



Workers at Planet Park, a children's amusement park, clean an airplane-themed ride ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr. The entire park is undergoing preparations to welcome the influx of visitors expected during the holidays. The photo was taken from Band Road in Barishal city yesterday.

House torched over rape attempt in Pirojpur

Man held on same charge in Ctg

STAR REPORT

Locals have set fire to an abandoned house of an elderly man who attempted to rape a 30-year-old woman after confining her to the house at Nagarbari in Pirojpur Sadar upazila, reports our local correspondent.

The accused – Mojibur Rahman alias Benu, 72 – is from Kathulia village in the upazila.

On Friday afternoon, he forcibly took the girl to the house and kept her confined, said locals.

Sensing the matter, one Tarikul Islam informed the matter to other locals. Later, Benu left the scene locking the door from outside.

"We rescued the girl after breaking open the door," said Tarikul.

Afterwards, agitated locals torched the house at night.

Md Abdus Sobahan, officer in-charge of Pirojpur Sadar Police Station, said a case in connection with the confinement was filed.

"We are trying to arrest the accused," he said.

Our Chattogram correspondent adds, police arrested a man on charges of molesting a seven-year-old girl and attempting to rape her in Boalkhali upazila on Friday night.

Police arrested Md Didarul Alam, 50, from his residence after the girl's mother filed a case with Boalkhali Police Station, said OC Golam Sarwar.

The girl somehow managed to flee and she informed her mother, who later reported the matter to police on Friday night.

A Chattogram court sent Didarul to jail after police produced him before it yesterday.

Illegal soil extraction chokes Titas river

MASUK HRIDOV, Brahmanbaria

A syndicate engaged in extracting soil illegally in Brahmanbaria's Akhaura upazila has curved out a road-like structure through the Titas river under Dharkhar union, where three road-like structures have been built across the river within a one-kilometre stretch from Dharkhar bridge towards the northeast.

As a result, agricultural activities and irrigation systems in the riverbank areas have been severely disrupted.



Locals allege that an influential group led by Mir Ariful, alias 'Shooter Arif', along with his associates Nuruzzaman Shilon and Al Amin, has been illegally extracting soil from the river for years.

They claim the syndicate, backed by political connections with the Awami League and its student wing, has operated with impunity -- even after the recent political shift that saw the AL ousted from power.

Affected local farmers submitted a written complaint with the Akhaura nirbahi officer citing illegal excavation in Bongoj village under Dharkhar union, where three road-like structures have been built across the river within a one-kilometre stretch from Dharkhar bridge towards the northeast.

Every night, the extracted soil is loaded onto trucks and transported to brick kilns and other locations, the complaint added.

Local sources said some 40-50 truckloads of soil are transported daily. Despite operations conducted by district and upazila administrations from time and again, the syndicate remains undeterred.

During a recent visit, this correspondent observed three road-like embankments along the Bongoj-Akhaura regional road, with two of those

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