

# The 'Birangona' we never knew

S DILIP ROY WITH FIROZ A MUZAHID

It was a Saturday noon in 1971 when Jahiron Bewa's world came tumbling down.

The ordeal that unfolded that day and continued throughout the next three days left a deep-rooted scar in the mind of the 25-year-old woman, now 74.

"I can never forget the unspeakable horror that was unleashed on me. It comes back when I close my eyes. Memories of those days are still vivid," said Jahiron.

All these years, she bottled up the pain to herself and turned away from those who asked about her trauma. "But I won't live much longer and now I think that time has come for me to let everyone know what the war did to me," she said.

The War of Independence was raging on elsewhere at the time and the Pakistan army had just set up a camp near the Teesta railway bridge -- about 500 meters from their village named Teesta Pangatari in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

But until that day, Jahiron had a simple life, revolving around her husband and their two children -- a 10-year-old daughter and a two-year-old son.

She could not remember the exact date. But she remembers clearly that her daughter was visiting her grandfather's house and her husband, Kazim Ullah, was also not home when she saw people fleeing as the Pakistan troops were entering the village.

Jahiron, while nursing her toddler, had to make a quick decision. As she could not think of leaving her loved ones behind for her own safety, she decided to hole up inside the house until her husband and

daughter returned home.

But the Pakistani intruders broke in to the house. Tossing her baby onto the ground, three of them raped her. While they dragged her out of the house, she pleaded to take the baby with her. But her plea could not soften the minds of the soldiers.

They took her to their camp and there they committed brutal sexual and physical assaults on her for three days, reminisced Jahiron with agony in her eyes.

But after she was released from the camp, her husband Kazim refused to take her back. Several days later he retracted from the decision, but Jahiron was never the same person.

Reeling from the trauma, she withdrew herself from everyone around her. She spent most of her days crying and she could not even tend to her breastfeeding child.

Later, Jahiron and Kazim had two more children together, but their relations never healed, she said adding that she had to endure repression and abuse from Kazim until he passed away 20 years ago.

Their children are now all grown up, but they are busy taking care of their own families.

Neglected by the children, the frail elderly woman now survives on old age allowance of the government and a meagre income from working as domestic help.

The government did not yet recognise Jahiron as Birangona (war-heroine) -- the women and girls who had been raped systematically by the Pakistan occupation forces and their collaborators during the Liberation War of Bangladesh.



Illegal selling of birds is rampant on Dhaka-Sylhet highway in Debpara bazar area of Habiganj's Nabiganj upazila. Below, Rab in a drive seizes birds from poachers in the upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

## Illegal sale of birds goes unabated on Dhaka-Sylhet highway

MINTU DESHWARA, back from Habiganj

Illegal selling of birds are going on unabated on Dhaka-Sylhet highway in Habiganj.

During a recent visit to Debpara bazar area in Nabiganj upazila of the district, this correspondent found that the sale of birds was going on rampantly on the highway.

The price of a heron is at Tk 250 while a duck is sold at Tk 400. Apart from that, rare birds are too pricey in the highway area, he added.

Bird hunter Saju Mia said he has been selling birds on the highway



He added that they set traps at 40 spots in Hail Haor and other haor areas this time, poaching birds. Besides, they use airgun to catch birds.

These birds are sold at different rural haats and bazars including Debpara bazar in the highway area, he said.

On October 11, Habiganj's Baniachang Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Masud Rana fined a hunter named Abdul Hamid for poaching birds with a trap in Dali Maholla Haor area near Habiganj-Baniachang road.

Sajen Mia, a resident of the area, said Hamid sets traps near his

house to catch birds. He has been involved in the illegal hunting and sale of birds for long.

The UNO said, he saw the hunter poaching birds with traps while passing through the road on October 11. He then seized 15 birds from Hamid. The poacher was fined at Tk 1,000. He later released the birds.

Major Ahmed Noman Zaki, camp commander of Rab-9 Srimangal Camp, said a team of elite force, on secret information, raided Nabiganj area on Dhaka-Sylhet highway on September 18 last year and recovered birds.

They also arrested five bird

poachers from the area, he said. The hunters poached the birds in haor and then brought them to the highway for sale, said the Rab official, adding that they also arrested four bird poachers from the highway at Debpara bazar on October 13.

A mobile court later fined the four arrestees, said Assistant Commissioner (land) Sumaiya Momin in Nabiganj.

She added that all the rescued 21 birds were white herons. The herons were being sold at high prices. The herons were later released into the open sky.

If anybody is found poaching and selling birds illegally in the areas, punitive action will be taken against them, said Sumaiya.

Dr Jahirul Hoque Shakil, a prominent professor of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology and a life member of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa), said according to the Wildlife Conservation and Security Act, hunting and killing of any kind of birds is a punishable offence.

"I think that the illegal act goes unabated in the Sylhet division and other parts of the country due to lack of awareness and proper execution of the law," he said.



Jahiron Bewa -- the unrecognised Birangona of Teesta Pangatari village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Superintending Engineer, RHD  
Road Circle, Patuakhali  
Phone, Fax No. 0441-64457, 0441-65114  
E-mail: se.rhdpatuakhali@gmail.com

Memo No. 35.01.7895.193.07.001.20-1076 Date: 01.12.2020

### e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concerned that the following tender have been published through e-GP Portal.

Sl. No.	Tender ID & Package No.	Name of works	Last selling, closing date & time
01.	518853 & 01/e-GP/PRC/BRD/Supply/2020-2021	1st Class Bricks, Stone Chips, Coarse Sand, OPC Cement & Asphalt Materials Supply for Departmental maintenance work at Different Roads of Barguna Road Sub-Division under Barguna Road Division during the year 2020-2021.	21-12-2020 at 17.00 & 22-12-2020 at 12.30

The interested persons/firms may visit the website [www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) to get the details of the tender. This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

Abu Sayeed Md. Nazmul Huda  
ID. No. 005201  
Superintending Engineer, RHD  
Road Circle, Patuakhali

GD-1921

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Project Director  
Establishment of 100 Technical School and College (TSC) in Upazila  
Directorate of Technical Education  
Agargaon, Dhaka 1207  
Web: [www.techedu.gov.bd](http://www.techedu.gov.bd)

Ref. No. 37.03.0000.070.007.203.020.447 Date: 01 December, 2020

### e-Re-Tender Notice

Sl. No.	Tender Ref.	Tender ID No. (From e-GP Portal)	Tender description	Publication date and time	Opening date and time
1	37.03.0000.070.007.203.020.446-Date: 29.11.2020	515709	Supply and Installation of Computer Lab Equipments for 25 Technical School and College at Different Upazilas	03-Dec-2020	20-Dec-2020

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on e-GP System (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders.

*(Signature)*  
01.12.2020  
Dr. Md. Sirajul Islam  
Project Director (Joint Secretary)  
Email: 100ts.pd@gmail.com

GD-1920

### 3 workers die from electrocution in Oman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Three Bangladeshi workers, including two siblings, have died from electrocution while fixing a water pump in Oman on Tuesday.

The deceased are Mohammad Mostafa, 50, and Nur Hossain Nasir, 40, sons of Haji Fakhrul Islam of Satashdron village in Subarnachar upazila, and Alamgir Hossain, 35, son of Bahar Uddin of Miarhat area in the same upazila, one of Mostafa's relatives Zia Uddin Farooq said, adding that the incident occurred 8:00am local time.

Farooq said Mostafa went to Oman about 20 years ago.

Five years later his younger brother Nasir also followed him to the Middle East country and joined his Mostafa at the same company as an electrician.

Alamgir, who joined the same company in Oman about six years back, was staying together with the two siblings in the city of Al Wafa.

On Tuesday morning, Alamgir first entered into a deep-well for carrying out installation works of a water pump while Mustafa followed him later on.

Failing to get any response from the duo for long, Nasir also went inside the deep well and came in contact with live electricity.

Being informed by the co-workers, a firefighting unit rushed to the spot and recovered their bodies.



শেলটেক SHELTECH Since 1988

## SHELTECH WINTER FESTIVAL 2020

1<sup>st</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> December

**Time:** 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM  
**Venue:** Sheltech Tower, 55, West Panthapath, Dhaka - 1205.

**ATTRACTIVE DISCOUNT FOR ON-SPOT BOOKING\***

*\*Conditions Apply*

For More Details...  
**16550**

\*Health safety precautions are rigorously maintained at our premises.

[www.sheltech-bd.com](http://www.sheltech-bd.com) | [/sheltechprivatelimited](https://www.facebook.com/sheltechprivatelimited) | [/sheltechprivatelimited](https://www.instagram.com/sheltechprivatelimited)