



Dam makeshift, damage extensive

GPH Ispat builds it to secure water for factory; forest streams drying up, biodiversity threatened

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Chattogram

The Chattogram-based GPH Ispat Ltd has constructed a makeshift dam on a stream bordering the Jangal-Bashbaria reserve forest in Sitakunda to secure water supply to its new factory.

The diversion could jeopardise the forest's biodiversity and deprive an indigenous village of water, said forest department officials.

The dam was built with sandbags on April 2, resulting in drying up of at least seven crisscrossing streams springing from various hills in the forest, they added.

During a visit on April 5, it was seen that about a 100-metre canal was also dug to channel water off the stream to the factory.

The steel manufacturing company owns hundreds of acres of land in the area



mostly covered by hills. It says the dam was built as a temporary measure as it failed to secure water connection to the under-construction factory that has at least 4,200 workers.

Gazi Moniruzzaman, acting range officer of Kumira Range, told The Daily Star that GPH

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Missing Michael Chakma's sister Shuvadra Chakma, left, and his co-worker Monty Chakma, right, in tears as they try to speak during a discussion organised by the Committee for the Protection of Fundamental Rights at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. Family members of 25 victims of enforced disappearances joined the programme.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Brutality unbound

BSF men pull out all fingernails of a Bangladeshi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

India's Border Security Force (BSF) has tortured a Bangladeshi man by pulling out all 10 of his fingernails with pliers after he got caught for illegal entry.

Md Azim Uddin alias Vuttu, 25, was also left untreated for three days after the brutality at Rangamati camp of India's Malda district, which borders Naogaon.

He is the son of late Foyjul Kabir of border village Tulshidanga Dakkhin Patari in Naogaon's Sapahar upazila, said BGB and police officials.

Hearing the news, Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) rescued the man

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

Jamaat men float new platform

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of former leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir yesterday launched a new political initiative named Jana Aakankhar Bangladesh.

It is being headed by former Shibir president Mojibur Rahman Monju, who according to several Jamaat leaders was known to be a hardliner.

Monju made the announcement at a press

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

SRI LANKA TERROR ATTACKS

Gun battle with militants kills 15

Bomb-making material, swords and knives seized in raids

REUTERS, Colombo

A gun battle between troops and suspected Islamist militants on Sri Lanka's east coast left 15 dead, including six children, a military spokesman said yesterday, six days after suicide bombers killed more than 250 people on the island.

The shootout at a safe house erupted on Friday in Sainthamaruthu in Ampara district, to the south of the Sri Lankan town of Batticaloa, site of one of the Easter Sunday blasts which have been claimed by Islamic State.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Let me see my son before I die

Pleads the mother of a man missing for 3 years; families going through similar ordeal gather to share their anguish

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"I am growing old. I am becoming sick... I want to see my son for one last time before I die."

The voice of Saleha Begum, 65, was cracking repeatedly as she sought to know the whereabouts of her son Moazzem Hossain Topu.

A former BCL leader, Topu was allegedly picked up by plainclothes men from the capital's Bashundhara area in 2016 when he was just 28.

"Already 1,186 days have passed. Shocked, his father

died of a heart attack. I met the prime minister four times and the home minister 36 times. But there has been no progress," said Saleha, clearly frustrated.

She is not the only one to have lost a loved one to this new trend of enforced disappearance.

Between January 2009, when the Awami League government took office, and December 2018, at least 507 people have fallen victims to enforced disappearance, according to the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH).

Of them, 62 people were later

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

11TH PARLIAMENT

BNP expels Zahidur for taking oath

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP last night expelled Zahidur Rahman for taking oath as a member of the 11th parliament violating the party's decision.

The party decided to expel him at a meeting of its highest policy-making body -- the National Standing Committee -- at Khaleda Zia's Gulshan office in Dhaka last night.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

RELIEVES SENSITIVITY IN JUST 30 SECONDS*

SENSITIVE EXPERT by Pepsodent

RELIEF & PROTECT
Relief in 30secs* and long lasting sensitivity protection

PROFESSIONAL
with HAP MINERAL

30s
DEVELOPED WITH DENTISTS

SENSITIVE EXPERT by Pepsodent

#DefeatSensitivity

*Basis on in-vivo study, on finger applications