

Waterbody losing existence to greed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

A group of influential people filled up part of an important pond in Madhyapara Bazar area in the town recently.

Locals alleged that Ali Ahsan Kawsar, a councillor of ward No 5 under Sadar municipality, is conducting the earth filling work on behalf of the seven owners of the pond.

The earth filling work starts every midnight and continues till dawn, local residents alleged.

Although local people tried to resist the grabbers, they did not pay heed, they said.

During a visit to the area on Sunday, this correspondent saw the south-western and north-eastern part of the mighty pond is almost filled up.

Meanwhile, on the same midnight this correspondent noticed that giant trucks were entering the pond site and dumping sand there.

Rabbi Islam, a resident of the locality, said, "If the filling work continues soon there will be no pond in the town."

If any fire incident occurred, where the fire fighting units will get the water, he questioned.

A number of locals, seeking anonymity, said the earth filling work is continuing under the supervision of ward councillor Kawsar.

Although the earth filling work has been continuing for long, local administration seems reluctant to take any steps in this regard due to unknown reasons, they alleged.

The pond is locally known as Border Bazar Pukur and hundreds of people from the nearby areas use it for different purposes, townspeople said, adding that local people will face great problem if the pond is filled up.

Brahmanbaria Department of Environment (DoE) Assistant Director Runaet Reza said one of the inspector of his department Mominul Islam filed a case in this regard recently.

Brahmanbaria Municipality Mayor Nayar Kabir said, "I heard about the pond filling and will take necessary step soon as such act is prohibitive."

Councillor Kawsar said all the owners together are filling the pond as locals prefer to dump their garbage there which spreads foul odour.

Meanwhile, a mobile court, led by Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Pankaj Barua, raided the pond site on Monday evening and fined its one of the owners Shahjahan Mia Tk 2 lakh.

The UNO also asked Shahjahan to remove the earth from the pond within the next three days.



Local influential people have continued filling this large pond at Madhyapara Border Bazar in Brahmanbaria town, ignoring environmental laws.

PHOTO: STAR

ATTACK ON SHEIKH HASINA'S TRAIN Two more BNP men land in jail

Court to deliver verdict today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A court here yesterday sent two more BNP leaders to jail after rejecting their bail prayers in a case filed for attacking the train carrying Sheikh Hasina, the then opposition leader and now prime minister, 25 years ago.

They are former mayor of Ishwardi municipality Mokhlesur Rahman Bablu, also former president of the municipality unit of BNP, and Abdul Hakim Tenu, member of the unit.

Meanwhile, the court fixed July 3 (today) for delivering the verdict in the case filed for the '94 attack.

Bablu and Hakim surrendered before the Additional District Judge's Court-2 and sought bail yesterday morning but Additional District and Sessions Judge Rustom Ali rejected their petition, said Public Prosecutor Akhtaruzzaman Mukta.

With the two, total 32 out of 52 BNP men landed in jail. On Sunday, the same court sent 30 BNP leaders and activists to jail after rejecting their bail prayers in the case.

The court also issued arrest warrants against the rest of the accused.

In 1994, then opposition leader Sheikh Hasina was travelling from Khulna to Rajshahi via train and holding rallies at different railway stations. As her train reached Pakshey Railway Station in Pabna's Ishwardi upazila, it was attacked with crude bombs and gunshots.

Nazrul Islam, then officer-in-charge of Ishwardi Police Station, filed a case accusing 52 persons of BNP and its allied parties. Police pressed charge sheet against the accused on April 4, 1997 but all of them secured bail from court.

Fish cultivation in cages attracts farmers in Rangamati

ANVIL CHARMA, Rangamati

Fish cultivation in cages set in open water bodies encourages farmers in Rangamati Sadar upazila.

Several youths have started cultivating monosex tilapia in cages in the Kaptai Lake adjacent to Kabukke Para, Jarul Chhari Para in Balukhali union under Sadar upazila and Jibtoli Para of Kaptai upazila in the district.

Shisihir Chakma, 32, a youth of Kabukke village of Balukhali union in Rangamati Sadar upazila, said he decided to be a fish farmer after reading a newspaper write-up about fish farming and seeing on YouTube about fish farming in cages last year.

"I along with my elder brother went to Rangamati Sadar upazila fisheries office a few months ago. With the help of Sadar upazila fisheries office, we built four cages, each 20 feet

long and 10 feet wide, with net, bamboo and plastic barrels.

"The cages, costing Tk 5,000 to Tk 10,000 each, can be used for eight to ten years. We started tilapia cultivation a month ago and hope to get profit by selling fish within a couple of months," said Sishir.

Udayan Dewan, 48, of the same area, said he invested Tk 4 lakh for cultivating fish in 35 cages.

"In April this year I started with 35,000 tilapia larvae in 35 cages. I expect that I will make a profit of around Tk 25 lakh after three months," he said.

Under the "National agriculture technology project" in Rangamati Sadar upazila, district fisheries office set 20 cages in the water bodies of Kaptai Lake and 14,000 tilapia fish larvae were distributed among the cultivators, said officials at District Fisheries Office.



Cages set by a farmer for fish cultivation in Kaptai Lake at Jarul Chhari of Rangamati Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: ANVIL CHARMA

Muhammad Belal Hossen, Sadar upazila fisheries officer, said, "Tilapia cultivation in cages requires a small investment and effort but it brings good profit. We give necessary suggestions to the farmers for cultivating fish in cages."

"Some 800 to 1,000 larvae of tilapia is kept in each cage for rearing. The cage method helps fish to grow faster and so, farmers can get good profit," he added.



Like their fellows in districts across the country, members of Bangladesh Poursava Service Association hold programmes in front of Chapainawabganj Press Club and right, in Gaibandha town yesterday demanding payment of their salary and arrangement of pension from the government coffers.



PHOTO: STAR

Mystery shrouds BCL man's death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader was found dead at his in-laws' house in Gazipur village under Benapole Port Police Station on Monday.

The deceased is Rabiul Islam Sumon, 24, joint secretary of Benapole municipality unit of BCL, and son of Abdul Mannan of Durgapur village under the police station.

Alamgir Hossain, officer-in-charge (investigation) of the police station, said Sumon went to the residence of his in-laws on Monday morning.

Informed by his father-in-law, police recovered the hanging body of Sumon from the house at night and sent it to Jashore General Hospital for autopsy.

Sumon's father alleged that his son was killed in a planned way and later the body was hanged from the ceiling to show the incident as suicide.

It was suicide or murder will be known only after postmortem, said the OC.

RAPE OF PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED WOMAN Lone accused still at large

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Although three weeks have already been passed, police are yet to arrest the lone accused in connection with a case filed for raping a physically challenged housewife in Sadar upazila on June 11.

"We have facing constant threat since filing of the rape case," victim's husband said.

According to the victim's family members, the 25-year-old physically challenged housewife went out of her home in the morning on June 11 for grazing her cattle at a nearby field.

When she was about 250 metres from her house, she had to take shelter at a makeshift irrigation pump house amid rain.

Later, one Mazedul Islam, 27, son of Asgar Ali of Kalikapur village, entered the pump house, raped the woman forcibly and fled the scene.

After the incident, she returned home and informed the matter to her family members.

"Before leaving the spot, Mazedul threatened me of dire consequence if I disclose the matter to anyone else," said the victim.

On June 13, the victim filed a case with Sadar Police Station accusing Mazedul and later her medical test was conducted at M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital.

Victim's family members alleged that after the incident Hamidul Islam, a ward member under Sundarban union parishad, tried to settle the matter.

When asked, Hamidul refuted the allegation brought against him.

Officer in Charge of Sadar Police Station Redwanur Rahim said they were raiding different areas to arrest the alleged rapist.

Expat's wife killed by stalker; college boy held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Wife of a Kuwait expatriate was stabbed to death by her alleged stalker at West Barail village in Habiganj's Chunarughat upazila on Monday.

The deceased is Hosna Khatun, 21, wife of Kuwait expatriate Ripon Mia of the village.

College student Saifur Rahman, 19, son of Surat Ali of the area, was detained in this connection, said AK Amiruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Chunarughat Police Station.

Quoting locals, Sub-Inspector (SI) Alak Borua of the police station said arrestee Saifur had been giving illicit proposal to Hosna for the last one year.

The victim informed Saifur's family members about the matter several times and also warned him on various occasions but it went in vain.

As Saifur stalked Hosna on her way back home from a local market on Monday evening, the latter angrily went to Saifur's house and engaged in an altercation with his mother over the issue. At one stage, Saifur stabbed Hosna dead.

Hearing screams, locals rushed to the spot and caught Saifur and handed him over to police after giving him a good beating.

The body was sent to Habiganj Sadar Hospital for autopsy, said the SI.

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