



Jhinai river branch getting choked up

An enclosure in it poses threat on farmlands

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A branch of the Jhinai river in Tangail's Ghatail upazila is under threat as a group of influential people are choking up the flow of the waterway by making a fish enclosure in it. Running through Digholkandi union, the river branch, 45 feet in width at most places, is the primary source of irrigation and household water for hundreds of farmers in Shambaria and Digholkandi villages for ages. But recently, three brothers – Haider Ali, Harun Miah and Humayun Miah, from Shambaria village – have started making the enclosure on the waterway with excavators, claiming that the part of the river belongs to them. Informed, Digholkandi union land office asked them to hold the work, but to no effect. If the enclosure is allowed to be completed, the constricted waterway will affect agriculture in hundreds of acres of land downstream, while it will create waterlogging in a vast area upstream during the monsoon, said Akbar Hossain, a resident of Shambaria village. A bridge nearby is also at risk now as the encroachers are extracting earth by digging near the base of the bridge, he added.

Land office officials in Digholkandi union said considering the waterway's significance to agriculture in the area, the government excavated it in 1991 and several other times before. Haider Ali, one of the encroachers, claimed that the river branch is flowing through land that belongs to his family. Rebutting his claim, Digholkandi Union Parishad (UP) Member Hitlu Miah said the crucial waterway is now endangered as a number of locals had been encroaching on it over the past couple of decades by making false land documents. When this correspondent contacted UP Chairman Nazrul Islam for his comments on the allegation, he said he was not aware of the encroachment on the river branch. "I'll see to it," he assured. Shamsul Haque, assistant land officer at the union land office, said he already issued directives to stop the enclosure work in the river branch and informed the upazila land office of the matter. Ghatail Assistant Commissioner (Land) Noor Nahar Begum said she also directed all concerned to stop the excavation work for the enclosure. "We will take next steps after examining [necessary land] documents," she added.

An excavator at work on the enclosure that is being built on the branch of Jhinai river in Ghatail upazila. The photo was taken recently.

3 villages 'besieged' since Mar 24 UZ polls!

M JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL, Jhalakathi

Three villages in Rajapur have been paying a heavy price since Sunday's upazila parishad election as majority of the villagers supported independent candidate Milon Mahmud Bacchu. Milon vied for the chairman post in the polls with pineapple symbol. The villages are Hilakathi, Parerhat and Purbo Indrapasha in Rajapur upazila. Over 6,000 people live in the areas. Awami League (AL) nominated candidate Moniruzzaman Monir won the election held on March 24. On the day of election, a group of villagers of Hilakathi locked in a clash with a group of musclemen of Indrapasha village at Hilakathi Primary School polling center, said an officer of the centre, seeking anonymity. Jahidul Islam, a supporter of Milon, said, "The musclemen, led by one Rafique and Sumon of Indrapasha, entered the centre and stamped the boat symbol. At the time, they resisted the supporters of AL candidate Monir, triggering a clash that left three attack-

ers injured." The people of Indrapasha village have been harassing and torturing the villagers since the AL nominated candidate won the election, said Jahidul, also the resident of Hilakathi village. People of the three villages could not go to the upazila headquarters in fear of further attack as they have to cross Indrapasha village going to the upazila for education and business purposes, he said. Especially school and college going students and treatment seekers are the worst sufferers as many government institutions like Rajapur Government Girls' School, Rajapur Government College and Rajapur Upazila Health Complex lie there. One Hedaytul Islam Hidu has been passing his days amid hardship since Monday as he could not pull his rickshaw out of fear of violence. Like him around 100 rickshaw and auto-rickshaw pullers of Hilakathi, Parerhat and Purbo Indrapasha confined themselves to their areas out of fear. Rasel Khan, an HSC examinee of Rajapur Government College, said

"my examination will start today but I don't know how I will go to the exam centre in the upazila headquarters because none can go through Indrapasha as the supporters of Monir always search vehicles to get us." "Some men of Indrapasha village beat me on Thursday when I was returning home after taking my HSC admit card from the college," said another student Enamul of the institution. Mim Akter, a student of Class IX at Rajapur Government Girls' School, said "Some women of the village stopped me from attending school on Monday and since then I could not go to school." Contacted, Md Jahid Hossain, officer in charge of Rajapur Police Station, said he will visit the areas soon to resolve the problem. Monir, the newly elected upazila chairman, said "I will visit the areas soon and take necessary steps after talking with the villagers and my supporters." He hopes that the problem will be resolved soon.

Ex-bank official jailed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A former official of Janata Bank has been jailed for 18 years for misappropriating depositors' money. The convict, Krishnakanta Biswas, was a field assistant-cum-supervisor of Janata Bank's Madaripur main branch, Public Prosecutor (PP) Mujibur Rahman said. "Judge Mohammod Motiar Rahman of Special Judge's Court in Faridpur delivered the verdict in absence of the convict. The court also fined him the amount he embezzled, in default, he is to serve 10 months more in jail," the PP said. According to the prosecution, Krishnakanta embezzled Tk 3.88 lakh 611 by submitting fake loan sanction documents against 21 people in 2004. On January 26, 2005, the then bank manager Zahangir Hossain Mollah filed a case with Madaripur Sadar Police Station against Krishnakanta. Abul Hossain, then deputy assistant director of the Anti-Corruption Commission, submitted charge sheet against him on January 26, 2009.

Man gets life imprisonment for murder

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A Thakurgaon court yesterday sentenced a man to life term rigorous imprisonment (RI) for killing his neighbour at Medenipur Kismat village in Haripur upazila under the district in 2008. The convict is Jaherul Islam, 48, son of Abu Taher of the same village. Additional District and Sessions Judge BM Tariqul Islam handed down the verdict in a crowded courtroom in presence of the convict. The court also fined him Tk 5,000, in default, to suffer another six months in jail. The judge acquitted ten other accused in the case as the charges brought against them could not be proved. According to the prosecution, Jaherul had a longstanding dispute with his neighbour Mohammad Ali, 39, over ownership of a four-decimal land. On February 26 in 2008, Jaherul and his accomplices waylaid Mohammad Ali when he was returning home from his paddy field. They beat him mercilessly, leaving him critically injured. Jaherul was brought to Rangpur Medical College Hospital where he died on February 28. Later, the victim's elder brother Mohiruddin filed a case with Haripur Police Station, accusing 11 persons, including Jaherul. Investigation officer of the case, Sub-Inspector of the police station Nazrul Islam submitted charge sheet before the court on June 26. After examining 18 witnesses and pieces of evidence, the judge handed down the verdict.

Teacher found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A college teacher was found murdered in a roadside ditch in Telirai area of Dakkhin Surma upazila yesterday. The deceased was Saifur Rahman, 29, son of Youstuf Ali of Foltoil village in Gowainghat upazila, and a lecturer of Islamic History at Madan Mohan College in Sylhet city. Saifur was a resident of a rented house for bachelors in Tilagarh area of the city. Khairul Fazal, officer-in-charge of Dakkhin Surma Police Station, said Saifur went missing from Saturday night and his family members filed a general diary with Shahporan Police Station the same night. Informed by locals, police recovered the body from the ditch yesterday morning and sent it to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital for autopsy, said the OC. The OC said they have found spot in his throat. Criminals might have strangled the teacher and dumped the body in the ditch, said the police official.

Two siblings among five killed by lightning strikes

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Five people, including two siblings, were killed by lightning strikes in Moulvibazar, Kishoreganj and Pabna yesterday and the day before. Two sisters were killed as a thunderbolt hit them at Uttar Patanusha village in Moulvibazar's Kamalganj upazila around 9:00am yesterday, reports our Sylhet correspondent. The deceased were Sadia Akter, 6, and her sister Munni Akter, 4, daughters of Junyed Miah of the village. Narayan Mallik Sagar, acting chairman of Patanusha Union Parishad, said when the two were playing in front of their house, a thunderbolt struck them. They died on the spot. In Kishoreganj, a farmer was killed in lightning strike in Balder Haor area under Itna upazila of the district yesterday noon, reports our Mymensingh correspondent. The victim was Rabbi Mia, 25, son of

Abdul Kadir Mia of Nandigram village in the upazila. Quoting locals, Officer-in-Charge of Itna Police Station Mohammad Morshed Zaman said a thunderbolt hit Rabbi when he was mowing grass in the haor area. He died on the spot, said the OC. Away in Pabna, two people were killed and four others injured by lightning strikes at Bothor Madhyapara village in Chatmohar upazila on Saturday evening, reports our correspondent. The deceased were Shanto Hossain, 12, a student of Class V of Bothor Government Primary School, and Rina Khatun, 28, of the village. The injured are Shahnaz Khatun, 35, Rehana Khatun, 40, Kabil Pramanik, 50, and Musa Hossain, 13, of the same village. They are now undergoing treatment at the upazila health complex, said Md Shariful Islam, OC of Chatmohar Police Station.

Fake doctor jailed in Madaripur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A mobile court sentenced a fake doctor to five months' imprisonment in Tanisatro area of Madaripur town yesterday and sent him to jail the same evening. The convict, Amit Kritonia, 37, son of Norendranath Kirtonia of Chowhaddi area in Rajoir upazila, has been treating patients at Madaripur Eye Hospital for long, claiming himself as a specialist doctor. Acting on a tip-off, a court, led by Executive Magistrate Fatema Zannat, raided the eye hospital yesterday and caught Amit red-handed, Madaripur Civil Surgeon Farid Hossain Mia said.



Students block Lalmoharhat-Moghohat road yesterday demanding action against the principal of Sakoya Manjil Business Management School and College in Aditmari upazila of Lalmoharhat, alleging that two students did not get admit cards for HSC examinations starting today due to negligence and corruption of the principal. Inset, the two students weep as they would not be able to sit for the examinations. PHOTO: S DILIP ROY



Several socio-cultural and environmental organisations form a human chain on Panchagarh-Dhaka highway in Sher-e-Bangla Park area of Panchagarh town yesterday demanding an immediate end to illegal stone extraction from different areas of Panchagarh and Thakurgaon districts. The callous act affects fertility of arable lands and poses threat of land subsidence, speakers said at the programme. PHOTO: MD QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT

GOVT CULVERT ON PRIVATE LAND Waterlogging feared due to earth filling on one side

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Restricting the free flow of water, a local influential man has filled up one side of a culvert on Tangail-Mymensingh highway in Kalihati upazila, leaving a vast track of croplands in risk of water logging during rainy season. The earth filling work was going on near a filling station in Ichhapur area as per the direction of land owner Shahidul Islam, principal of BM College, for the last couple of days. Farmers in nearby areas opined that crops on hundreds of acres of land on other side of the culvert might face serious water logging during the rainy season for restricting the water flow. Contacted, Shahidul said though the culvert was supposed to construct at Ichhapur Bus Stand area, it was not possible then due to shortage of space there. Later, the culvert was constructed on their personal property, he said. "We are filling the low land for our personal purposes," Shahidul said, adding that there are two other bridges on the road nearby, so filling earth near the culvert will not hamper flow of water. Kalihati Upazila Nirbahi Officer Amit Debnath said after knowing about the matter he visited the spot recently and directed land owner Shahidul to stop the earth filling work.

Tk 7 lakh snatched from bKash staffer

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Criminals snatched Tk 7.5 lakh from a sales representative of bKash at Tinmile village in Panchagarh Sadar upazila on Saturday afternoon. The victim is Nur Alam, 27, son of Shahidul Islam of Moulvopara village in the upazila. Police said Nur Alam was returning Panchagarh on a motorbike after collecting money from different bazaars in Tentulia upazila, two people, in guise of Detective Branch (DB) of Police, waylaid him. They challenged him saying that there were Phensidyl bottles in his bag. At the time, Nur Alam tried to make a phone call to local bKash distributor, the duo then threw chilli's dust at his eyes and snatched his bag containing Tk 7.5-lakh and fled away. Hearing screams, local people rushed to the spot but failed to catch the culprits, Panchagarh Police Station OC Abu Akkas Ahmad, said adding that Nur Alam filed a complaint in this regard. They are trying to arrest the snatchers, said the police official.