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অবসরকালীন ভবিষ্যৎ আর্থিক নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করতে
সর্বজনীন পূবালী পেনশন স্কীম
আকর্ষণীয় সুদহার
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ঘরে বসেই
**ব্যাংক
অ্যাকাউন্ট
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An illegal sand business in Char Hogla village in Narayanganj has put a part of the Meghna at risk. According to locals, two ruling party leaders are running the business illegally filling up part of the river to store sand there. Even though as per law no person can excavate and make any kind of construction on the bed or foreshore of navigable waterways without license from the conservator, they continue to carry on with their onslaught due to indifference of the authorities concerned. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

Fined, evicted yet in business

2 local AL leaders continue to run illegal sand depot by filling up portion of Meghna in N'ganj

SAJJAD HOSSAIN, back from Narayanganj

An illegal sand business is being run in Char Hogla village under Shambhupura union of Narayanganj by allegedly encroaching a portion of the Meghna.

Ruhul Amin, secretary of the union unit of Swachhasebak League, and Abul Hossain, secretary of Ward-9 Jubo League unit, are jointly running a sand depot on the river bank in Char Hogla village, illegally filling up part of the river to store sand there.

They have continued their activities despite being fined and ordered to vacate the land earlier in July.

Their activities are damaging the river's ecosystem, said locals and environmentalists.

Locals alleged that the duo are being able to carry on the illegal business

amid an absence of monitoring from Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority.

"The river isn't just a part of our village; it is our lifeline. Protecting it is essential for the well being of the entire community," said a farmer from Char Hogla, wishing anonymity.

During a recent visit, this correspondent saw a bulkhead unloading sand on the encroached river land, which turned into a sand fill.

The grabbers have also erected a fence extending the depot into the river, filling up at least 1,983 sq metres area with sand.

According to Google's satellite imagery, around 939 acres of the river at Char Hogla, a low-lying shoal surrounded by the Meghna, have been filled up between 2011 and 2023.

Contacted, Sharif Islam, deputy

director and in charge of BIWTA's Meghna River Port, said they raided the site on July 30 and fined Ruhul Amin Tk 1 lakh for illegally occupying a portion of the river.

The occupants were also ordered to vacate the land, he said.

"We are unaware about the current situation in the area, but we will soon launch an eviction drive," he added.

BIWTA is the legal conservator of river ports and adjoining foreshore areas, according to the Port Act of 1908.

As per the port rules, no person can excavate and make any kind of construction on the bed or foreshore of navigable waterways without license from the conservator.

Contacted, Ruhul Amin claimed he was not involved in the sand business.

"One of my relatives is involved in the

sand business. I paid the fine for him as he was not solvent," said Ruhul Amin.

He also said he did not think the business on the river land was harmful. "The government does not need the land now," he said.

Abdul Hossain could not be reached for comment.

The grabbers violated the Water Act 2010 by filling up the river, say environmentalists.

"Some corrupt government officials have put the river at risk by accepting benefits from the occupiers," alleged Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association.

"The illegal occupants must be urgently evicted, otherwise the damage to the river and biodiversity will be irreversible," she added.

No confrontations, no use of force

Quader warns AL independents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday cautioned the AL leaders running as independents not to engage in confrontations with party nominees or use any force.



"Not everyone received nominations due to limitations. Some were upset by that. But the leader (party president) offered a chance to run independently, so make sure not to misuse this opportunity," said Quader while addressing a joint meeting of the AL at the party's central office on Bangabandhu Avenue.

"You (independents) have to maintain discipline. You are a contender, you have to contest with other candidates. We won't shelter any terrorists," he added. "No one will use muscle power, we will not tolerate it in the party," he said.

Pointing at the EC, he said, "We wanted to hold a rally marking Human Rights Day. The Election Commission did not give us permission and we complied with that. But we have no idea how they gave permission [to BNP] to hold a human chain in front of the press club."

"Denying us permission while granting it to those intending to disrupt the election raises questions. I am not making accusations; I am simply posing the question," he said. Speaking about the media's role, the AL leader said, "We are not seeking anything beyond what we rightfully deserve as a political party. Fair coverage should encompass both sides, including the opposition."

Quader announced that the AL would bring out a procession in Dhaka on December 18 for Victory Day.



'Let's not cover Dhaka with posters'

UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Md Atiqul Islam yesterday warned of stern action if posters are found covering up authentic street art on the city's walls.

He was speaking at an event showcasing street art at the Mohakhali Flyover.

"With elections approaching, let's not cover Dhaka with posters. Why can't we run a digital campaign in Smart Bangladesh? The Election Commission has already issued guidelines. I urge everyone not to put up posters without designated spaces," he added.

HC rejects petition, clears way for Jan 7 polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday cleared the way for the Election Commission to continue the process for holding 12th parliamentary election on January 7.

The court summarily rejected a petition that challenged the legality of announcing its schedule.

The HC bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Md Atabullah delivered the order after holding hearing on petition.

The bench also blasted petitioner Advocate Md Eunos Ali Akond for filing it, saying that he has moved this petition as a public interest litigation, but it was in fact for personal interest.

The HC bench rejected the petition as the EC has announced the election schedule in accordance with article 123 of the constitution and relevant sections of Representation of People Order (RPO), 1972 and there is no illegality in announcing the election schedule.

CHRISTMAS, NEW YEAR'S EVE DMP chalks out security plans for the capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police has chalked out security plans for the capital on the occasion of Christmas and the New Year's Eve.

Security will be ensured in the capital to maintain law and order situation and traffic management around these two major festivals, said DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman at a coordination meeting at DMP Headquarters yesterday.

Adequate police personnel in both uniform and plainclothes will be deployed at each church on Christmas. Entry points to the churches will be regulated through archways, with metal detectors and manual searches conducted for all visitors, Biplab Kumar Sarkar, DMP's joint commissioner (operations), said briefing the plans.

The measures will also include security sweeps by dog squads, assistance from fire services and ambulance, and uninterrupted power supply within church premises. Floating shops, hawkers, and the entry of bags into the church area will be prohibited.

On the 31st night, DJ parties, playing of music in open spaces or on house rooftops and exploding firecrackers will be strictly prohibited.

Entry into the Dhaka University area on the 31st night will require an ID card, and vehicles must display a university sticker. Individuals are advised to use Shahbagh and Nilkhet intersections for entering DU campus.



WINTER DELIGHTS... After dipping a piece of bread into a cup of piping hot tea, Ismail blows off the heat before serving it to his sister Lamia, who eagerly waits for the next bite. Donning vivid hooded caps, the siblings enjoy the winter mist through small sips of the drink in Khulna's Dumuria upazila yesterday morning.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN