

Once a lifeline, now a lifeless canal

Siltation chokes Kakoria river; locals demand immediate dredging

MASUK HRIDOY, Brahmanbaria

The Kakoria river, stretching nine kilometres through Aruail and Pakshimul unions under Brahmanbaria's Sarail upazila, was once a vital lifeline for the region's people.

A tributary of the mighty Meghna, the river served as an important waterway for communication while supplying water to thousands of farmers for irrigation and providing livelihoods to local fishermen.

Now, however, Kakoria is a mere shadow of its former self.

Years of neglect and the absence of dredging have gradually transformed the river into a narrow, lifeless canal due to unchecked siltation. Its poor navigability has disrupted transportation, while the lack of natural flow has deprived farmers of irrigation water and taken away fishermen's means of survival.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension in Sarail upazila, Boro paddy is cultivated across 1,840 hectares of land in Aruail and 2,290 hectares in Pakshimul union. For decades, farmers depended on the Kakoria River to irrigate their fields, but in recent years, its flow has ceased due to siltation.

Now, the worsening situation has forced local farmers to extract groundwater using deep or shallow tube wells, significantly increasing their fuel costs and raising production expenses.

Locals have urged the authorities to take immediate steps to dredge the Kakoria River and restore its natural flow for the benefit of farmers.

Due to heavy siltation, Kakoria's confluence with the Meghna has become narrower, severely affecting the water flow. As a result, hundreds of hectares of agricultural land across Boroichara, Rajapur, Kakoria, Charpara, Ranidiya, Paromanandpur, Shatbariya, and Haripur villages have been deprived of irrigation water, making Boro paddy cultivation increasingly difficult. Transporting goods has also become more expensive, as boats can no longer navigate the river.

Rahul Das, a fisherman from Ranidiya village, said the water level had dropped alarmingly low during the dry season, preventing them from casting their nets. This, he added, has severely impacted their livelihoods.

Locals expressed frustration over government inaction, pointing out that

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Years of neglect and the absence of dredging have gradually transformed the Kakoria river, a tributary of the Meghna, into a narrow canal. Its poor navigability has disrupted transportation, while the lack of natural flow has deprived farmers of irrigation water.

PHOTO: STAR



Shaon, Saba released after questioning



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Actors Meher Afroza Shaon and Sohana Saba, who were taken into custody on Thursday night, were released yesterday afternoon after being questioned over allegations of plotting against the state.

They were handed over to their families, Talebur Rahman, deputy commissioner (Media and Public Relations) of DMP, told The Daily Star.

The Detective Branch (DB) of police picked up the actors from the capital on Thursday night.

Rezaul Karim Mallick, additional commissioner (DB) of DMP, earlier told The Daily Star that Shaon was taken into custody over allegations of plotting against the state. However, he did not elaborate.

Her detention came just hours after her village home in Jamalpur was attacked and torched.

A group of protesters set fire to the house belonging to Shaon's father, Mohammad Ali, near Narundi Railway Station in Jamalpur Sadar upazila.

GALLAMARI IN KHULNA

People suffer for delay in bridge work

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Gallamari Bridge, a key gateway to Khulna city, has long been a source of suffering for thousands of residents.

According to the Roads and Highways Department (RHD), there were initially two bridges over the Mayur river in Gallamari. The older bridge, built during the Pakistan period, became dilapidated and unusable over time. Subsequently, a second bridge was constructed in 2013 at a cost of Tk 6.9 crore and opened to the public in 2015.

However, the design of the second bridge failed to consider crucial factors such as river protection. It was built too low, preventing even small boats from passing underneath.

Environmentalists protested the bridge's construction, citing its low quality, insufficient height, and lack of environmental consideration.

Later, the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) alleged that RHD had built the bridge without securing its approval.

RHD then initiated a new project to demolish the old bridge and construct a replacement at a cost of Tk 68 crore.

The new bridge, measuring 68.7 metres in length, 13.7 metres in width, and standing 5 metres

above the water level, commenced construction in 2020, with a deadline set for May 2025.

However, progress has been extremely slow, and work came to a halt around six months ago.

As a result, residents are still forced to use the old bridge with

around 5,000 easy-bikes use the bridge.

Kamal Hawlader, an easy-bike driver, said, "We often have to wait for an hour or more just to cross the bridge. This frustrates passengers and wastes our time." "Additionally, abandoned



Built too low, Gallamari Bridge, a key gateway to Khulna city, has long been a source of woe for residents due to its faulty design. Meanwhile, the work for a new bridge goes on at a snail's pace, exacerbating public sufferings.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

its flawed design, enduring severe hardship and long hours of traffic congestion.

The bridge is one of 18 major routes connecting Khulna to other districts, including Dhaka. Every day, at least 500 vehicles, including cargo-laden trucks, and

construction materials are scattered along the road, making it extremely difficult and hazardous to drive," he added.

Akbar Hossain, a resident of Ward 21 in Khulna city, said he had heard that the contractor

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Woman killed, house of UP chairman vandalised

UNB, Narsingdi

An armed group yesterday shot a woman dead while attacking and vandalising the house of Riaz Murshed Khan, chairman of Sreenagar union parishad, in Raipura of Narsingdi.

The deceased was identified as Shanta Islam, 24, wife of Riaz's cousin Shakil Khan.

The incident took place in Sreenagar village in the union during Juma prayers.

According to the victim's family, a group of 10 to 12 armed men, led by Sohel Mia of the same union, stormed into Riaz's house over previous enmity.

Failing to find the chairman and his family members, the assailants vandalised and looted the house. When Shanta attempted to intervene, they opened fire, leaving her seriously injured.

Family members rushed her to Raipura Upazila Health Complex, where a doctor declared her dead.

Md Adil Mahmud, officer-in-charge of Raipura Police Station, said police have been deployed at the scene and filing of a case is underway.

Shanta's body has been sent to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy, he added.

Man dies in police custody

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A 65-year-old man died in police custody in Jamalpur early yesterday.

Huttu, a resident of Hat Chandra village in Jamalpur municipality, was an accused in a land dispute case, said police.

Faisal Muhammad Atik, officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station, said police arrested him at his home around midnight.

Within 10 minutes of his arrest, he suffered a cardiac arrest, said the OC.

When he was rushed to a hospital, doctors declared him dead.

Woman's body found in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

Police recovered the beheaded body of a woman from a crop field in Pirganj upazila, Rangpur yesterday.

The victim -- Dilwara Begum, 25, daughter of Rabiul Islam -- was from Dilalpara in Gobindaganj, Gaibandha, police said.

Locals at Chatra village noticed the mutilated body in a field early in the morning and informed police, said MA Faruk, officer-in-charge of Pirganj Police Station.

He said a forensic team from the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the police confirmed the victim's identity using fingerprint analysis.

The body was sent to Rangpur Medical College Hospital for an autopsy.

He said investigators have yet to determine the motive behind the murder.

However, initial findings suggest that the victim was killed elsewhere, and her body was later dumped in Chatra village.

The OC said filing of a case was underway.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Divisional Forest Officer
Chittagong Hill Tracts North Forest Division
Rangamati.

E-mail: dfochn@gmail.com

Memo No. 22.01.8400.885.01.001.2025-357

Date: 06.02.2025

e-Tender Notice 2024-2025 Open Tendering Method (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal for the procurement of following works as stated below.

SL No	Tender ID	Name of work & Package No	Last selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time	Opening Date & Time
1	1073148	(a) Repairing of DFO Residences at Reserve mukh, Rangamati under CHT North Forest Division, Rangamati. (b) Repairing of ACF Residences at Banarupa, Rangamati under CHT North Forest Division, Rangamati.	23 February 2025 17.00 PM	24 February 2025 13.00 PM	24 February 2025 13.00 PM
2	1073183	(a) Repairing of Narachori Range Office at Jamtali Dighinala, Khagrachari under CHT North Forest Division, Rangamati. (b) Repairing of Massalong Beat Office at Baghaichari Upazila under CHT North Forest Division, Rangamati. (c) Repairing of Sadar Range Office at Rangamati under CHT North Forest Division, Rangamati.			
3	1073187	(a) Repairing of Banasmiti Rest House, Mainimukh, Longodu under CHT North Forest Division, Rangamati (b) Repairing of Boundary wall and Staff Barrack at Reserve mukh under CHT North Forest Division, Rangamati.			
4	1073188	(a) Making Uniform for the FD field Staffs under CHT North Forest Division, Rangamati			

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and offline/hard copies will not be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and also form e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Md. Rezaul Karim Chowdhury)
Divisional Forest Officer
Chittagong Hill Tracts North Forest Division
Rangamati.
Phone: 0233-3371489

OUR CUSTOMERS SPEAK FOR US

40 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

"We're very happy with bti's commitment to excellence; they kept their word & handed over a beautiful home with even a mesmerising rooftop to us"

Mrs. Simky Afrin
Homeowner
The Finesse, Bashundhara

SCAN HERE
btibd.com

SINCE 1984