



The blossomed bright red water lilies in once-abandoned waterbodies in Kalyanpur area of Chapainawabganj are drawing a good number of visitors in recent time.

PHOTO: RABIUL HASAN

Town gets lively with water lilies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, C'nauwabganj

Tourists are thronging an abandoned canal and a pond in the town's Kalyanpur area where thousands of bright red water lilies have blossomed.

The Chapainawabganj Horticulture Centre took the initiative of planting the water lilies in the waterbodies -- a half-kilometre long canal and a pond on two bighas of land -- that used to emit foul smell due to indiscriminate dumping of garbage.

Scientists at the horticulture centre said wild water lilies grow naturally in the country's low-lying areas such as marshlands and ponds, but many of its varieties have gone extinct due to commercial fish cultivation there.

Utilising abandoned waterbodies to plant water lilies might protect some of their varieties, they also said.

Abdul Alim, a resident of the town and a twelfth grader at Chapainawabganj Technical School and College, was visiting the site with his friends. He said last time he visited the place, there were bushes all around and one had to remain wary of snakes.

But now, as the blossomed water lilies has changed the atmosphere entirely, they visit the place often, he added.

College teacher Rawshan Ara, from Char

Scientists at the horticulture centre said wild water lilies grow naturally in the country's low-lying areas, but many of its varieties have gone extinct due to commercial fish cultivation there.

Jotprotap area in the town, said without any recreational facility or park to visit in the town, she frequently brings her daughter to the place to enjoy the sight of the blossomed red water lilies.

Chapainawabganj Horticulture Centre Deputy Director Mozdar Hossain said they collected rhizomes of water lily from different areas of Pabna, Natore, Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj and planted those in the abandoned canal and the pond in the town.

Located in front of the horticulture centre, the waterbodies had turned into dumpsite and became a source of putrid smell.

After planting the water lilies, the abandoned waterbodies are not only attracting visitors, but many species of birds as well, he also said.

Rozina's footstep in an all-men

MIRZA SHAKIL

Rozina Akter set out to take care of the needy family when her husband was unable to earn a living due to physical illness. Now she is the only female among the drivers of nearly 10,000 battery-run auto rickshaws plying in Tangail town every day.

The thirty-year-old is seen transporting passengers by a rented auto-rickshaw from one end of the town to the other.

Where a male driver struggles to drive an auto rickshaw in the busy town with traffic jam, Rozina has been doing this job for the last three years.

Nizam Uddin, a passenger, said that he got into the auto-rickshaw despite of its driver is a woman as Rozina drives the vehicle very well.

Praising Rozina's bravery, Kamrunnahar Munni, a local woman organiser, said, "I salute Rozina as she has proved that a woman is in no way inferior to a man."

In 2010, Rozina, the eldest of three daughters and two sons of a day labourer, was married off to one eyed Rafiqul Islam, an orphan

Rozina bought a piece of land in adjacent Basail upazila, taking loan from an NGO to cut her living cost at rented house.

youth of Golora village in Tangail's Kalihati upazila. One of Rafiqul's eyes was completely damaged in an accident during his boyhood.

After marriage, two daughters were born. Husband Rafiqul was running the family by his daily wage. But with time, Rafiqul's another eye was damaged partially. As the only bread earner of the family became disabled, the family came to a standstill.

Bewildered Rozina then started working to other houses as housemaid and also borrowed money from NGOs to manage livelihood of her four-member family. But it was not enough against the needs.

In such a situation, Rafiqul rented an auto-rickshaw from a villager to drive it. But at one stage, the work became risky due to his poor eyesight.

Rozina then expressed her interest in driving the auto-rickshaw and learnt driving from her husband.

While driving the vehicle on the road, she suffers from a problem and that is the lack of toilets for women in the town, said Rozina.

Shahadat Hossain, a neighbour of Rozina, said seeing her driving the auto, earlier some villagers used to laugh at her but they now fell silent seeing her determination.

Last year, Rozina bought a piece of land at Aishora village in adjacent Basail upazila taking loan from an NGO to cut the cost of living in a rented house. Later, the government gave her a house under the Prime Minister's Ashrayan Project.

Rozina's two daughters now read in a local government primary school.

"I want to get my daughters educated. So I know no fatigue or obstacle. I know I have to earn to keep everything going," Rozina went on.



Akter is the only female among the drivers of hundreds of battery-run auto-rickshaws plying in Tangail town every day.

PHOTO: STAR

Three to die for murder in Madaripur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A Madaripur court sentenced three people to death for killing a five-year-old girl allegedly over personal enmity with the victim's family in 2015.

The convicts are Rajib Hawladar, 41, and Rimon Hossain, 32, of Madaripur's Rajor upazila, and Shafikul Islam Mollah, 31, of Pirojpur Sadar upazila.

Madaripur District and Session Judge Nitai Chandra Saha delivered the verdict on Monday afternoon in presence of Rimon, while the other two convicts were tried in absentia, Public Prosecutor (PP) Siddikur Rahman Sing said.

The court also fined the convicts Tk 50,000 each, and acquitted another accused of the case as charges brought against him was not proved, the PP added.

According to the case statement, Aduri Akter, daughter of Tuku Sardar of Sendia area in Rajor upazila, went out of her house to take Arabic lesson at a local mosque on September 20, 2015, and did not returned home.

Police detained Shafikul, imam of the mosque, for interrogation after victim's father filed a general dairy (GD) with Rajor Police Station the same evening.

Later, according to Shafikul's confession, police recovered Aduri's body from a place beside the mosque on September 22.

The same day, Tuku field a case against six identified and four to five other unidentified people with the police station.

After investigation, Sayeed Hasan, the then inspector of Crime Investigation Department (CID) in Madaripur, submitted the charge-sheet against four on January 10, 2018.

Tajuddin condemns plan

FROM PAGE 12
ON THE WAR FRONT

Mukti Bahini attacked Pakistan army today at Shamsernagar in Sylhet at the break of dawn. The rigorous assault forced Pakistan Army to retreat. Mukti Bahini declared Tengratila and Duarabazar areas independent. Their continuous operations forced the occupation army to retreat from some other parts of Sylhet -- Gara, Alirgaon and Pirjipur.

Freedom fighters also kept the fight up against the Pak army in Mymensingh, Jashore, Khulna, Kusthia, Chattogram and Dinajpur sectors and inflicted heavy loss on the occupation force.

A Pakistani spokesman today said the aggressive pressures mounted by the Pakistan Army at four war zones in East

Pakistan were continued.

People's Party office in Dhaka was damaged in a bomb attack. The office was opened by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto months earlier, an AFP report said.

Freedom fighters killed two Muslim League supporters during an operation in Dhaka. Two others were injured in the attack.

As guerrilla activities increased, West Pakistani armed forces started killing and burning villages according to the junta order, a report of the New York Times said.

At least 87 guerrilla suspects, including women and children, were killed at Jinjira in Dhaka.

Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

They're all in it together

FROM PAGE 12
For Doha and then on to Lebanon and had each paid Tk 3-4 lakh.

A case was filed against Khorshed and five other agents following this incident.

On July 21, eleven migrants heading for Iran were stopped by immigration officials.

When their documents were inspected closely, it was found that they had forged documents and visas. They had each paid Tk 3.5 lakh to their recruiting agencies, said CITC officials.

All 11 have been accused in a trafficking case.

On July 17, four migrants heading to Iran with forged documents were stopped by immigration officials.

During interrogation, the workers said they were each to pay Tk 5 lakh for a safe passage to Iran. They had each already paid between Tk 50,000 to Tk 2 lakh.

A case was filed with the Airport Police Station in this connection against three agents.

A month before that, two migrants heading for South Africa were stopped as they produced an unsigned document that said, "OK to board".

A majority of these workers held BMET cards.

Tohidul Islam, additional deputy commissioner of CTTC, said they found five people from this syndicate. He said there were several circles involved.

World's first living robots can

FROM PAGE 12
Inspired Engineering said they have discovered an entirely new form of biological reproduction different from any animal or plant known to science.

"I was astounded by it," said Michael Levin, a professor of biology and director of the Allen Discovery Center at Tufts University who was co-lead author of the

new research.

"Frogs have a way of reproducing that they normally use but when you ... liberate (the cells) from the rest of the embryo and you give them a chance to figure out how to be in a new environment, not only do they figure out a new way to move, but they also figure out apparently a new way to reproduce."

20 injured in post-polls

FROM PAGE 12
fire to five houses, four motorbikes and a car.

Police brought the situation under control around 10:00pm.

Injured by bullets, Yusuf Mia and Renu Mia, both from Naora village, were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Abir Hossain, assistant police superintendent in Narayanganj, said it was a post-polls violence over establishing supremacy in the area.

In Pabna, at least 10 people were injured as supporters of two rival UP member candidates in Lakshmikunda UP polls clashed in Ishwardi upazila.

Masud Alom, additional superintendent of Pabna police, said the clash broke out in Charkur area around 9:30pm when supporters of defeated UP member candidate Rekat Ali and winner Asadul Islam came across each another. Both the candidates are involved in AL politics.

Armed with sharp weapons, the two groups clashed to establish supremacy in the area, the additional SP said.

Three of the injured were in critical condition.

The third phase of the staggered UP polls was held on November 28.

Our correspondents in Narayanganj and Pabna contributed to this report.

PCJSS

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political parties based in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Besides, numerous abductions and assaults have taken place during the period.

Pakistan win

FROM PAGE 12
breakthrough and sent back Shafique, who had scored his second fifty of the match, for 73. But it was already too late for the hosts.

Man of the match Abid missed out on a second hundred of the match by just nine runs, departing for a 148-ball 91 that featured twelve fours, after being trapped leg before by Taijul Islam.

Bangladesh posted 330 in the first innings after Liton Das struck his maiden Test century and Mushfiqur Rahim scored 91. Taijul then bagged seven wickets to bundle Pakistan out for 286, which gave Bangladesh a 44-run first-innings lead.

But batting failures once again proved costly as a quality Pakistani pace attack bowled the Tigers out for just 157 in their second essay.

Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 12
Hasina said the two countries now have to remain cautious to tackle Covid-19.

Doraiswami thanked Hasina for helping his country by providing medical equipment during the Covid-19 pandemic.

He handed over a very rare photograph of the Father of the Nation in which he is seen taking a security man to his home for lunch with him in 1972.

Omicron

FROM PAGE 12
the sample of a man who tested positive for Covid-19 after recently returning from South Africa to see if he is infected with the Omicron or another variant.

'No vaccine, no service'

FROM PAGE 1
Bangladesh has so far vaccinated about 20 percent of its population.

The government will also be stipulating those arriving in Bangladesh present a negative RT-PCR test taken 48 or 24 hours before the flight's take-off, down from 72 hours at present. The directive will arrive soon, according to Maleque.

The Delta variant, the most aggressive strain of the coronavirus yet, had spread in the country as the government could not prevent the returnees from abroad, Maleque said, while discouraging inbound passengers from southern Africa, the epicentre of the Omicron variant.

"The health ministry can give treatment and make suggestions, but how do we prevent infected returnees if the other government departments do not cooperate? We have to take a multilateral approach."

The quarantine centre may be set up at Diabari on the outskirts of Dhaka, he said, adding that its management would be handed over to the armed forces.

There will also be about 100 hotels for institutional quarantine purposes, with the cost of the stay borne by the inbound passenger. "There will be special consideration for those who fail to pay at once," he said.

The bordering areas have also been asked to strengthen their monitoring and tests as a good number of people commute

to and from India regularly.

Also at the meeting, which was attended by secretaries of 25 ministries and top officials of intelligence and health departments, instructions were given to district and field level committees to take measures to limit social, political and religious gatherings.

The committees will also monitor whether any returnee from abroad is maintaining home quarantine. If necessary, flags will be hoisted on the residences, Maleque said, while expressing his surprise over people's non-compliance to government directives.

"About 240 people came from South Africa in the last one month. Shockingly, we could not trace them. They kept their mobile switched off. We gave directives to the local administration to trace them but their addresses were also found fake," he said.

But the district administration in Brahmanbaria has been able to trace seven of the returnees and hoisted red flags outside their homes.

The Election Commission has also been asked to ensure health guidelines during the polling, Maleque said, adding that there are no plans to increase the number of in-person classes.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh has been removed from the 'red list' of India following a request from Dhaka, said Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen.

A father in disbelief

FROM PAGE 1
19-year-old was crossing the DIT Road.

The death sparked a protest. Angry locals vandalised and torched at least 12 buses in the area.

After an autopsy at the Dhaka Medical College morgue around 11:30am yesterday, his family took the body to the Brahmanbaria village for burial.

Talking over the phone from there, Monir Hossain, elder brother of Mainuddin, said, "We only showed my brother's face to my father. He has seen it but I don't think he is in a state to realise anything."

Abdur is a tea seller in Molla Bari area of East Rampura. Mainuddin was his youngest among three children. He had left the stall minutes before the accident.

After Mainuddin was killed, Abdur said while having lunch on Monday, his son told him that his SSC exams went well and that he wanted to study at a good college. "I told my son that I would definitely get him into a good college, even if I have to beg..." said the father.

At their home in Rampura earlier yesterday, Mainuddin's mother Rasheda Begum kept sobbing.

"My son had to sell Halim by the road to support his education. He had been doing it since he was in class 8," she told these correspondents.

"Are bus owners out to kill students in

Dhaka?" said an angry Rasheda. "I pray to Allah that no parents have to go through such a tragedy."

Meanwhile, two cases were filed over the incident on Monday night. One of them was by Rasheda against the driver of the bus and the other by police over vandalising and torching 12 buses, said Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Rampura Police Station.

"Police have arrested the bus driver named Soheli. Locals caught and handed him to us," he said.

Ethiopia PM claims war gains, urges rebels to 'surrender'

AFP, Addis Ababa

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed yesterday urged Tigrayan rebels to surrender, claiming government forces were nearing victory just one week after he vowed to lead military operations at the front.

"The youth of Tigray is perishing like leaves. Knowing it is defeated, it is being led by one who does not have a clear vision or plan," Abiy, winner of the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize, said in comments aired on state media.

2 suspects

FROM PAGE 1

Beribadh area around 12:45am, forcing the policemen to retaliate.

"Once the firing stopped, police found two bullet-hit bodies on the spot. The law enforcers also recovered guns and ammunition from the spot."

Three policemen were injured during the "gunfight" and received treatment at a hospital, he further said.

The bodies were sent to Cumilla Medical College Hospital for autopsies.

Meanwhile, Sajon's father Kakon Mia claimed that his son was detained by police before he was killed in the "gunfight".

He said, "If any accused in any case is detained by police, the accused should be sent to jail, but police killed my son in the name of crossfire."

Besides, the house of another accused Sabbir was vandalised allegedly by the followers of the slain councillor.

This correspondent found the house empty while visiting yesterday.

Sabbir along with his brother Samad and his wife used to live in the house for the last three years. All of them, however, went into hiding after the councillor murder, said locals.

On November 22, Syed Mohammad Soheli, 48, councillor of ward-17 of Cumilla City Corporation, and his close aide Haripada Das, 45, were shot dead by masked gunmen at the councillor's office in the city's Pathuriapara area.

The slain councillor's younger brother Syed Mohammad Roman filed the murder case with Kotwali Police Station on November 24. Eleven named persons and some eight to ten persons were made accused in the case.

A total of six persons have so far been arrested in this case.