

National

Making money by human trafficking through Indian enclaves

KURIGRAM, Oct 17: For innocent people an enclave is a toughest place to live in. But for human traffickers 71 Indian enclaves in Kurigram and Lalmonirhat districts have become potential territories to make money by human trafficking from Bangladesh, reports UNB.

According to enclave residents, human traffickers lure a large number of women and children into their trap from various parts of Bangladesh and smuggle them out to India and Middle East countries through the enclaves every year.

They alleged that the human smugglers pick up poor women and children from the mainland of Bangladesh, take them to the Indian enclaves and collect Indian nationality certificates

against their names from chairman of the enclaves and then hand them over to their accomplices in the Indian mainland.

According to information trickling in from across the border, some 300 Bangladeshi nationals out of 1,000 trafficked during the last year have been languishing in different Indian jails, including 50 in Dinhata Sub-Divisional jail in Kuchhbari.

Those who escaped police arrest have been coerced into various odd jobs, including prostitution, in various parts of India.

Of the 71 enclaves, 12 are located in Kurigram while 59 in Lalmonirhat. As enclaves are detached from the Indian mainland and encircled by Bangladesh territories, Indian officials and law-enforcers hardly enter into

their small territories.

The enclaves are virtually controlled by terrorists and smugglers in absence of Indian administration. Residents of each and every enclave usually elect a chairman for five years and they have to cast votes in favour of the influential and corrupt people.

There have been reports that these corrupt chairmen provide Indian nationality certificates for the smuggled Bangladeshi people at Tk 500-1000 each. The enclave people hardly dare raise their voice against the chairmen and smugglers for fear of reprisal.

More interesting is that there are some female human traffickers who are locally known as 'Jhumkawali'. Their role in taking the Bangladeshi people to the Indian mainland is vital as they

have link with BSF.

Locals said that at a large number of people were trafficked out of Bangladesh to India with certificates from the chairman of Dashpara Enclave in Fulbari upazila of Kurigram district.

Two of them are now languishing in an Indian jail.

They were identified as Rahima, 35, Rafiqul, 27, Chhelo, 40, Mumtaz, 33, Fazil Haq, 28, Saidur Rahman, 20, Jothsna Begum, 28, Saidul, 15, Abdur Rahim, 35, Rabeya, 18, Asraful, 25, and Rezaul, 20, of Fulbari upazila of Kurigram district.

Some of the relatives of the victims reportedly met with them in Dinhata jail with the help of BSF. They urged the government for taking steps to take them back home.

Low price makes jute growers unhappy

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 17: Farmers here are selling jute below the production cost due to sharp fall in demand for the golden fibre.

According to growers, number of buyers of jute in markets is very few. As a result, the farmers are in trouble with their product. Taking advantage of the situation a section of middlemen are controlling the jute market. They are offering prices much below the production cost, causing frustration among growers.

At present, jute is being sold at Tk 240 to 265 per maund in local markets. Some farmers in Sadar upazila said at least Tk 395 is required to produce a maund of jute fibre, but they are selling the product much below the production cost. Private and government agencies have not yet started purchasing jute in the current season.

However, the farmers are reluctant to sell jute to the government agencies due to long-drawn procedure in getting prices. Some jute traders said that they are purchasing jute between Tk 240 and Tk 275 per maund depending on quality. They said with the increase in transport and labour costs they can not pay more than Tk 275 for a maund. In absence of local

buyers, jute is being smuggled to neighbouring India.

Tissa variety is in demand in the Indian markets, farmers said. Jute price at the purchasing centres was set at Tk 857 (tossa variety) and Tk 777 (white variety) per quintal. But the traders are not inclined to bring in jute at the centres for non-payment of outstanding dues. As a result, jute price has declined.

In fact, rural markets and the growers face problem with jute. Informed sources said large quantities of jute are sold to buyers coming from across the border.

An unknown quantity of jute is smuggled out every year through the border. As the jute mills have either closed or turned sick, for golden fibre has now reduced to a problem for the farmers.

Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Department, said jute cultivation in northern districts has declined drastically in last 5 years. He estimated that jute was cultivated only on 50,000 hectares this year as against 5 lakh hectares. Farmers of Sirajganj district in nine upazilas cultivated deshi and tissa on about 10 thousand 996 hectares.

Irregularities' in Cox's Bazar Telephone Deptt

From Abdul Monayem Khan

COX'S BAZAR, Oct 17: Telephone and fax subscribers here have been suffering a lot due to alleged irregularities and malpractice by a section of officials and employees of the local Telephone Department.

It is alleged that, some telephone subscribers of the district town have underhand dealings with the staffers of the switch room and some officials of the local auto-telephone exchange and can use their telephone sets frequently and keep the channel under NWD system engaged for hours together in exchange of illegal gratification.

As a result, the government has been incurring a loss of about Taka 12 lakh revenue every year.

Many telephone subscribers of the town and the adjoining areas on condition of anonymity told this correspondent that they pay Taka 3,000 to Taka 3,500 to the staffers of the switch room and other officials every month to keep their telephone sets operating under NWD system.

At least 400 telephones are now under this kind of contract. Those contract telephone subscribers pay a nominal bills Taka 500 to Taka 1,000 to the government under the contract.

Telephone Department snapped 40 illegal telephone connections at Cox's Bazar town after the news of malpractice had appeared in some daily newspapers last year. But after a few days the illegal telephone business began to the surprise of all.

Besides, the telephone lines of the subscribers remain out of order most of the time. Dial tones come and go frequently. Cross connection, wrong number, feeble sound and ghost bills are constant troubles faced by the subscribers.

Subscribers of the town, most of whom are businessmen, are to depend on telephone sets to contact different places in the country for their business transactions. But due to erratic behaviour of their telephone sets they are facing much difficulties.

Besides, cards have become scarce in the post offices. But the users said, these are available in black market at a rate higher than the actual price.

Card phone users have urged the authorities to take measures to fix the phones and stop black marketing of the cards to ensure easy telephone services to the people.

Bad days for day-labourers

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Oct 17: Day labourers, especially agriculture day labourers have been passing their days in great hardship for want of jobs.

Hundreds of labourers are found to assemble at different labour markets of Alipur, Goalchamot and Tepakholia in the town to sell their labours every day. One fourth or one third of the labourers gathered get job and the rest have to go back home being very disappointed. Many of the day labourers come to these labour markets walking a distance of four to five miles to get jobs. They appeared at the markets in the early morning and wait there till noon seeking even odd jobs.

When interviewed some day labourers going back home from the labour market getting no job said that jobs are seldom available adding that a strong and stout day labourer earns Tk 40 to 50 a day at present as against Tk 80 to 95 a day one and half months ago.

Torrential rainfall with frequent intervals during the last months has made the labour unemployment very acute. Some day labourers are reported to have been passing their days half fed and unfed.

The Padma has been devouring hundreds of hectares of land round the year turning the land owners into day labourers, one day labourer said adding that this

News snaps

Literacy drive faces setback

From Our Correspondent

NILPHAMARI, Oct 17: The official target to wipe out illiteracy from here through Total Literacy Movement (TLM) programme may face setback if adequate fund is not provided soon.

The Mass Education Department has set a target to make 2,58,961 illiterate people, including 1,36,650 women under a programme named Chetana Nilphamari' literate which involves an amount of Taka 8 crore. Illiterate people will be taught in 8,632 centres under 575 supervisors. An official of the Non-Formal Education (NFE) Department said the Mass Education Department could not yet allocate fund. But it had decided to complete the programme by October this year. However, Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Nilphamari has floated tender for procuring educational appliances for the project.

Jessore flood loss

BENAPOLE, Oct 17: Standing crops worth over Tk 186 crore in five upazilas of Jessore district were damaged by the devastating flood till October 13, reports UNB.

According to official sources, flood washed away transplanted Aman on 40,500 hectares of land, broadcast Aman on 2,357 hectares and vegetables on 4,070 hectares. Upazila-wise extent of damage was estimated at Tk 87.66 crore in Sharsha, Tk 25.23 crore in Chougantha, Tk 50.64 crore in Jhikorgacha, Tk 16.42 crore in Monirampur and Tk 6.26 crore in Keshabpur.

Flood victims returning home

MEHERPUR, Oct 17: Traumatised flood victims have started returning homes from flood centres with the improvement of overall flood situation in three upazilas here, reports UNB.

Meanwhile, relief operations by government and non-government organisations have been intensified in the flood-affected areas. Prof Abdul Mannan, MP, Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Cultural Affairs Ministry, visited the flood-hit areas of Amdah, Amjhupi and Baradi in Sadar upazila Sunday and distributed relief materials among the victims. According to the Deputy Commissioner, Meherpur, 490 metric tons of rice has so far been distributed among the flood victims.

Jessore flood death toll 20

JESSORE, Oct 17: Some 8,000 people in five upazilas here have been attacked with various diseases, including diarrhoea, with the recession of floodwaters, reports UNB.

When contacted Civil Surgeon Dr Rahmat-e-Khuda said some 2,820 people have been attacked by diarrhoea while 4,725 by other waterborne diseases. "Unfortunately, children are the worst victims," he said adding that 548 medical teams are working in the affected areas to combat the diseases. Twenty deaths caused by snakebite, house collapse and drowning have so far been reported from the flood-affected areas.

The amount of toll collection along Bangabandhu Jamuna Bridge has increased a lot with the increasing number of plying vehicles. Jamuna Maintenance and Operation Company (Jomac), has collected an amount of Taka 145,78,12,530 as toll in 27 months. A total of 20,76,745 vehicles crossed the bridge till now since the commissioning of the bridge. Photo shows drivers of two passing cars paying tolls in the toll plaza (east) of the bridge.

BJMC Advertisement International Tender Notice

Amin Jute Mills Ltd, Sholashahar, Chittagong invites sealed quotation from the overseas manufacturers/bonafide suppliers or their local agents in Bangladesh for import of (1) PT-23(F)/2000, spares & chemicals (2) PT-24(F)/2000, bearing (3) PT-25(F)/2000, sewing machine spares (4) PT-26(F)/2000, spares for carpet shearing machine (5) PT-27(F)/2000, spares for gasoline boiler (6) PT-28(F)/2000, spares for hibbert & lessona dressing machine (7) PT-29(F)/2000, chains, workshop tools & others from the member countries of OECD and all developing countries (except Bangladesh) under Japanese Debt Relief Grant Foreign Exchange allotment on FOB and C&FC Chittagong basis by sea/air.

Tender schedule with full specification, terms & conditions along with the name of source countries will be available on all working days (except opening date) on cash payment of Tk 220/- per set from the (1) Dy General Manager (Accounts), BJMC, Adamjee Court, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka (2) Manager (A&F), BJMC, 99, Agrabad C/A, Chittagong (3) Dy General Manager (A&F), Amin Jute Mills Ltd, Sholashahar, Chittagong.

Tender along with earnest money (as mentioned in the schedule) will be received up to 12.00 Noon on 20.11.2000 in the tender box kept in the office of (1) Dy General Manager (Planning), BJMC, Adamjee Court, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka (2) Liaison Office, BJMC (CZ), 99, Agrabad C/A, Chittagong and (3) Dy General Manager (Admin), Amin Jute Mills and will be opened at 12-30 pm on the same day at the above points simultaneously in presence of the tenderer (if any). The management reserves the right to accept or reject any tender or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

BJMC-612 Dated: 10.10.2000
DFP-24666-12/10
G-1811

Directorate General Defence Purchase Ministry of Defence New Airport Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215

Tender Notice

1. Sealed tender in foreign currency is invited from bonafide manufacturers/dealers/suppliers (enlisted firms in DGDP) for supply of the following items for Bangladesh Navy.

SI No	Name of Items & Qty	From	To	Date of Opening	Tender No
1.	Spares for Wartsila Generator, Qty-61L/I.	23-10-2000	30-11-2000	3-12-2000	6554/NP-2
2.	Spares for Dock Crane, Qty-26L/I.	23-10-2000	30-11-2000	3-12-2000	6555/NP-2
3.	Spares for Cummins Engine, Qty-10+10L/I.	23-10-2000	30-11-2000	3-12-2000	6556/NP-2
4.	Spare for Reverse Mechanism, Qty-18L/I	23-10-2000	30-11-2000	3-12-2000	6557/NP-2
2.	Tender schedule with detailed specification/condition will be available on payment as per I/T selling rate (not refundable) during office hours between 0800 hours and 1300 hours. The tender can be dropped latest by 1000 hrs and opened at 1005 hours on the specified date of opening in the presence of tenderers (if present).				
	ISPR/Misc/2000/832 DFP-24720-12/10 G-1812				

Lt. Commander BN
for Director General.



Flood affected people have started repairing their damaged houses following recession of waters from Moheshpur and Kotchandpur upazilas in Jhenidah district. Photos (Left to right) were taken from village Keshabpur and village Sejia in Moheshpur upazila.

Jhenidah flood victims pass miserable days

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH, Oct 17: About four lakh flood affected in Moheshpur and Kotchandpur upazilas in the district are passing hard days as the flood damaged their houses, belongings and crops on acres of land. The flood victims are facing acute shortage of food, drinking water, medicine and clothes.

The floodwater started entering Moheshpur upazila on September 22 after the Ichhamati river overflowed. The floodwater soon engulfed areas of Moheshpur and Kotchandpur upazilas, rendering people homeless.

During a visit to Sejia and Keshabpur, villages last week villagers told this correspondent they did not receive any cash money from the government. We received only scanty assistance in the form of rice, they said. The villagers said they need money to rebuild their houses.

According to unofficial estimate, crops on all 1,850 hectares

Rly land grabbed in Chapainawabganj

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Oct 17: A vast tract of land owned by Bangladesh Railway went under illegal occupation, depriving the government of huge revenue, reports UNB.

According to the Amnara estate office of BR, most of the 819 bighas of land of Chapainawabganj, Rohanpur and Amnara stations have already been grabbed by the illegal occupants.

An official, wishing anonymity, told the news agency that an influential quarter in connivance with a section of dishonest railway officials and employees occupied the land.

The arrested were identified as Md Mohsin, 25, Johirul Hoque, 24, Atiqul Hoque Murad, 25, Mainuddin, 24, Monimul Hoque Babul, 20, and Kawsarul Hoque Dedar, 23.

Police rescued the boy from Johirul Hoque's house. The youths were arrested from different parts of the town.

Slums, shops and other structures are being built on the government land day by day but no

action has yet