



A brick wall now dissects the 24-decimal yard that had been enjoyed equally for decades by century-old Hindu temple Kalibari Mondir and decades-old Puran Bazar Jame Masjid in Lalmonirhat.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

MOSQUE, TEMPLE ON SAME YARD

# Authorities stumped over land claim

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

The piece of land in the front yard, shared by two houses of worship of two different faiths in Lalmonirhat's Puran Bazar, has been claimed by a third party.

Setting a unique example of peaceful coexistence, members of two religious communities had been holding separate religious programmes on the yard that had been vital for the two establishments -- the century-old Hindu temple Kalibari Mondir and decades-old Puran Bazar Jame Masjid.

The persons making the claim of ownership on the piece of land, 24 decimals of area in total, already

built a wall across it and made an offer to sell a 12-decimal portion of the property to the authorities of the mosque and temple.

Govinda Chandra Saha, general secretary of the temple's managing committee, said since no one had made any claim on the land in front of the temple before and it had been left in an abandoned state, they were using it for various occasions for long.

Routine worshipping is held inside the temple building regularly. But, without the front yard, it would be very difficult to accommodate the large number of visitors who gather at the temple during bigger occasions such as Durga Puja.

The programmes held on the yard have become traditions as well as a symbol of communal harmony in the area and worshipping at the temple would be disrupted without the yard, he added.

With the size of the adjacent yard constricted by the newly erected wall, holding of large programmes for both the institutions would be challenging because the temple building is on 8 decimals of land while the mosque building is only on 5 decimals, said Md Rafiqul Islam, muazzin of the mosque and Sree Sanjay Chakraborty, priest of the temple.

They both urged the government to take necessary steps in this

regard as none of the institutions have any funds for procuring the 12-decimal portion of the yard from its supposed owners.

People from far and away come to see the two places of worship, only several feet apart, sharing the same yard and they would have a different impression if the yard is not kept in its original size, they also said.

Khorshed Alam Dulal, general secretary of the managing committee of the mosque, said, if the yard cannot be protected for both the mosque and the temple, the harmonious tradition of the two religious communities will be in jeopardy.

# 103 poverty-stricken indigenous families struggling to survive

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Indigenous people from the Musahar community, who used to live on catching and selling eel and snail, are struggling to survive as they cannot sell eel and snail amid coronavirus outbreak.

They live at bordering Subarnakhuli village in Nilphamari Sadar upazila and Khansama upazila of Dinajpur.

During a visit to the village on Tuesday, this correspondent found that the poverty-stricken people sat idle in the area as there is no work now. It is mentionable that the same people were busy with selling of eel and snail before the pandemic.

They lost their livelihoods due to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, said locals.

Ramdas Rikhiason, 65, of the village, said "We usually live by selling eel and snail to traders from different districts but the traders cannot pay regular visit to the area now due to coronavirus outbreak, badly hampering our meagre income from selling snail and eel."

During the coronavirus shutdown, the government provided food assistance to them but the food aid programme has been stopped for the last four months, he said.

Ramdas added that on the other hand, people in the country's northern region have become jobless during the lean period (mid-September to mid- November). As a result, the situation has now significantly worsened.

They are now suffering a double blow, he said.

Deepak Chakrovarti, Sadar upazila vice chairman in Nilphamari, said 103 families of Musahar community are passing miserable life as there is no work in their hand now.

Moneswar Rikhiason, 60, a community member, said "Many of us earn by working in farmland but after transplanting Aman saplings in August, there is no work now, bringing hardship to our livelihood."

A septuagenarian widow, Pugli Rikhiason from the community, said "We used to consume boiled arums in the crisis time as my only son has been sitting idle for days for want of work. Meanwhile, we have no money to buy rice."

Gadlu Rikhiason and his mother Kamoni of the village were seen breaking snail's shell to bring out fleshy part. They would eat it during lunch.

Housewives Pushni and Alomuni of the



Snail's shell being broken to bring out its fleshy part to eat at bordering Subarnakhuli village between Nilphamari Sadar and Dinajpur's Khansama upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

same area said at present, they only eat cooked rice with salt.

College student Subel Rikhiason of the community said "While other students are preparing their lessons at home during the coronavirus situation, students of our community are struggling to make ends meet."

Contacted, Khansama Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mahbubul Islam said "We are ready to render support to the hapless indigenous people within our capacity."

## Freedom

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Rashid, officer-in-charge of Basail Police Station, said a case was filed in this regard and police were trying to arrest the accused.

## Malaysia

FROM PAGE 12

permits, Muhyiddin said at a meet-the-people session with the Chinese community and Chinese non-governmental organisations in Pagoh.

"Give them a temporary licence or work permit, like what we call an amnesty or legalisation programme. This is what we are mulling over," the PM said.

Muhyiddin was replying to a question on his government's efforts to help Pagoh residents involved in the oil palm sector which was facing a worker shortage due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Bernama report said.

The Malaysian premier said the proposal would be explained further by the home and human resources ministers later to avoid misunderstanding.

Muhyiddin said he did not want to give the wrong impression to syndicates that they could bring in illegal workers in future because Malaysians were "nice people".

"You [illegal foreign workers] stay there one year and can get a work permit. This [perception] is wrong."

The PM said he was aware that the shortage of workers affected many parties because this issue was frequently raised at his meetings with the local people, including community associations.

"That's why we will study the situation. If possible, we will try to implement it," he added.

## Rogue planet

FROM PAGE 12

an astronomical phenomenon known as "gravitational microlensing" to spot the planet, which revealed itself by bending the light of more distant stars.

The result was an effect that is much like a giant magnifying glass, which brightens light from a background "source" star to reveal the presence of the massive object.

Gravitational microlensing is only possible when an astronomer's telescope lies in almost perfect alignment with the observed object and the source star. That is rare: if astronomers were only looking at one star, they would only have one chance every million years to see it using such a technique.

## 9 Amendments Passed

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are not Bengalis and as such all the citizens of Bangladesh should not be identified as Bengali as the amendment has sought. The amendment is however carried in the House.

**10M POUND CZECH CREDIT FOR BANGLADESH**

Bangladesh and Czechoslovakia sign two agreements in Dhaka on October 31, 1972, providing for Czech assistance for economic development of Bangladesh and mutual cooperation in the filed of science and technology. The first agreement provides for a Czech credit of 10 million pounds for purchase of industrial plants and capital equipment and securing technical assistance from Czechoslovakia for implementation of various projects.

**TK 76 CRORE PROVIDED FOR RELIEF SO FAR**

The government of Bangladesh has so far provided Tk 76 crore besides money sanctioned from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund and other sources for the relief and

## Sean Connery passes away

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The pair added Connery was "undoubtedly largely responsible for the success of the film series and we shall be forever grateful to him."

A message on a Twitter account maintained for fellow late Bond actor Roger Moore, who died in 2017, called the news of his passing "infinitely sad".

It added: "He and Roger were friends for many decades and Roger always maintained Sean was the best ever James Bond. RIP."

Hollywood star Hugh Jackman said: "I grew up idolizing #SeanConnery. A legend on screen, and off. Rest In Peace."

Connery, born in Edinburgh in 1930, claimed his sole Oscar in 1988 for best supporting actor for his role as an Irish cop in "The Untouchables".

He also starred in "The Hunt for Red October", "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" and "The Rock".

But it is his smooth, Scottish-accented portrayal of the suave spy 007 that earned him lasting worldwide fame and adoration.

The first actor to utter the unforgettable "Bond, James Bond", Connery made six official films as novelist Ian Fleming's

rehabilitation of the millions who had suffered at the hands of the Yahya's hordes during the War of Liberation. This money has been provided in the shape of house building grants, test relief grants to the orphans and disabled persons, contingency for the rehabilitation of the affected people.

**RECOGNITION BY HONDURAS**

Honduras has recognised Bangladesh as an independent and sovereign country. The total number of countries which have so far recognised Bangladesh now stands at 93.

**INDO-BANGLADESH PROTOCOL ON WATER TRANSPORT**

India and Bangladesh sign a protocol on inland water transport providing trade and transit facilities between the two countries on November 1, 1972. The protocol which will be valid initially for a period of five years thus revives the transit trade facilities on water ways suspended during 1965 Indo-Pakistan War.

*SOURCES: November 1 & 2, 1972, issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.*

creation, giving what many still consider as the definitive portrayal.

A bricklayer, lifeguard, and coffin polisher, among other manual jobs, before he found fame, Connery kickstarted his acting career after a bodybuilding hobby led him to enter the Mr Universe competition.

There, a fellow competitor urged him to audition for acting parts and he soon started landing small roles.

His big break came by starring as Bond in 1962's "Dr. No", the franchise's first film. He went to play Bond in "From Russia With Love" (1963), "Goldfinger" (1964), "Thunderball" (1965), "You Only Live Twice" (1967) and "Diamonds Are Forever" (1971).

He made a comeback as the British spy in the unofficial 1983 film "Never Say Never Again".

Off-screen, Connery was a fiercely proud Scot and a financial backer of the Scottish National Party (SNP), which advocates for independence for Scotland from the UK.

The nation's former First Minister Alex Salmond reacted to his death by describing Connery as "the world's greatest Scot, the last of the real Hollywood stars, the definitive Bond."

## Kashmir shuts down

FROM PAGE 12

government changed the constitution to bring the territory under direct federal rule last year, sparking protests and a months-long internet blackout.

Shops and businesses stayed shut yesterday and most residents kept at home after a shutdown was called by a coalition of political and religious groups that want self-determination for the region. Extra Indian security forces patrolled the nearly empty streets.

This week New Delhi announced the abolition of laws that meant only the 12 million permanent Indian Kashmir residents could own land there. Even Kashmir groups normally supportive of Indian rule have opposed the changes, which also allow the Indian armed forces to designate strategic zones for building military infrastructure.

Many Kashmiris accuse the government

of seeking to water down the local population in India's only Muslim-majority territory.

Former chief minister Omar Abdullah said Kashmir had been "put up for sale and left bereft of any basic protections". "The amendments add to the fear of demographic changes. They want to alter the character of this place," said Abdullah, who was among hundreds of political leaders detained for months during last year's protests.

Meanwhile, India has complained to Saudi Arabia over a banknote that shows Kashmir as a separate country.

The foreign ministry in New Delhi said it expressed "serious concern" over a new 20 Riyal note issued to mark Saudi Arabia's presidency of the powerful G20 bloc of countries, which includes India. The world map on the note's background shows it as a separate country, including the part of the territory administered by India.

## 28 killed

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following reports in Turkish media that a mother and her three children were rescued some 23 hours after disaster struck. A 53-year-old and 62-year-old were also pulled out alive hours after the quake, media reports said.

The government's disaster agency AFAD said 100 people have been rescued.

The latest earthquake will renew fears over when Istanbul might be hit by a big tremor after the devastating 7.4-magnitude one in 1999 in Izmit, western Turkey.

Some 17,000 people died then, including 1,000 in Istanbul.

This is the second powerful earthquake to hit Turkey this year, after one in the eastern city of Elazig killed more than 30 people in January.

The tremor was felt as far away as Athens and Istanbul.

Turkey reported around 550 aftershocks following the quake, including 35 that were above four in magnitude.

Rescuers had not lost hope, but a sense of peril hung over the coastal province, with large cracks and broken plaster lining buildings that looked like they could fall from another bad shake.

In Bayrakli's city centre, families wept and prayed at the first funerals for the victims of the quake.

"I can't cry anymore. Look I'm not crying," one woman wailed. "Mother, when will I see you again?"

## Man held

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Israil Hossain, court inspector of Dinajpur, said the girl would be sent to a safe home.

Sahidul Islam, SI of Parbatipur Police Station, filed the case accusing the girl under on Wednesday night.

On the other hand, Habibur Rahman, another SI of the same station, filed another case against 22 named and over 100 unnamed people for attacking the police station during a protest against the arrested girl.

The attack left seven policemen injured.

Police had to contain the mob deploying additional force, said Mokhlesur Rahman, OC of the station.

## Trouble over trash dump

FROM PAGE 12

bank of the Korotoa -- and this is mixing with river water when it rains or floods," said Masud Rana, senior chemist of DoE, Bogura.

**IMPACT ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LIFE**

Md Afzal Hossain, 53, a resident of Uttar Baghopara village, said, "Because of the bad odour, we can hardly sleep at night even after shutting all the doors and windows."

Several thousand people in the village suffer due to the dumpsite's foul odour. It also attracts flies -- another nuisance for the villagers.

"People of Uttar Baghopara and students of the Pundra University of Science and Technology protested last year but TMSS and the municipality did nothing to address it," said 25-year-old Ujjal Shaha.

Nunu Mia, 50, said it is hampering their social and family life.

"Most of our relatives, including our daughters and their husbands, don't visit us and stay at our home due to the odour," he added.

A local medical official said the garbage odour can cause pressure on the nervous system and so lead to irritation to the eyes, nose, and throat.

Abdul Wadud, assistant director of the Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital in Bogura, said, "If odours spread through air and water, it can also lead to airborne and waterborne disease for humans and other living beings."

"Besides, diseases can also spread among people through insects and flies swarming around in the dump," he said.

Passers-by on the Bogura-Rangpur highway, a major thoroughfare en route to the northern districts, regularly encounter this unsightly trash dump.

Rafiq Uddin, 34, a bus helper who goes from Bogura to Gaibandha two times a day via the highway, said, "Thousands of passengers who travel from Dhaka to the northern districts or from Bogura to other northern districts via this road can't escape the odour."

**NO ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE**

On September 29, the Rajshahi divisional office of the DoE sent two formal notices to TMSS and the Bogura municipality in this regard.

The Daily Star has obtained copies of both the notices.

The letter addressed to the municipality stated that it had no environmental clearance certificate or permission to dump garbage there.

"Without having an environmental clearance certificate, your above mentioned activities have resulted in the possibility of indiscriminate damage to public health and to the environment and ecosystem," it said.

"In addition, the municipal waste disposal site is adjacent to the highway, which is causing various problems for public movement and creating hazards for locals; this is a punishable offence under the Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act."

It went on to request the municipal dumping ground to be shifted to a suitable place and that an environmental clearance certificate (ECC) be obtained, both within the next 15 working days.

The letter sent to TMSS executive director reads almost the same, with the exception that it also refers to the NGO

dumping of industrial and medical waste.

**PASSING THE BUCK**

In response to the DoE notices, TMSS blamed the municipality for forcefully dumping garbage at their site, while the municipality did not reply as of October 28, a month after it was sent, according to a local DoE official.

Neither TMSS nor the municipality stopped dumping garbage there within the given time period, he added.

Mayor AKM Mahbubur Rahman, told The Daily Star that the two formal dumping stations of Bogura municipality had to be closed leaving no other landfill option.

A 22-bigha dump yard in the Arulia area was shut down 12 years ago after the Bogura airport authorities complained about the smell, and a 11-bigha site in the Matidali area was also shut five years ago when TMSS established a school and college near it and urged the authorities to stop dumping garbage there, said the mayor.

Since then, municipal waste has been dumped at the Baghopara station as no other formal landfills remain, he added.

"We applied to the ministry of local government for a new formal dumping station several times but they did not respond yet," said the mayor.

Regarding disposal of medical waste, Bogura municipality has been under contract with a local NGO called SAPNO, and such waste is not dumped at the Baghopara site over the last one and a half, said municipal sources.

Ziaur Rahman, executive director of SAPNO, confirmed this, also saying the medical waste of municipality area was dumped at Baghopara trash dump at least for three years before this.

Hosne Ara Begum, founder and executive director of TMSS, told The Daily Star, "We invited the municipality to dump their garbage on our Baghopara land, about a quarter of a kilometre from the highway, but their garbage now spills out on the road."

"We urged them to stop but they [the municipality] continue to forcefully dump municipal garbage."

Hosne Ara refuted the allegation that TMSS dumps medical and industrial waste at the Baghopara site from its hospital and other institutions. "We have our own waste management system," she said.

Masud Rana of DoE Bogura, however, said neither TMSS nor the municipality has any incinerators to manage their garbage.

Seeking anonymity, an environmental activist of Bogura Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA), said, "TMSS invited the municipality to dump garbage on their low-lying land because they want to fill it."

Recently, the Roads and Highways department too sent a notice to both the municipality and TMSS about the matter.

Md Ashrafuzzaman, executive engineer of Roads and Highway (Bogura), said, "We have served notice to the Bogura municipality and TMSS to remove their garbage 14-15 feet away from the sides of the highway on October 19."

The Daily Star has also obtained a copy of this notice.

When asked about the pollution of the Korotoa and the highway, the mayor said, "It should not happen; I am looking into the matter."