## Of honour and Biranganas

An expatriate Bangladeshi in the UK fills hearts of post-Liberation War generation with tales of atrocities that the Pakistani occupation forces unleashed on women during the Liberation War in 1971

Dwoha Chowdhury, Sylhet

The atrocities unfolded on women by Pakistani occupation forces during the War of Liberation in 1971 have left an indelible scar in the psyche of the nation. While the nation moves on leaving behind the trauma, it holds dear the glorious sacrifices the heroines and heroes of the country made during the nine-month-long struggle.

In a foreign land thousands of miles away, Munira Parvin, a news presenter at a television channel in the United Kingdom, has taken on the task of telling the harrowing tales of Biranganas, the war heroines of Bangladesh, to the post-Liberation War generation living in that country and elsewhere.

Originally from Sylhet city, Munira recites various forms of literature including stories and poems written about the 1971 war heroines and victims of genocide in Bangladesh.

She recites from Nilima 'Ami Birangana Ibrahim's Bolchhi', interviews Ferdousi Priyabhashini-Rama Chowdhury, Jahanara Imam's 'Ekattorer Dinguli', Anisul

Hoque's 'Maa', Apurba Sharma's 'Birangana Katha' and 'Cha Baganey Gonohotya', Arafat Tanim's 'Ramjan Mashey Gonohotya' and many other books, research publications and interviews.

Besides in the UK, Munira performed recitals in Bangladesh's Dhaka and Sylhet, and in India's Kolkata.

On how it all started, Munira said, "During [my] maternity leave in 2014, I suddenly realised that I am reciting from many poets only to promote myself. But to spread the Bangalee culture, I have to spread the glories of our Liberation War... I started reciting the stories from home."

She said she decided to recite from literatures on Biranganas at different programmes as "this generation has no time to read books, not even those about the Biranganas."

"I started with Nilima Ibrahim's. Every story in her book is long. So I created shorter versions, keeping the original language intact. And when I heard the audience sobbing during the programme, I realised that everyone was feeling it within themselves."

It is that sort of a feeling that sends shivers down your spine, she said, explaining, "Maybe it's because I'm a woman; I can relate to the torture they endured. And that

gives me the strength to carry on and recite the tales of the war heroines.

In December 2008, Munira formed a recital organisation named 'Chhandashik', which is based in the UK.

In London city, Chhandashik organised the first 'International Bangla Recitation Festival' in September of 2019 and in 2018, the organisation staged a play depicting life stories of eight Biranganas.

"But the journey wasn't easy. Many people issued threats on me after my second show as they didn't want me to continue such recitations. But I was resolute and I told them that I will recite at least one tale of a Birangana in every programme that I get a chance to perform," Munira said.

"There lives a Birangana by the name Prova Rani, whom the locals call 'Punjabir Bou [wife of the Punjabis]' -- just to insult her. What are we doing for them [the Biranganas]? I felt the stigma they faced all their lives and that drives me do my work," Munira said in a firm voice.

Munira started learning recitation from her mother at an early age. In 1984, when she was only five, she was admitted to

Shishu Academy in a recitation course. By the time she passed secondary school exams, in 1995, she took recitation lessons from Guru Hemchandra Bhattacharjee and she later on joined the Shishu Academy as a junior instructor.

After studying Bangla Literature in Bangladesh, Munira moved to the UK in 2003 to study Media Culture and Technology at University of Bedfordshire. She married in 2004 and she is mother of two children.

Munira currently works as care coordinator at Apasen, a provider of social and community services in the UK. She also works as a senior news presenter at Channel-S, a television channel there. Besides presenting news, she also anchors a programme on art and culture at the TV channel.

Till date, Munira performed about a hundred recitals on the Liberation War and the Biranganas. She also conducts live recitals on Facebook.

"My vision is to ignite the light of the Liberation War of 1971 in every heart of the post-Liberation War generation in Britain and all around the world. Embodying that spirit, I will do my part till the end,"



# Livelihood of fishermen under threat

Nearly 10,000 families in Kurigram, Lalmonirhat depend on the Brahmaputra and Teesta rivers

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Hundreds of fishermen in Kurigram and Lalmonirhat are going through hard times as fish stocks in the Brahmaputra and Teesta rivers have drastically decreased over the years.

With their traditional livelihood failing to provide for their families, many fishermen have taken loans at high interest from local moneylenders.

"Usually, a group of four or five of us fishermen goes together to the river. After trying for hours, we get around five kilograms of fish," said 46-year-old Sadhan Chandra Das of Majhipara village in Kurigram's Chilmari upazila.

"The situation worsens from December to June as the water level falls. We have no work during this period," said Sadhan, who fishes in the Brahmaputra.

Bishnu Chandra Das, a 56-year-old fisherman from the same village, said, "We are unable to provide for our families with the money we earn from fishing. So, we have to

take loans from the Mohajon (moneylender) with high interest."

"We have to repair our fishing boats and nets at our own expense. So you can easily understand our misery," he added.

Hit hard by poverty, many have already left their ancestral profession and others are

"Many fishermen in our village have already left and are now working as day labourers, some pull rickshaws, and others work in garment factories," said 55-year-old Surendra Nath Das, a fisherman from Daspara village under Kurigram's Rowmari upazila.

"We are deprived of our rights even if the policy is "Jal Jar Khal Tar" [those who have the net have the canal]. It is only on paper. We are not allowed to catch fish in the government canals as politically influential people have occupied those," said Surendra.

"We are instead forced to work as labourers

footsteps, I used to catch fish in the Teesta. But it became difficult for me to maintain my family with the little income from fishing. So, I left the profession," said 38-year-old Nikhil Chandra Das of Daspara village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila. He now pulls rickshaw.

"Around 10,000 families depend on the Brahmaputra and Teesta rivers in Kurigram and Lalmonirhat. Many are frustrated with their ancestral profession," said 70-year-old Narayan Chandra Das of Majhipara under Kurigram's Ulipur upazila.

"The fishermen spend most of their income on repairing and buying fishing nets. That is why they cannot repair their houses while many don't even have their own house," he added.

Lalmonirhat Sadar Upazila Fisheries Officer Hasmat Ali told The Daily Star that the canals are not under the control of fishermen. These have gone into the possession of non-fishermen with political influence.

"In this case, we can do nothing for the "Following in my grandfather and father's fishermen. But we are trying," Hasmat added.

# 5 critical measles affected children flown to CMCH

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Five seriously ill measles affected children of Tripura community were yesterday flown to Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) from remote Lungtian Para under Sajek union of Rangamati by helicopter.

"Our medical team went to the measles affected area yesterday. Finding five of the affected children in serious conditions, we decided to bring them to CMCH by aircraft," said Brigadier General Md Faizur Rahman of Khagrachhari Brigade.

"Our team is also giving proper treatment to the other measles affected children of the remote area," he said.

"Earlier a 16-member medical team of Bangladesh Army along with two of our A helicopter carrying five seriously ailing MBBS doctors went to the affected spot on Tuesday evening," said Dr Istekhar Ahmed, upazila health and family planning officer of Baghaichhari.

"A total of seven children died of measles affected," he said, adding that the affected arrival of the medical team.



measles affected children prepares to fly for Chattogram to arrange their better treatment.

children are badly suffering from malnutrition. Hiranondo Tripura, a ward member of in remote Arun Para and Lungthian Para since the area who visited the spot said the affected February 26 while around 130 children were children didn't get proper treatment before

Several karbaris (village chiefs) of the affected areas alleged that doctors or community health service providers never visit there, showing the excuse of difficulty in reaching the remote place.

A health assistant, who was on the spot for weeks before the medical team arrived yesterday, said, "Following order from the high authorities, I was giving medical service although I am not a doctor. Doctors gave me medical advice over phone, which was not enough to deal with the measles affected children.

Meanwhile, people in Bandarban claimed that a child died of measles and around 40 others, including 33 children, were infected with the virus in a remote area of the hill

Health officials, however, said the child died of an unknown disease.

The campaign to vaccinate 34 million children, aged between 9 months and 10 years, against measles and rubella was scheduled to begin on March 18. But the programme was postponed over the ongoing outbreak of coronavirus.

#### Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Ministry of Education



Secondary Education Sector Investment Program

Memo No. DSHE/SESIP/SPSU/1-438/PVIP(GD-50/a)/2019/938 Date: 25.03.2020

#### ADDENDUM No. 1

to

Procurement Package: GD-50a PVIP Equipment for (Lot 2: General Electrical Works; Lot 3: General Electronics; Lot 4: General Mechanics) and GD-50b PVIP Equipment for (Lot 1: Civil Construction; Lot 4: Refrigeration and Air Conditioning; Lot 5: Plumbing and Pipe Fittings).

This Addendum is being issued pursuant to ITB Sub Clause-8 of the Bidding Document:

Current requirements Subject Amendments (Existing contents) (Contents to be read as) Pre Bid Meeting for GD-50a Pre Bid Meeting for both GD-50a & Pre Tender Meeting is 30.03.2020. GD-50b is 06.04.2020. Pre Bid Meeting for GD-50a Time and place is same as before. is 31.03.2020.

NOTE: All other terms and conditions shall remain unchanged. This ADDENDUM No. 1 shall form an integral part of the bidding document.

> Professor Dr. Shamsun Naher Joint Program Director (R.C.) Secondary Education Sector Investment Program

## Bridge over Madhumati to ease link between capital, SW region

The people of south-western region are eagerly waiting for enjoying faster communication with different parts of the country including the capital Dhaka as the construction of the country's first ever six-lane bridge is scheduled to be complete in September next year.

690-metre-long bridge, being constructed with the financial assistance of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), will reduce 100 kilometres of distance from Jashore to the capital, Syed Gias Uddin, executive engineer of the Roads and Highways Division, also project director (PD) of Kalna Bridge,

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on January 24 in 2015 laid the foundation stone of the Kalna Bridge over the Madhumati River flowing between Kashiani upazila under Gopalganj district and Lohagara upazila under Narail district, the PD said.

The estimated cost of bridge is Tk lanes and there will be a total of 960 crore, he said, adding that over 4.30-kilometre approach roads on 30 percent of the construction work is both sides. already complete.

After opening, the bridge will directly benefit the people of the region including Jashore, Narail, Magura, Jhenidah, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Satkhira and part of Khulna district, project officials said, adding that the benefit will significantly rise after the opening of the Padma Bridge.

The people of the region now use the Jashore-Dhaka Highway via Paturia-Daulatdia ferry route, which requires covering a long way to reach Dhaka from Jashore.

communication between the capital and the country's biggest Land Port time, he added. at Benapole, will be a part of Asian

Highway, the PD said. The 27.1-metre-wide bridge will have six lanes including four lanes for the construction work of the bridge

Md Shahidul Islam Milon, former president of Jashore Chamber of Commerce and

Industries, said after completion of the bridge and re-construction work of the road, the people of the area will enjoy economic advantage, which will be even better after opening of the expressway leading to the underconstruction Padma Bridge.

The economic activities Benapole Land Port, Mongla Sea Port and Noapara

River Port will see a boost while the residents of a vast area will be The bridge, which will also ease able to travel to and from the capital for various purposes in much shorter

Talking to the BSS, several commuters of the region expressed happiness over the rapid progress of high speed vehicles and two service where nearly 300 people are working.



#### Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

College Education Development Project (CEDP) Bhawal Badre Alam Govt. College Chandona, Gazipur



### Corrigendum of Invitation for Tender

Reference No. BhaKa/2020/CEDP/11/241

GD-613

Date: 25.03.2020

The undersigned has to inform that due to unavoidable circumstances tender last selling, closing and opening dates & time of Package No. W-1 (package name: Renovation and refurbishment of ICT Lab, Classroom, Washroom, Lab & Medical Centre) are revised as follows:

Olassicom, Washioom, Eab & Medical Centre, are revised as follows.			
SI No. in	Description	Original date & time	Revised date & time
published			
IFT			
17	Tender last selling date	30/03/2020 at 5:00pm	April 13, 2020 at 5:00pm
18	Tender closing date and time	31/03/2020 at 1:00pm	April 14, 2020 at 1:00pm
19	Tender opening date and time	31/03/2020 at 3:00pm	April 14, 2020 at 3:00pm

**Note:** It is mentioned that if the tender closing and opening date is holiday in that case tenders will be closed and opened in next available working day at same place and same time.

All other things of published IFT (reference No. BhaKa/2020/CEDP/135, date: 15/03/2020) will remain unchanged.

Prof. Masuda Sikder

Principal

Bhawal Badre Alam Govt. College, Gazipur Mobile: 01712116985

GD-610