange a stage drama Gingili (in Tanchangya language) at the hall room of Rangamati Khudro Nri Ghoshti Cultural Institute yesterday to raise fund for treatment of Chabathui Marma, 52, Bandarban district correspondent of Ekattor TV. He is now under treatment with kidney dialysis at a private hospital in Chattogram.

PHOTO: ANVIL CHAKMA