



Labourers cutting off topsoil from a farmland for manufacturing bricks in different brick kilns of Tangail's Basail upazila.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Topsoil removal for brick making damages fertility of farmlands

Powerful syndicate already sold earth from at least 7 different points in the last couple of weeks

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Topsoil of croplands are being used for manufacturing bricks in different brick kilns of Tangail's Basail upazila, damaging the fertility of lands and also destroying local environment.

A group of influential earth traders are buying the topsoil of the farmlands from local people in Kawaljani union of the upazila and selling the soil to different brickfields.

As a result, the local rural roads have been badly damaged due to rampant plying of earth-laden trucks and illegal tractors.

Local people said the influential traders were cutting off topsoil at least seven points in Moheshkhali and Ronggilabari

areas of the union for the last couple of weeks.

The syndicate of powerfull earth traders having political clout is doing the brisk business of crores of taka after managing the local administration, they alleged.

Hobibur Rahman Chowdhury Hobi, chairman of Kawaljani Union Parishad, said the rural roads in the area were badly damaged by the recent devastating and prolonged floods. Now the roads are also being damaged due to rampant plying of earth-laden heavy vehicles.

Despite repeated pleas, the influential earth traders did not pay any heed to the matter, he said, adding that only the local administration can stop the illegal act.

Asked about the matter, Nahian Noon, assistant commissioner (Land) in Basail,

they were not informed about the matter.

Necessary steps will be taken in this regard after investigating the matter, said the assistant commissioner.

Contacted, Mohammad Mujahidul Islam, deputy director (DD) of Directorate of Environment in Tangail, said the use of topsoil for brick making causes serious damages to the croplands and its fertility.

However, they have nothing to do in this regard as it is the duty of the local assistant commissioner to take action to stop the illegal act, he said.

The DD added that the brick kiln owners all use the topsoil of the farmlands to make bricks. They must have taken permission from the deputy commissioner's office to collect earth for manufacturing bricks.

PANGSHA MUNICIPALITY

Stop dumping garbage by highway, demand locals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

In a display of disregard for human health and the environment, for the past couple of years, the authorities of Pangsha municipality in Rajbari have been dumping garbage from the town onto a spot right beside the Rajbari-Kushtia regional highway.

Stench from the massive pile of decomposing garbage near 'College Mor' area on the highway has created a suffocating atmosphere for locals and commuters alike.

Established in 1990, Pangsha municipality has yet to introduce a waste management system for the town. As a result, waste from households, businesses as well as hospitals and clinics in the area are being disposed of out in the open, raising the risk of spreading contagious diseases.

During a recent visit, this correspondent witnessed dumping of garbage at the spot from rickshaw-vans and garbage trucks engaged by Pangsha municipality.

Requesting not to be named, a garbage collection worker of the municipality said, "We've been dumping waste here for the last two years as there's no waste management system in the municipality."

College student Animesh Chakraborti, a resident of Purapara area, said, "Garbage is being dumped beside an important road, causing the spread of foul smell and making lives of commuters as well locals miserable."

College Mor area resident Abdus Samad said liquid waste from the dump starts flowing on the road during rain and pedestrians have no other option but to walk over it and risk spreading of diseases.

Poisonous smoke emitted from burning of the garbage is also causing respiratory problems for locals, especially their children, he added.

Ashish Das, a resident of Banjana village, said, "We are the worst sufferers as we have to use this road to get to Pangsha town. I hope the municipality authorities will take necessary steps in resolving this situation permanently."

Contacted, Pangsha Municipality Mayor Abdul Al Masud Biswas admitted people's sufferings and said, "We are compelled to dump the garbage there because we have no other place... We submitted a plan to the higher authorities and we hope that the problem will be solved soon."



Commuters on a rickshaw-van pass the open landfill, created by Pangsha municipality in Rajbari, near College Mor area on Rajbari-Kushtia regional highway. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SUZIT KUMAR DAS



PHOTO: STAR

The construction work of 250-bed hospital in Pirojpur town progresses in full swing.

PIROJPUR 250-BED HOSPITAL

30% work completed, construction in full swing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

The construction work of 250-bed hospital in Pirojpur town is going on in full swing. A total of 30 percent work of the construction has been completed so far.

People from nearby district will also be benefitted following completion of the construction work of the 12-storey hospital.

Under the supervision of Public Works Department (PWD) in Pirojpur, Banga Builders Ltd and Khan Builders (JV) are constructing the hospital building.

The work order for construction of the hospital building was given on August 30 in 2018 and it was scheduled to be completed within January this year. But due to coronavirus situation, the construction work was badly hampered.

The authorities concerned later extended the time till December next year, said a PWD official.

Md Sultan Mahmud Shoikot, sub-divisional engineer of PWD office in Pirojpur, said they are expecting to complete the main structure of the building in between

August and September next year.

The construction work is now going on in full swing, he said.

Locals said Pirojpur is one of the underdeveloped southern districts of the country. The health service here is not satisfactory. At present, Pirojpur District Hospital has the capacity of 100 beds. If any patient suffers from critical illness, he is referred to Khulna or Barishal.

"It takes over one hour to reach Barishal or Khulna to carry a patient," said an ambulance driver in Pirojpur town.

It is also expensive to take

patients, especially poor one, to Khulna and Barishal.

"Most often it is difficult for the people to carry a patient to Khulna or Barishal if the patient's condition is critical," said Khalid Abu, Pirojpur district unit general secretary of Udichi Shilpi Goshthi, adding that after being completed the construction work of the 250-bed hospital, it will ensure better health facility to the patients of the district.

He said that they demanded for a medical college in Pirojpur for a long time.



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(Rashid Ahmed)
General Manager (Foreign Purchase)
Phone : 88-02-9205103.

GD- 2104



Nearly a year of its installation, the CT scan (computed tomography scan) machine at 250-bed Pabna General Hospital begins operation on Sunday. The hospital authorities got the 440 voltage new power connection recently, following a report, headlined 'Cost Tk 2cr, service zero,' published on the country page of The Daily Star on December 1.

PHOTO: STAR

Nirmul Committee distributes warm clothes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee (Committee for Realisation of Bangladesh Liberation War Ideals and Trial of War criminals) distributed warm clothes among the Baul singers and their family members in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila yesterday.

The committee members distributed 220 blankets and same number of bed covers among the cold-hit families during a programme organised at Sufala Satej Government Primary School premises in the upazila, says a press release.

On the occasion, a colourful cultural programme was arranged, where child singers performed 'Lalon Geeti' and 'Bhawaiya' songs.



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