

# Slow road work leading to wildlife endangerment in Lawachhara

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Movement of cargo traffic -- transporting import and export goods from India -- is increasingly becoming a threat to wildlife and biodiversity at the Lawachhara National Forest as a vital road between the towns of Moulvibazar and Kamalganj upazila remain unrepaired for at least three years.

The 33 kilometre-long road is the only means of communications for 1.5 lakh residents of 16 surrounding unions. Widely known as Chatlapur Check Post Road, it connects Moulvibazar and Shamsheernagar in Kamalganj upazila.

Finally, on September 15 last year, the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) undertook a repair project for the road, at a cost of Tk 42.11 crore.

Even though deadline to complete the work ended on the same date this year, the road still lies in a deplorable state as the contractor firm completed only 30 percent of the work within the stipulated time.

During a visit to the area recently, this correspondent found the road and its sides strewn with various construction materials. In many parts of the road, there was not even any sign of construction work.

In order to evade accidents or damage to precious cargo as well as

the vehicles, heavy trucks were seen taking a detour through Lawachhara in Srimangal.

Nurul Muhaimin Milton, a resident of Patanushar area in Kamalganj upazila, said the Cumilla based contractor firm, RAB-RC Pvt Ltd, dug up the road in many places

and left the site after the outbreak of Covid-19 in the country.

Sufferings of locals, especially of critical patients, pregnant women and the elderly, are inexplicable, said Chatlapur resident Abdul Muhith, a village doctor.

Joly Paul, convener of Lawachhara Bon O Jiboboichitra Rokhya Andolon, said, they have long been demanding a ban on through

traffic on the Lawachhara road for the protection of wildlife in the Lawachhara National Forest. But lately, huge trucks and lorries started plying the road day and night.

The road work had been slow from the beginning and local on various occasions protested negligence of the contractor firm, she also said.

Contacted, Muhibur Rahman, the proprietor of the firm, said they submitted an application to the authorities, seeking extension of the deadline so they can resume the work.

Executive Engineer Zia Uddin of RHD in Moulvibazar said the contractor firm in its application said they could not complete the work due to Covid-19 situation and the monsoon.

He also said that they have asked the firm to finish the work at the soonest and the RHD was in the process of undertaking another project to repair the remaining 13 kilometres of the road.

After the attention of Mir Nahid Ahsan, deputy commissioner of Moulvibazar, was drawn on the matter, he told this correspondent that the contractor firm has been asked to finish the work within the stipulated time while ensuring quality of work.



PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

Strewn with construction materials, the dilapidated Chatlapur Check Post Road now causes nightmare to locals and truckers.

# Millions to earn from malta

SHYKH SERAJ

Today is the World Food Day and this year's theme is: Grow, Nourish, Sustain. Together, its actual meaning during this time of COVID-19, we must reflect on our most basic needs. Food is the quintessence of life and core of our cultures and communities. Access to safe and nutritious food will continue to be an indispensable part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for deprived and vulnerable communities. I completely agree with the theme of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and it is a timely one indeed. Today, I will share with you a story about one of the heroes of our country whose contribution alike others is extremely significant and so much contributing at this critical moment of the pandemic.

In May-June this year, when the corona infection was at its peak in our country several news on malta fruit was published in different newspapers. Since malta has an abundance of vitamin C, the demand for it was also high. On the other hand, the whole world was in lockdown during that period. Imports and exports were also somewhat sluggish. Taking this opportunity, the syndicates unusually raised the price of malta. After reading the investigative reports, I came to know that malta was sold in the wholesale market at Tk 85 (USD 1) per kg at the beginning of the holy Ramadan this year. The demand for malta was increased so much during Ramadan. The unscrupulous syndicate increased the price like the way they wanted. Malta has also been sold at Tk 180 (USD 2.12) per kg at the retail markets. In the last few years, there has been a massive increase in malta cultivation throughout the country. The taste of our malta is no less than that of imported malta, rather, the sweetness is 10 to 15 percent higher.

The impact of coronavirus has taught the people of the world that

and sweetness of this variety were far higher than the imported ones. After the episode went air on Channel i's Hridoye Mati O Manush, I kept on receiving phone calls, text messages, emails and whatnot. Especially the youth group became eager to cultivate malta. Malta was soon spread all over the country. It is not only the youth of the country who started dreaming about malta farming, but even the Bangladeshi expatriates also called and emailed me and showed interest in farming BARI-1 malta. I would also like to remind you about a successful malta farmer from Chuadanga, Sakhawat Hossain. You probably would remember Sakhawat's 40 bighas (13.22 acres) malta orchard. Three years back in 2017, I became fascinated to see the malta orchard of Sakhawat. Since 2016, people from different professions took the enterprise of cultivating malta and surely the contribution of so many,

After returning to the country, Ismail started his malta orchard. He thinks malta farming is comparatively easy and profitable. The first-year investment was Tk 20,000 (USD 235.76). After taking care of the trees with some fertilizer and cleaning for a year or so, he saw malta fruits in the second year. He sold malta, the second year and earned about Tk 20,000. He earned Tk 70,000 (USD 825.15) next year. Afterwards, his profit crossed Tk 1 lakh (USD 1178). Hridoye Mati O Manush brought the images of Ismail's success. He even made more profit by selling malta saplings. Malta has changed all the calculation of profit for Ismail. In the year 2020, Ismail spread his orchard from 12 katha to 19 bighas (6.28 acres) with 4,000 malta trees. It's a mind-blowing success. The market price of Ismail's malta is around Tk 120 (USD 1.41) per kg. Ismail says, in three to four years of sowing the BARI-1 variety, any tree can give around 40 kgs of malta, a season. For example, if you have 4,000 trees in a big orchard, you would certainly get around 4,000 maunds (Approximately 1,50,000 kgs) malta. If you can get Tk 100 (USD 1.17) per kg, you would perhaps earn around 1,50,00,000 (USD 176816.26). Ismail also planted the short-variety Vietnamese coconut. He's also doing orange. Ismail certainly has become a hero of agricultural success in Bangladesh and an inspiration to the entrepreneurs.

When I visited Ismail's orchard in 2016, his malta orchard in Meherpur was about 6 bigha (1.98 acres), but it has increased to about 350 bighas (115.70 acres) in 2020. This is what is called by 'extension.' That's what accomplishment is all about. True entrepreneurs like Ismail could spread the spirit of farming across the country. So many others are now following his footsteps.

Dear readers, farming has evolved and went through many diversified paths. I have always said that a class



Shykh Seraj is Bangladesh's pioneer development journalist. He received country's two highest civilian honours, Swadhinata Puroshkar and Ekushey Padak, respectively. He is a BIDS, Ashoka and Bangla Academy Fellow. He also received highest award for agricultural journalism from the United Nations, FAO A.H. Boerma Award, Gusi Peace Prize (Philippines) and many other prestigious accolades at home and abroad. At Channel i, he's the Founder Director and Head of News. He's also Director and Host of Channel i's popular agro-documentary, Hridoye Mati O Manush.



Shykh Seraj at Ismail's malta orchard at Monakhali village in Meherpur's Mujibnagar area.

PHOTO: HRIDOYE MATI O MANUSH

food is not just a taste of the tongue, it is not only a pleasing experience but it has to be the source of nutrition. If the body does not get balanced nutrition from food, it can break down in any disease. The body's immune system, which comes from food-nutrition, also needs to be boosted to fight the deadly virus. So nutrition is a must. Fruits should be included in the daily food menu along with other foods. Talking to the fruit sellers, I learned that the demand for fruits in the market during this corona period is many times higher than the last few years. And this market was largely captured by the country-made malta, which have been sold at Tk 150 (USD 1.76) per kg in the retail markets. The small malta orchard of Reboti Sikder at Dakatia village in Pirojpur worked behind the spread of malta cultivation all over the country. I was astonished by the taste and sweetness of Reboti's malta, which is our country's BARI-1 variety. The taste

boosted up the production of this very special fruit across the country.

A man from the south-west district of Meherpur, living in Mujibnagar called me. His name is Ismail. In 2016, he came back from Korea with the dream of his farm. Later on, he started his malta orchard on 12 kathas land (0.19 acres) in Monakhali village, 10-km south of Meherpur Sadar upazila. I saw the possibility in him of another Reboti Sikder. When I went there, I saw Ismail has 48 malta trees in his orchard. The trees filled with so many maltas were all bent down. Ismail shared his story with me. He chased the dream of settling in South Korea. After five and a half years of living abroad, he didn't find anything that could make him prosper. The soil of the country was always in his mind. "When in South Korea, I used to watch episodes of Hridoye Mati O Manush on YouTube," shared Ismail. Reboti Sikder became his inspiration.

of enterprising and confident youth is taking the Bangladeshi farming scenario forward. Ismail is one of those brilliant agro-entrepreneurs. I believe that his success will also open the eyes of many new entrepreneurs in the country. This corona pandemic informs us that agriculture is one of the most reliable sectors at the moment. Relying on which, dreams can be seen and achieved. I wish Ismail continued success and look forward to numerous success stories in the farming sector of the country.

In a desperate time like this, it is more significant than ever to recognize the need to support our food heroes. I dedicate this article to all the food heroes of Bangladesh, the farmers and workers in the food system, the policymakers and the media, whose combined efforts have ensured that food is making its way from farm to fork, even during the unprecedented COVID-19 catastrophe.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives  
Local Government Division (LGD)  
Income Support Program for the Poorest (ISPP) –JAWTNO Project  
Level 8, DPHE Bhaban  
14 Shaheed Captain Mansur Ali Sarani  
Kakrail, Dhaka 1000  
Request for Expression of Interest for Individual Consultant

1	Ministry / Division	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives
2	Agency	Local Government Division
3	Name of Procuring Entity	Income Support Program for the Poorest (ISPP)-JAWTNO Project
4	Title of Service	(i) Financial Management Specialist (Accounts) (SI-2a)
5	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
6	Expression of Interest for Selection of	Financial Management Specialist (Accounts) (SI-2a) Individual Consultant- Time based
7	EOI Ref. No.	ISPP/PMU-85 (part-1)/Individual Consultant/2020(SI-2a)
8	Date	15 October, 2020
KEY INFORMATION		
9	Procurement Sub-Method	Selection of Individual Consultants (SIC)
FUNDING INFORMATION		
10	Budget and Source of funds	Development Budget – Aid Grants/Credit
11	Development Partner	IDA/World Bank
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
12	Project/Program Code	224041200
13	Project/Program Name	Income Support Program for the Poorest (ISPP)-JAWTNO Project
14	EOI Closing Date and time	05 November, 2020 – 3:00 p.m.
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT		
15	Brief Description of the Assignments	<b>Financial Management Specialist:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work closely with the Project Director and Deputy Project Director/Focal Point in any necessary updates of Operational Procedures for the Cash Transfer Program;</li><li>• Manage the accounting and budgeting systems to ensure proper fund utilization, enable performance analysis, ensure regular reconciliation, etc.;</li><li>• Prepare timely and relevant interim financial reports for IDA reporting through the project's accounting software;</li><li>• Process withdrawal applications for IDA funds to the Designated Account;</li><li>• Process transfers to BPO and ensure proper reconciliation of expenditure statements;</li><li>• Ensure adequate internal controls for funds management, separation of duties and policy for authorization of transactions, etc.;</li><li>• Coordinate with internal and external auditors to provide information and address queries, and</li><li>• Prepare periodic reports required by LGD or IDA, and ensure proper follow-up.</li></ul>
16	Qualification, Experience, Resources & Delivery Capacity Required	<b>Qualification and Experiences</b> Professional accounting qualifications (FCA or FCMA); with at least a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, Business Administration or Finance <b>Experiences:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At least eight (8) years of work experience in financial management in government/semi-government institutions, or with international donors, implementing development projects</li><li>• Extensive knowledge of Government budgeting, fund release and reporting requirements</li><li>• Extensive knowledge of IDA's financial management and disbursement procedures</li><li>• Excellent spoken and written Bengali and English</li></ul>
17	Indicative starting and completion date (Duration of service)	December 01, 2020 to June 15, 2022
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
18	Name of the Official Inviting EOI	Shaikh Md. Kabeul Islam
19	Designation of the Official Inviting EOI	Project Director (Additional Secretary)
20	Address of the Official Inviting EOI	Level 8, DPHE Bhaban 14 Shaheed Captain Mansur Ali Sarani Kakrail, Dhaka 1000
21	Contact Details of the Official Inviting EOI	Level 8, DPHE Bhaban 14Shaheed Captain Mansur Ali Sarani Kakrail, Dhaka 1000 Phone:88-02-55130514 E-mail: pd.ispp.lgd@gmail.com
22	Two copies of Expression of Interest (EOI)/ application along with copies of certificates of all academic/professional qualifications, copies of experience certificates and a passport size photograph of the applicants in a sealed envelope shall be submitted to the office of the Project Director at the address given above within the closing date and time specified above. On the top of the sealed envelope the applicant shall write the name of the post. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all EOIs without assigning any cause or reason.	
GD-1644		 (Shaikh Md. Kabeul Islam) Project Director (Additional Secretary) ID 4541 (Admn.) Income Support Program for the Poorest (ISPP)-JAWTNO Project

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Ministry of Road Transport & Bridges  
Bridges Division  
Bangladesh Bridge Authority  
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[www.bba.gov.bd](http://www.bba.gov.bd)

Memo No. 50.01.0000.407.38.006.20-593

Date: 15/10/2020

Request for Expression of Interest (International)  
Cancellation Notice

This is to inform all concerned that the Tendering process for the Request for Expression of Interest (International), for "Selection of Service Provider for Supply, Customize, Implement and Maintain a Proven Off-the-Shelf Modern Real-Time web based On-Line Centralized Toll Collection System with Web Based Monitoring and Related Services with Complete Technology Transfer to BBA for Toll Collection of Bangabandhu Bridge" which was issued vide Memo No. 50.01.0000.407.38.006.20-590; Dated: 12 October 2020 published on 13 October 2020 on [www.dgmarketbd.com](http://www.dgmarketbd.com), [www.bba.gov.bd](http://www.bba.gov.bd) and on 14 October 2020 in the 4 (four) National Dailies, "Daily Prothom Alo", "Daily Ittefaq", "The Daily Star" and "The Financial Express", has been cancelled due to unavoidable circumstances.

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GD-1642