

# Fake medicines supplied to Rangpur hospitals for 2 yrs

## Arrested fake chemist tells police: Pressure from BNP leaders to drop some names from case

**RAFIQUE SARKER, Rangpur**

Spurious medicines produced in fake factories here were supplied to Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH), Sadar Hospital, TB Hospital and seven upazila health complexes in the district for the last two years, arrested Mahfuz Amin Setu, now on remand, told police. He divulged "a lot of information" about spurious medicines, Detective Branch police said. He was taken on three-day remand on Saturday.

Mahfuz Amin Setu, a fake chemist, was arrested when police raided a fake laboratory at Pannardighi in the Sadar upazila on August 3 and recovered huge quantities of spurious medicines and fertiliser.

Quoting from Setu's statement, a DB source said that some of the spurious life saving medicines produced in the fake factory were packed and labeled in the name of reputed pharmaceutical companies and supplied to these hospitals.

Besides information on production

and supply of spurious medicines, Mahfuz Amin also disclosed some "sensational information", the sources said but declined to disclose for the sake of investigation.

Three alleged spurious medicine dealers Joynal Abedin, Azad, and Mosaddeque Bablu-- had formed an "armed gang" in and around the RMCH. They did all sorts of crimes in the hospital.

Whenever some one opened mouth against them, they never hesitated to take any action to stop him.

A source at the RMCH said Azad and Mosaddeque Bablu were subcontractors who supplied medicines to the hospital on behalf of an influential BNP and DAB (Doctors Association of Bangladesh) leader.

Some months ago, they presented the BNP leader a luxurious car.

The DB sources said they are facing a "tough situation now as some influential BNP leaders are pressing them to exclude the name of Joynal Abedin, Mosaddeque Bablu and Azad from the

case lodged for producing spurious medicines in the fake laboratory at Pannardighi.

Meanwhile the local units of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) and Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) continued their programmes for arrest of the culprits who produced fake medicines and supplied those to hospitals.

On Saturday, activists of the parties staged a four-hour token hunger strike in front of the Court Square.

The hunger strike programme ended with formation of a human chain.

Dr. Swapan, Sakwat Ranga, Goutom Roy and other leaders led the programmes that started at 10:00 am.

The JSD leaders expressed their deep concern over alleged the police inaction in arresting the producers of spurious medicine, fertiliser and cement and their dealers.

They claimed that police, instead of arresting the culprits suggested them to go to Dhaka and pay for High Court bail.

Meanwhile Rangpur Civil Surgeon Dr. Joynal Abedeen told this correspon-

dent that they have not yet formed any probe body to investigate the matter but asked the authorities of ACME Laboratory and Aristopharma to check the quality of medicines Eftear Pharmacy supplies to their depots.

Eftear Pharmacy, whose proprietor is the wife of Joynal Abedin, is supposed to supply medicines of ACME Labratory and Aristopharma under a contract.

Zamil Hossen, Rangpur Depot Manager of Aristopharma

Said he was asked to examine the quality of medicines supplied by Eftear Pharmacy. He is awaiting an official letter from the Civil Surgeon in this regard.

When asked if any probe body was formed to investigate

Supply of spurious medicines to RMCH, Director of the hospital Dr. A.K.M Shahariar said, " I won't say anything about this."

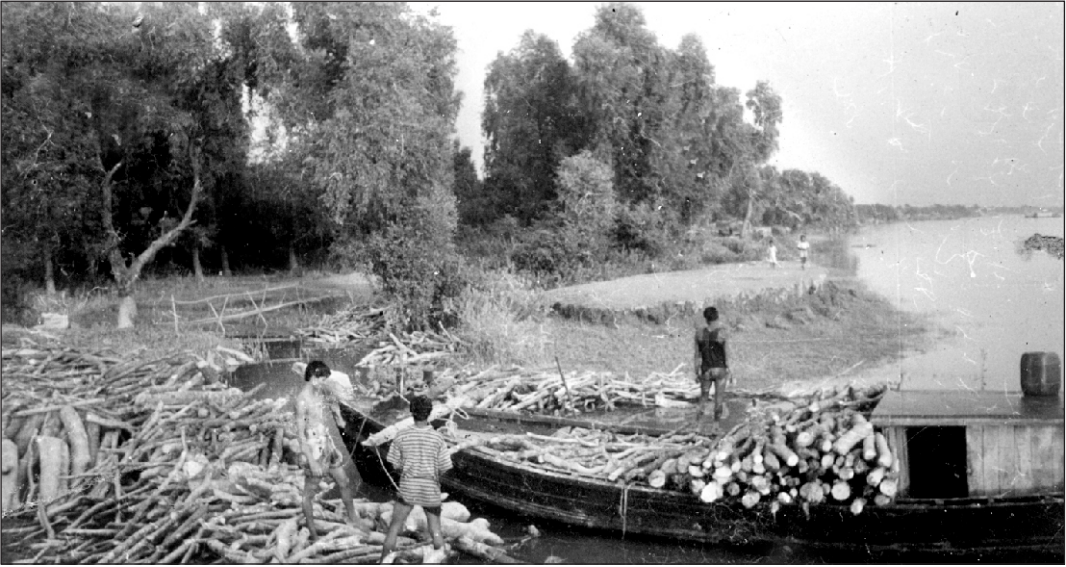


PHOTO: STAR

Freestyle pilferage... forest bandits loading pilfered trees on a trawler at Katra cost in Patuakhali.

# Unabated looting of coastal forests

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhalis**

Reserve forests in coastal areas of Patuakhali are disappearing due to large scale felling of timber trees by organised gangs of thieves.

Local people alleged that the gangs are stealing valuable timber trees from forests in coastal areas of Kalapara and Galachipa upazilas in connivance with a section of Forest Department staff and lowenforcers.

Scores of valuable trees like Sundary, Kewra, Garan and Karai are taken away from from forests in Fatrar Bank, Char Gongamoti Sonr Char, Nishan Baria and Kachop Khali lake every night. These are loaded in trawlers and sent to the different areas including Dhaka and Chittagong.

Parts of these are also sold at nearby saw mills. Forest officials some times recover stolen timber and arrest people, but this is only an eyewash, they alleged. "We recovered about 500 cft Sundary timber from three trawlers on the Kalaguchia river on February 17 this

year and arrested 15 people", one officialsaid.

Alongside the pilferage, threes are also dying in large scale. Forest officials and local people said, thousands of timber trees died from unknown diseases in Char Gongamoti, Kuakata, Khayura, Lambur Char and Kaver Char in Kalapara upazila in the last several years.

Death of trees was noticed about six years back. Trees are dying in large scalenow, local pople said. Some forest officials suspect that trees are dying as their roots cannot suck sweet water because of deposit two to three feet sand in the beach, carried by tidal wave.

Forest officials said excessive deposit of sand is harmful for man grove forest. The forest can be saved if the sand layer is removed, but it is costly.

But other officials differ with the view. There could be other reasons they said but could not specify.

This correspondent during a visit to Kuakata sea beach last week saw hun-

dreds of dead trees.

Abdul Mannan 40, a farmer at Char Gougamoti said the withering process starts four to five mouths after their roots are covered with sand.

## Govt assistance Only 5,700 to benefit in Bogra

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra**

Only 5700 flood affected farmers out of about one lake in Bogra district will get governments' assistance under its post-flood agriculture rehabilitation programme.

Agriculture Extension Department (AED) sources said the government has decided to supply five kilograms of late variety Aman seeds to the farmers in Dhanut, Shariakandi, Sonatola and others flood affected upazilas for preparing seedbeds.

# Rainy season without rain

## Farmers irrigate lands to transplant Aman in southwestern dists

**A CORRESPONDENT, Jessore**

Unbelievable though, farmers are irrigation lands in many areas in southwestern districts to transplant Aman seedlings in the current rainy season.

This correspondent during a visit to some areas saw farmers pumping groundwater to fields with shallow irrigation machines. Many a poor farmers said they can not even rot harvested jute plants for lack of water in canals, ditches and other small waterbodies.

A drought-like situation is prevailing in the ten south-western districts because of scanty rainfall, farmers said. Black clouds often appear in the sky raising hopes, but those do not burst, they lamented.

Agriculture Extension Department (AED) sources said they fixed a target to bring 7,07900 hectares of land under Aman cultivation in the ten districts to produce 16, 22, 690 tonnes of paddy in the current season. Transplantation of

seedlings is fully dependent on rain, but the weather is behaving erratic, they said.

At places, farmers said they had problem also in preparing seedbeds due to lack of rain.

This correspondent traveled a long way on a motorbike. At Majdia village in Kaligonj upazila in Jhenidah district, farmer Mohiuddin was seen irrigating a land to transplant Aman seedlings.

Nur Islam and Moshir Rahman of Kandia village in Jessore Sadar upazila were also seen irrigating their lands with shallow machines. Such scenes were in neighbouring Natnapara village.

Sadek Ali at Natnapara village said, "It will take Tk 70 to 80 for irrigating one bigha of land. If there is no sufficient rainfall, each farmer will have to spend additional Tk 800 to 1000 per bigha to cultivate Aman".



Awami Ainjibi Parishad brought out a procession in Barisal city (left) and party leaders and activists paraded streets of Comilla town (right) yesterday demanding execution of Bangabandhu murder verdict.



PHOTO: STAR

# 'Execute Bangabandhu murder verdict' Hunger strike in Gaibandha, procession at RU

**STAR NATIONAL DESK**

The 29th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was observed yesterday in Rajshahi University and Gaibandha town in a befitting manner.

**Our Rajshahi University (RU) Correspondent reports:** Different organisations brought out mourning processions, held discussion meetings, cultural functions and milad mahfil on the university campus to mark the day.

Rajshahi University unit of Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote brought out a mourning procession on the campus. Processionists chanted slogans demanding immediate execution of the verdict of Bangabandhu Murder Case.

A discussion meeting and a cultural function were held at Room No 115 of the

Fourth Arts building.

Former National University Vice Chancellor (VC) Professor Borhan Uddin Jahangir was present at the discussion meeting as chief guest while former Rajshahi University VC Professor Abdul Khalek and Prof Saidur Rahman were present as special guest.

Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote President Prof PM Shafiqul Islam presided over the discussion. A cultural function followed the discussion.

The university units of Bangabandhu Parishad and Udichi Shilpi Gosthi organised a cultural function on the Folklore Department premises.

The university unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) brought out a mourning procession and held a rally on the campus. Processionists wore black

badges. Its president Ibrahim Hossain Moon and general secretary Ayen Uddin led the procession.

Earlier, BCL placed wreath at the portrait of Bangabandhu at the Central Shaheed Minar. A milad mahfil was also held at the central mosque after Asar prayer. A blood donation programme has been arranged at the central library today.

The university unit of Uddichi observed the day by holding a discussion meeting and a cultural programme.

An earlier report says: The teachers of Rajshahi University (RU) paraded the campus streets in a silent procession on Friday demanding immediate execution of the verdict of Bangabandhu murder case.

Progressive Teachers' Association convenor Professor Entajul Haque led the

procession.

A big rally followed the procession.

Speakers blamed the government for protecting the killers and called upon the government for immediate execution of the verdict.

**Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports:** BCL staged a six-hour token hunger strike on the Shaheed Minar premises.

BCL activists formed a human chain and brought out a procession in the town.

A discussion meeting was held at the Public Library Hall under the auspices of Mukti joddha Chetona Bastobayan Committee where leaders of Awami League and its front organisations demanded immediate execution of the verdict of Bangabandhu Murder Case.

# Facing fallout of flood 45,000 hectares under sand in Bogra, Sirajgonj

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra**

The floodwater is gone but has left vast sheets of sand, making lands uncultivable.

At least 45,000 hectares of cultivable land in Bogra and Sirajgonj districts have been covered by sand carried by the recent flood.

Sirajgonj Agriculture Extension Department (AED) officials said about 25,000 hectares are now under cover of five to six feet layers of sand in different areas of the district.

Sand has covered over 20,000 hectares in the Sadar, Dhunat, Sonatola and Shariakandi upazilas in Bogra, officials

heresaid.

Asraf Ali and Afzal Hossain at Chuniapara village in Dhunat upazila said all their lands have become unfit for cultivation due o sand deposit. It is not possible to remove the sand and make those cultivable again, the poor farmers said. Same is the condition with many a farmers in Dhunat and three other upazilas, AED officials told this correspondent. The worst affected villages are Chaniapara, Chatodiari, Gozaria, Buroiel, Chekashi, Kutheirgat, Gueduri, Daripara, Chatulia, Fakirpara and Collagepara.

In Sonatola upazila, most lands in Khabulia, Vitnarpara and Purbatakinich

villages are now sheets of sand.

Farmers in Sirajganj Sadar and Kazipur said they can not cultivate Aman paddy on fields on the right bank of the Jamuna due to heavy layers of sand on the lands.

The affected areas include Bahauka, Kurania, Kuripar, Vatpiaria, Shilma, Patagram villages in Kazipur upazila and Kaizuri in Shahjadpur upazila.

Twenty-five thousand hectares out of over 39,000 inundated by the flood in the district are now under sand and unfit for Aman cultivation, sources said.



PHOTO: STAR

A farmer at Goshabari village in Dhunot upazila in Bogra removing sand from his cultivable land.