

In constant fear of losing everything

Brahmaputra erosion takes serious turn in Kurigram

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Erosion by the river Brahmaputra has taken a serious turn at 11 villages in Kurigram recently, making numerous people homeless.

Around 160 homesteads, six fruit orchards, three mosques and more than 300 bighas of arable land have been devoured by the river in the last one week, sources said.

Besides, several hundreds of homesteads and a large amount of arable land are under threat of erosion in those villages, said sources at Water Development Board and local union parishads.

The residents of Ghughumari, Char Khedamari, Char Italukanda, Char Gendar Alga, Faluar Char, Palerchar, Kandapara, Dighlapara and Dhanarchar Paschimpara villages in Roumari upazila, and Sazai Bazar and Paikantari villages in Rajibpur upazila are in now living in constant fear.

Torab Ali, 60, a farmer from Palerchar, said his homestead and two bighas of farmland had been devoured by the river.

He along with his six family members took shelter at a relative's house. "I have lost everything... I don't know how I will survive," he said.

Alzal Hossain, 58, another victim from Dhanarchar Paschimpara, said he lost his homestead and three bighas of cultivable land. He had to take shelter on a road with his five-member family.

Mariom Bewa, 60, an erosion victim from Paikantari, said she lost her homestead to the river a week ago.

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The Brahmaputra has ravaged 11 villages in Kurigram over the past week, devouring about 160 homes, six fruit orchards, three mosques, and more than 300 bighas of arable land, leaving a large number of people homeless.

PHOTO: STAR

'No housing project on Arial Beel'

JS body urges ministries to take immediate steps

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body yesterday expressed concern regarding construction of an illegal housing project in the Arial Beel.

The parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Affairs in its meeting asked the ministry concerned to write letters to the Ministry of Lands and the local administration to take action in this regard.

Awami League MP and chairman of the parliamentary watchdog Saber Hossain Chowdhury presided over the meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Arial Beel, one of the largest wetlands located in Munshiganj, is facing an invasion by illegal real

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AL to stage sit-ins in Dhaka today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League will hold sit-in programmes and processions in the capital today instead of their previously announced "peace rally" movement.

The programmes will be held under the supervision of AL's Dhaka (north and south) unit.

The party announced a "peace rally" Saturday night after BNP declared to hold rallies in districts and cities across the country on July 31.

However, AL's rally was cancelled.

"The peace rally has been cancelled since the old trade fair ground is unfit for use. Instead, we have decided to hold sit-in programmes and protest marches at thana levels today," said Dhaka city (north) AL President Sheikh Bazlur Rahman.

Meanwhile, various AL fronts and associate bodies yesterday brought out protest processions in different regions, where they announced to give BNP a fitting reply if they continued to carry out such "violence".

"Do not think that we, Jubo League activists, will sit idly if you try to harm the people. Their [BNP's] hands are stained with blood, if they attack us with those hands, we will break them," said Jubo League Chairman Sheikh Fazle Shams Parash.

He made the comments while addressing a protest rally at the Mohakhali

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Jashore Airport gets new terminal

Built at Tk 32cr, it will handle 10 lakh passengers annually

RASHIDUL HASAN

The number of passenger and cargo flights at Jashore Airport is increasing every year. But due to various limitations, services are being hampered at the airport.

To bring an end to this situation, the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) has taken various development projects.

In continuation of this, CAAB has constructed a terminal building at a cost of Tk 32 crore.

State Minister for Civil Aviation M Mahub Ali will inaugurate the terminal today.

The terminal has a capacity of handling one million passengers annually, said CAAB sources.

Currently, Biman Bangladesh Airlines, US Bangla Airlines, and Novoair operate 16-18 flights at Jashore Airport daily. According to CAAB sources, the number of passenger and cargo flights has been growing at an average rate of 8.91 percent each year. At this pace, it is projected that about three million passengers will be traveling through the airport by 2050.

To improve passenger services, the new terminal building is equipped with various facilities, including 300 chairs, eight check-in counters, a VIP lounge, five luggage scanning machines, five archways, and adequate car parking, including VIP car parking. Moreover, CAAB has also taken up multiple projects to enhance airport operations and remove existing limitations.

These projects include the development of the runway lighting system, construction of electrical substations and



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PHOTO: COLLECTED

residential buildings, cargo aircraft parking, apron extension, construction of taxiways, water treatment plants, generators, electrical substation upgrades, communication equipment installation.

Additionally, efforts have been made to strengthen the airport's infrastructure with the runway surface reinforced with asphalt concrete overlay, old apron (aircraft parking points) reconstructed, Instrument Landing System (ILS) installed, new lighting system for safe flight and landing, arrival hall renovated, conveyor belt installed, and security system improved.

Asked Reazul Islam Masoud, Airport Manager, Jashore Airport told The Daily Star that quality of

passenger service will improve a lot following inauguration of the new terminal of the airport as they will get various improved facilities in this airport.

Jashore Airport has a historical significance, with its origins dating back to the second World War when the British constructed an air base for its air force.

Later, it became an operational base for the Pakistan army and air force in 1950.

In 1960, the airport commenced full-fledged operations under CAAB.

Additionally, the airport is also utilised by the Bangladesh Air Force as part of BAF Matiur Rahman Base and serves as a training airfield for the Bangladesh Air Force Academy.

26 Jamaat activists arrested

STAR REPORT

At least 20 leaders and activists of Jamaat e Islami were arrested yesterday in Kishoreganj, Kushtia and Narsingdi.

The arrestees were gathering in Ekrampur Bus Stand area in Kishoreganj around 8:00am to join their agitation programme.

"Police arrested 15 of our party men, without any arrest warrant, from the spot. They are doing this to harass our party men," said Md Ramzan Ali, ameer of Kishoreganj district unit of Jamaat.

Contacted, Kishoreganj Sadar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mohammad Daud said the Jamaat men were arrested in different cases filed in the past.

However, the OC did not elaborate what type of cases were filed against them.

In Kushtia, police arrested five Jamaat men from the district headquarters on sabotage charges.

Locals and witnesses said the district unit Jamaat leaders and activists brought out a procession around 11:00am in Dobir Mollah Rail Gate area to press home their several demands that include holding the next election under non-partisan caretaker government and releasing their party top leaders from jail.

The procession ended at Lahini Bottola on Kushtia-Rajbari highway around 12:30pm.

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Don't bring up 'arson terrorism'

HC tells lawyers at bail hearing of BNP leader Aslam Chowdhury

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court bench yesterday asked the lawyers not to raise the issue of "arson terrorism" before the court.

"This court is for all the people of the country. Don't bring up this issue (arson terrorism) before this court and damage its environment," the bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Md Aminul Islam said.

The bench said this while hearing of a bail petition of detained BNP leader Aslam Chowdhury in a vandalism and arson case lodged with Shahbagh Police Station after Hefajat-e-Islam mayhem on May 5, 2013.

The bench said this after Deputy Attorney General Sarwar Hossain Bappi opposed the bail petition, saying that political unrest and incidents

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FARDIN'S DEATH

CID asked to submit probe report by Aug 29

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday again asked Criminal Investigation Department to submit by August 29 the probe report in a case filed over the death of Buet student Fardin Noor Parash in November last year.

Metropolitan Magistrate Md Ali Haider set the new date after CID failed to submit any probe report.

On April 16, another Dhaka court ordered further investigation into the case after Fardin's father filed a no-confidence petition against the DB report clearing Amatullah Bushra, an accused in the case, of murder charges.

Bushra, who was granted bail on January 8, was present yesterday.

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'Why Janata Party should not get EC registration?'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday questioned the legality of the Election Commission's decision not to register Jatiya Janata Party as a political party.

The court issued a rule asking the EC and government to explain in four weeks why the EC's decision should not be declared illegal.

It issued the rule following a petition filed by party General Secretary Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury. The EC, on April 10, issued a letter rejecting its application for registration. The EC said it has no committees at relevant levels although it is mandatory.

However, the petitioner said Jatiya Janata Party has fulfilled all the preconditions.



To develop skilled human resources, especially women, Shomman Research & Technical Training started a government approved six-month "caregiver course" yesterday at Shomman's Dhanmondi office in the capital.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Man beaten to death in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was killed in Dhaka's Shantinagar Saturday night.

The deceased is Khaled Sheikh, 26, of Faridpur's Madhukhali upazila.

Sentu Mia, inspector (investigation) of Paltan Police Station, said they detained several persons on charge of beating a man to death.

The incident took place around 11:30pm at a building near Eastern Plus Shopping Complex.

Khaled went there after hearing that some security guards of the building held the younger brother of his friend, suspecting him of theft, said Md Sajib, a family friend.

An altercation took place between him and security guards there and at one stage, around 15 persons assaulted him.

Khaled was declared dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said police.

ARREST DESPITE BAIL

2 cops apologise to High Court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two Patuakhali Police Station officers have apologised to the High Court yesterday for arresting Asrafur Hwlader, a college student, on May 18 in connection with a case even though he was out on anticipatory bail from the same court.

Md Moniruzzaman, officer-in-charge, and Mizanur Rahman, assistant sub-inspector, offered an unconditional apology through their lawyer Abu Reza Md Qayyum Khan last month before the HC bench of justices Mustafa Zaman Islam and Md Aminul Islam.

They also appeared before the bench yesterday in compliance with its previous summons order.

The HC bench fixed today for further hearing. The HC on May 21 issued a rule and summons order against the two following a newspaper report published on May 20.

According to the report, police arrested Ashrafur though his lawyer informed them that he was granted anticipatory bail by the HC.

Despite this, police picked him up, brought him to the police station and produced him before a magistrate the next day. The magistrate released him on the same day after seeing the HC bail order.