



Nets used to catch fish being dried on the sluice gates through which water was drained out of the canal in Patuakhali's Kalapara. Inset, workers catching fish in the waist-deep water of the canal recently.

PHOTO: STAR

Draining out canal water for fishing jeopardises farming

Cultivation on 2000-acre land in Kalapara uncertain due to the callous act

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Around 2,000 acres of land in six villages of Kalapara upazila may go uncultivated this season as a group of influential people has drained out water from a canal for catching fish.

The Patuakhali canal is the main source of irrigation during dry season for the six villages -- Chalitabunia, Binamkatha, Golbunia, Krisnapur, Machukhali and Patua under Champapur union.

When salinity falls in the adjacent river during monsoon, sluice gates of the canal is opened to fill it up with water for irrigation during dry season. The sluice gates remain closed during dry season when salinity in the river is high.

Farmers in the six villages rely on the water from the canal to irrigate their land for cultivation of Boro paddy and various Robi crops in the dry season. They also use the water for household work as well as bathing their livestock.

Recently, the influential locals have opened the sluice gates and drained out the water, leaving only around a waist-deep water in the canal.

During a visit to the area, this correspondent found workers using nets to catch fish in the canal.

Farmers told this correspondent that although it is high time for starting Boro and Robi cultivation, they were unable to use the water in the canal as its level of water has fallen below the level of their land.

Requesting anonymity, they said Sohrab Gazi, Montu Gazi and Hanif Mridha are leading the group of people who are depriving the farmers of their rightful share of water by controlling the canal's sluice gates at will for their personal gains.

Kamal Mridha, former member of the local union parishad (UP), said the influential group of people did not pay heed to his request and they were wasting the water that is precious for farmers.

Farmer Masud Chowkider said the water in the canal has become so dirty that it is now unconsumable for even livestock and its water level is so low that they cannot bathe their cattle in it.

He also said he was worried that after their fishing is over, the group might open up the sluice gates during high tide to refill the canal with river water that is currently high in salinity.

Since water with high salinity is harmful to agricultural land, the authorities concerned need to take immediate steps to regain control over the sluice gates from the group with vested interest, he added.

When reached for his comment over the accusations, Sohrab Gazi, however, said they opened the sluice gates and drained out some water from the canal only to flush out water hyacinth.

Rintu Talukder, chairman of Champapur UP, said he was aware that the sluice gates were being controlled by a group of influential people and that he would speak with officials of Water Development Board (WDB) regarding the issue.

Contacted, Shahjahan Siraj, WDB executive engineer for Kalapara circle, said, "I wasn't aware of the matter. I will look into it and take necessary steps in this regard."

Girl injured by stalkers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A schoolgirl was seriously injured in an attack allegedly by the men of her stalker in Dewanganj upazila of the district on Saturday.

The victim's father filed a case with Dewanganj Police Station, accusing Biplob, 22, son of Abdus Salam of Balugram village, and his five to six friends. Biplob is also a garment worker in the capital's Keraniganj.

Police and family members said as the ninth grader kept refusing Biplob's repeated indecent proposals, he became so enraged.

When the victim was going to school by a battery-run easy-bike around 9:00am on Saturday, five to six friends of Biplob intercepted her at Chukaibari Union Parishad intersection.

At one stage, the youths dragged out the girl of the easy-bike and slashed her hands with a sharp blade, said AKM Aminul Haq, officer-in-charge of Dewanganj Police Station.

Hearing screams, locals rushed to the spot and rescued the victim. However, the attackers managed to flee the scene.

The seriously injured girl was later sent to the upazila health complex, said the OC, adding that police are raiding different areas to arrest the accused.

Condemned

FROM PAGE 1

The SC upheld the High Court verdict that sentenced Mamun to death, and gave life term to three others -- Md Al Amin, Akbar Ali Lalu and Rafiqul Islam -- for killing the Saudi national.

Khalaf, 45, a non-diplomatic official with the consular section of the embassy, was shot dead near his Gulshan residence on the night of March 5, 2012.

A murder case was filed with Gulshan Police Station against five people, two days after the killing.

On December 30, 2012, a Dhaka court sentenced all the five accused to death.

But the judgment was overturned when the convicts' appeal and death sentence were sent to the HC.

In 2013, the HC acquitted fugitive Selim Chowdhury, commuted the sentences of Amin, Akbar and Rafiqul to life in prison and upheld the death sentence of Saiful. The state then filed an appeal with the SC in 2014.

Clashing gangs injure four cops, 2 held with arms

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Police yesterday detained two youths, one with bullet injuries, in Rajapur area of Pabna Sadar upazila where two rivalling gangs locked in a gunfight early yesterday.

At least four members of police sustained injuries as they went to the spot to subdue the clash. A revolver, a machete and a knife were seized from the possession of the detained youths, said Officer-in-Charge of Detective Branch of police Delwar Hossain.

The arrestees -- Tuhi Hossain, 25, of Mondolpara village; and Sumon Hossain alias Kaila Sumon, of Purbo Shadhpura village; both from Pabna Sadar upazila, are listed criminals, he said.

Tuhi, found with bullet injuries from the spot, was sent to Pabna Medical College Hospital under police custody for treatment. The injured police members -- constables Anisur Rahman, Fazle Rabbi, Rokonuzzaman and Jamir Uddin -- were also undergoing treatment at the same hospital.

After clashes erupted around 1:00am between the two gangs -- one led by Shahin, while the other by Habban -- over establishing supremacy, police went to the area to bring the situation under control.

The four police members were injured when they came under attack of the gang members. At one point the gangs fled the scene, leaving Tuhi and Sumon behind, added the OC.

Fire kills woman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A woman was burnt to death while her daughter in-law sustained burn injuries in a fire at their house at Kalai Matbarkandi village in Madaripur's Shibchar upazila on Saturday.

The deceased was Korimon Begum, 60, wife of late Anej Dhali of the village. Injured Kulsum Begum, 30, wife of Kadir Sheikh, is now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

The fire originated from a short circuit around 3:00pm when Korimon and Kulsum were inside their house, Shibchar Police Station OC Md Zakir Hossain quoted local as saying.

Hearing screams, locals rushed to the spot, doused the fire and took seriously injured Korimon and Kulsum to Shibchar Upazila Health Complex where Korimon was declared dead. Kulsum was later shifted to DMCH.

Assaulted by drug addicts, day labourer loses arm

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Day labourer Bahadur Mardi, of indigenous Kol community in Rajshahi's Godagari upazila, lost his right arm after he was beaten up by drug addicts in January.

The 30-year old man, receiving treatment at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH), now does not know how he will provide for his wife, two children and his elderly parents.

Bahadur's forearm including the elbow joint had to be amputated at the hospital on Thursday as gangrene developed on the limb due to damage caused by injuries, according to hospital authorities.

After he was beaten with a bamboo stick on the evening of January 20, Bahadur could only afford to seek treatment from a quack.

As his condition deteriorated, he was brought to the hospital on Thursday when gangrene was detected in his arm. The damaged limb was amputated the same day, said doctors at the hospital.

Speaking with this correspondent at



Amputee Bahadur Mardi at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital yesterday.

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27.02.2019

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Locals join a procession organised by Setubandhan, a voluntary organisation working for protection of wildlife, in collaboration with the upazila administration in Nilphamari's Saidpur marking Global Wildlife Preservation Day yesterday. Inset, Saidpur Upazila Nirbahi Officer SM Golam Kibria releases a barn owl, as the bird rescued with injuries at Chakdhana village of neighbouring Kishoreganj upazila recovered through treatment by livestock officials.

PHOTO: EAM ASADUZZAMAN



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