



Park on railway land

Ex-minister's son occupied property using influence

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Rakibuzzaman Ahmed, son of former Social Welfare Minister Nuruzzaman Ahmed, has allegedly occupied around 70 decimals of Bangladesh Railway land in Kaliganj upazila, Lalmonirhat, to build an entertainment park.

The land, located near Tushbhandar Railway Station on the Lalmonirhat-Burimari rail route, was previously used as a temporary village market. According to locals, the site remained open until April 2022 when Rakibuzzaman allegedly seized the land, erected a brick wall around it, and constructed the park, which includes a lake and other structures, reportedly for personal enjoyment with friends.

Rakibuzzaman, organising secretary of Lalmonirhat district Awami League and former Chairman of Kaliganj Upazila Parishad, is also accused of misappropriating Tk 1.5 crore from district

and upazila councils and the office of the Project Implementation Officer.

He allegedly siphoned off the funds through 20 development projects under various names to build the park, sources from the three departments claim.

Both Rakibuzzaman and Nuruzzaman Ahmed have been absconding since the ouster of the Awami League government on August 5. Separate murder cases have also been filed against them.

Sources at the railway's divisional estate office in Lalmonirhat said a letter was sent to Rakibuzzaman, instructing him to halt the construction and vacate the premises. However, he ignored the directive.

Attempts to evict the park last year were reportedly thwarted by the influence of his father, the then minister. Preparations are now underway to demolish the illegal structures this month, said Purnendu Dey, divisional estate officer of railway in Lalmonirhat.



Just like this road near Joy Kali Mondir, many of Dhaka roads become unusable after just half a day of rain. Potholes form and water clogs the streets, as poor drainage fails to adequately address the issue. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

ABU SAYED MURDER Travel ban issued on 14 accused

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A Rangpur court has issued a travel ban on 14 accused individuals in the Abu Sayed murder case, including a few top former police officials.

Md Asaduzzaman, the judge of the Metropolitan Magistrate Court of Tajhat, issued the ban after the case's investigation officer filed a petition with the court on September 30, stating that the accused persons might flee the country.

Rokonuzzaman Rokon, panel lawyer of the murder case, said the court issued the order on September 30 after hearing the petition filed by the IO.

But they got the written copy yesterday, he said.

The 14 accused are Abdul Baten, former DIG of Rangpur Range; Md Moniruzzaman, former RMP commissioner; Md Arifuzzaman and Al Imran Hossain, former RMP assistant commissioners; Abu Maruf Hossain, former deputy police commissioner of RMP; SI Bibhuti Bhusan Roy; OC Rabiul Islam; Pamel Barua, president of Begum Rokeya University unit BCL; BRUR BCL unit members Tagar, Babul Hossain, and Shamim Mahfuz; Rafiur Rahman, a BRUR official; and BRUR teachers Moshirur Rahman and Md Asaduzzaman.

Potholes plague key Gaibandha road



MOSTAFA SHABUJ, Bogura

The 12-kilometre road from Gobindaganj upazila town to Mahimaganj Railway Station in Gaibandha has long been in a dilapidated state and is in need of urgent repair and renovation.

The road, an important thoroughfare for around five lakh people from the district's Gobindaganj, Saghata and Phulchhari upazilas to reach the only railway station in the area, is now largely impassable for vehicles and pedestrians alike.

On the spot observations by this correspondent revealed that bitumen surface has worn off from 1km stretch of the road in Kochashahar Bazar area and another 500 metres within Gobindaganj Municipality.

This in turn led to formation of large potholes along the road, which accumulate water after rains, and hinder movement of people and vehicles.

"Just going to Kochashahar Bazar, merely 500 metres from our house, has become an ordeal due to the present condition of the road. Whenever it rains, the potholes accumulate knee-deep water, preventing anyone from using the road on foot, while making it risky for vehicular movement as well," said Anika

Mezhabeen, 24, of Kochashahar Collegepara area.

Nurunnabi Akand, a lecturer of Kochashahar Shilpanagari College and resident of Gobindaganj municipality, said the road requires repairs every year, but never sustains for long.

Nayrhat Bazar in Kochashahar union is a local hub of garments industries, where around 100 types of winter clothes are manufactured and has an annual turnover of around Tk 700 crore.

Local garments owners have to bear higher cost of transporting their products to different parts of the country due to the road's sorry state, said Mizanur Rahman, president of garments owners' association at Nayrhat Bazar.

Contacted, Atiqur Rahman Talukdar, engineer of Local Government Engineering Department in Gobindaganj upazila, said, "A budget of Tk 4.5 crore has been allocated to repair about 3km stretch of the road in Kochashahar Bazar and in front of Gobindaganj municipality. The work will begin in November after completing the tender procedure."

"The rest of the road will also be repaired with new bitumen surface," he added.

The road, an important thoroughfare for around five lakh people from the district's Gobindaganj, Saghata and Phulchhari upazilas to reach the only railway station in the area, is now largely impassable for vehicles and pedestrians alike.

Youth key to development

Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Emphasising the role of youth in shaping the future of Bangladesh, speakers at an event yesterday stressed that no development strategy can succeed without addressing the needs of the younger generation and ensuring their active involvement.

They made the remarks at the "9th Annual Knowledge Fair 2024" on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), organised by Share-Net Bangladesh, with the theme "YouthPower 2024 - Nothing Without Us", at a city hotel.

Inaugurating the event, Md Saifullahil Azam, director general of the Directorate General of Family Planning, highlighted that the majority of Bangladesh's population being young, their voices, energy, and ideas are crucial for the success of any plan.

Dr Vibhavendra Raghuyamshi, head of health at the UNFPA in Bangladesh, stressed the need to educate youth about reproductive health for achieving public health goals, including SDG 3.

He also stressed the importance of creating an environment where young people can openly discuss reproductive health, with strong government support.

Thijs Woudstra, chargé d'affaires at the Embassy of the Netherlands, said, "Youth are not just beneficiaries of economic growth; they should be active partners in driving progress, particularly in areas like health, gender equality, and climate action."

Dr Halida Hanum Akhter, chairperson of Share-Net Bangladesh's steering committee, also spoke.

More than 300 participants shared insights on SRHR, and young researchers presented their findings. Asian University for Women, Chattogram was this year's academic partner.

Idols vandalised in Kishoreganj and Pabna

STAR REPORT

Unidentified miscreants vandalised Durga idols in Kishoreganj and Pabna early yesterday.

In Kishoreganj, at least five idols were vandalised at Gopinath Mandir in Batrish area of the town, said Md Shamol Miah, inspector (investigation) of Kishoreganj Sadar Police Station.

Narayan Dutta Pradeep, president of the temple's committee, said, "Like other days, our guards remained on duty till 12:00am last night (Wednesday). When we came to the temple early in the morning, we found the idols vandalised. The culprits could not be identified since no one was present at the temple when the incident took place."

In Pabna, criminals vandalised three idols at a temple in Pal Para area of Sujanganj upazila.

Yesterday, police closed Sakiul Azam, officer-in-charge of Sujanganj Police Station, citing "public interest".

On September 29, miscreants vandalised at least four idols at Rishipara temple in the area.

Anisul shown held in murder case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Former law minister Anisul Huq was shown arrested yesterday in another murder case, this one filed over the death of Al Amin Hossain in Dhaka's Badda area during the mass uprising on August 5.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Syful Islam passed the order after Investigation Officer Md Ahsan Habib, a sub-inspector of Badda Police Station, produced Anisul before it.

The case filed by victim's mother against Sheikh Hasina, Anisul Huq and 45 others, said Al Amin took part in the movement in Badda around 3:30pm on August 5 where he was shot dead.

Anisul Huq was also shown arrested in 16 other murder cases.

Advertisement for DESCO (Dhaka Electric Supply Company Ltd.) featuring a table of e-Tender notices with columns for Tender ID, Name, and dates.

Ex-MP Dabirul Islam held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Police arrested former Thakurgaon-2 lawmaker Md Dabirul Islam in an extortion case early yesterday.

Dabirul was held at a house at Ruhea village in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila, said police.

Ruhea Police Station Officer-in-Charge Shahidur Rahman said Habibur Islam, a local BNP activist, filed the case with Baliadangi Police Station against the lawmaker and others on September 3.

Meanwhile, a Thakurgaon court rejected Dabirul's bail petition and sent him to jail.

Dabirul Islam was elected MP from the constituency for seven terms.

Locals want dyke to save homes, crops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Locals of Paschim Londa village in Patuakhali demonstrated yesterday demanding construction of sustainable embankments on Tiakhali river to protect houses, croplands, roads and infrastructures.

Hundreds of people joined the programme on the bank of the river.

Around 250 poor families have been living in the village battling the river during lunar tides and natural calamities for almost 40 years, they said.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Tea Board featuring a table of tenders for tea processing and other services.