

NAIKHONGCHHARI IS THE MAIN SPOT IN BANDARBAN

183 heavy, sophisticated arms recovered in a year

MONIRUL ISLAM MONU,
Bandarban

Bangladesh Army, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police recovered 183 heavy and sophisticated arms from various areas of Bandarban in the last one year.

At the same time a huge number of small arms and ammunition were seized during raids in the dense forests of the hill district.

District law enforcement authority recently submitted a 'secret' report to the government on last one year's raids and recovery of the arms.

Sources said most of the arms and ammunitions were recovered

from Naikhongchhari, an area close to the border with Myanmar. In 2003, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) in separate raids seized huge arms and ammunition from Baisari, Dochari, Chakdhala, Techari and Lembuchari areas of Naikhongchhari upazila.

Frequent recovery of heavy arms took the military experts by surprise. They were also worried at seeing some sophisticated arms and ammunition. A team of US arms experts visited Naikhongchhari to investigate the matter in the month of February of 2004.

Arms and ammunition recovered last year include AK-47 rifle, AK-22 rifle, M-16 rifle, M-79 rifle, land mine,

high-powered grenade and rocket launcher.

The report submitted to the government provided a list of total arms and ammunition recovered between February last year and this February.

According to this list, 24,144 rounds of live ammunition of various types of arms were recovered.

It included 14,731 bullets of AK-47 rifle, 5,126 of pistol, 1,742 rounds of M-16 rifle, 2,000 of LMG and 270 rounds of machinegun. Besides, there was a list of 237 empty magazines of various types of arms and 14 barrels recovered from spots.

The report informed that total arms and ammunition recovered in

the last one year were AK-47 rifle-27 pieces, AK-22 rifle-3 pieces, M-16 rifle-4 pieces, M-79 rifle-7 pieces, LMG-15 pieces, SMC-8 pieces, sten gun-4 pieces, 303 rifle-10 pieces, foreign made gun-5 pieces, pistol-2 pieces, 12-bored short gun-2 pieces, automatic rifle-1 piece, 22-bored rifle-3 pieces, Air rifle-3 pieces, pipe gun-2 pieces, air gun-3 pieces, revolver-4 pieces, country-made gun-72 pieces, mine-33 pieces, rocket launcher-6 pieces, GF bomb-1 piece, grenade-1 piece, 60 mm mortar-2 pieces, two-inch mortar-2 pieces and 40 mm handlauncher-1 piece.



Water remains stagnant on Kabi Nazrul Islam Sarak, a busy road in Bogra town for days together because of absence of drains on both sides of the road.

PHOTO: STAR

Woes of Bogra town dwellers

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Bogra

Around four lakh dwellers of Bogra Pourashava are living a miserable life with various problems like traffic jam, water-logging, power crisis, occupied footpath and clogged sewerage.

Bogra pourashava sources said, plying of more than 20 thousand illegal rickshaws, slow road expansion and laying of gas pipeline are the main causes of traffic jam in Bogra town.

Pourashava authority issued about 5,000 rickshaw licenses for 14.76 square kilometer pourashava area about 18 years ago.

But now around 25 thousand rickshaws ply the streets of the town.

A total of 27.50 kilometres of Chancha Road are being maintained by the 129 years old pourashava.

Most of the roads in Bogra town are not fit for vehicular traffic, an official of Bogra Pourashava said.

Only 40 water bodies out of 134 in the town area are alive, official said.

About 50 kilometres out of the town's 100 kilometres drains remain clogged for years, they informed.

A few drains in Bogra town have become clogged during road expansion and gas pipeline laying work. At least 2,000 street lights out of 5,000 in the town are out of order.

The hawkers and traders occupy most of the footpath in Bogra town, said a ward commissioner of Bogra Pourashava.

Fishing by poisoning river water!

Dishonest fishermen in Moulvibazar do it for easy fishing in Juri river

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Moulvibazar

A section of dishonest fishermen allegedly poison water of the river Juri in the district to ease fishing.

This is destroying not only fishes but also other aquatic fauna of the river. Even ducks have died after eating poisonous fish of the Juri river, it is widely alleged.

Fish of Hakaluki haor where the Juri river falls, are found to be poisonous.

People of some villages under Juri upazila of Moulvibazar district who live along to the Juri river alleged that a section of native fishermen with some fishermen from the neighboring state fish in this river by poisoning its water.

The small river, Juri, originated from the 'Jampai hill' of Indian State of Tripura. Entering Bangladesh it flows through Fultala, Sagarnal, Goalbari and West Juri and Jayfarnagar unions of Juri upazila.

Near Juri upazila headquarters, the river renamed as Kantinala and meets with the Hakaluki haor. The Hakaluki haor is one of the biggest

in the country. There are a number of water bodies in the Hakaluki haor which produce a huge quantity of fishes every year.

The locals allege that the criminal fishermen extract juice from 'Bish Lata'—one kind of poisonous creeper and mix this juice with water of the Juri river. As a result fishes die and start floating up. After that the dishonest fishermen catch them with the help of fishing nets.

Besides aquatic fauna, ducks of the area also die eating these poisonous fishes. Zahir Uddin, Aleya Begum, Minara Begum and Delwar Hussain of the riverside villages of Juri upazila have lost huge number of ducks because of river poisoning.

People of the area lodged complaints with the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Juri and informed the matter to OC of Juri police station.

But fishing by poisoning Juri water still goes unabated. People of the area are now suffering from various diseases eating poisonous fishes.

4 killed, 3 hurt in Gaibandha road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Gaibandha

Four people were killed and three received severe injuries when a stone-laden truck fell into a road-side ditch at Balua on the Bogra-Rangpur highway yesterday morning.

Police said the truck carrying seven people was heading toward Bogra from Panchagarh district. When it reached Balua, 10 kilometer off Gobindaganj Police Station, it skidded off the road as the driver lost control over the wheels.

Four people fell under the stones and died on the spot while three others sustained severe injuries. Police rescued the injured and sent them to Gobindaganj Health Complex.

One of the dead was Raju, 50, of Panchagarh district. But police could not identify 3 others till filing of this report at 5 pm.

2 'controversial' appointments at RU

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi University authorities on Sunday appointed two senior teachers to important posts, allegedly on political reasons.

RU Senate member and Applied Physics Department teacher Prof Dr Azizar Rahman Sarker has been appointed chairman of Computer Science and Technology Department replacing the department's 'controversial' teacher Khwaja Zakaria Chishty.

Sources said his appointment violated the university rules. As per the rules, any person appointed to the post must have either computer background or should come from Computer Science Department.

No one was appointed chairman of Applied Physics Department with computer science background in the last five years, they claimed.

Statistics Department teacher Prof Dr Asaduzzaman Shah was appointed Computer Centre administrator replacing Abdul Aziz Miah.

Talking to this correspondent, many senior RU teachers expressed their concern and said the appointments were politically biased.

"The appointments would tarnish the university's image because the two teachers were involved in Jamaat-e-Islam politics", said a teacher seeking anonymity.

When contacted, Prof Azizar Rahman denied the allegations and said, "The authorities did what they thought appropriate about me".

Asaduzzaman Shah thanked the administration for his appointment.

Nursery trade changes their lot

MD SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Nursery business has changed the lot of many besides employing about 5,000 people in the district.

There are around 1,000 nurseries in urban and rural areas in Patuakhali Sadar, Galachipa, Kalapara, Bauphal, Mirzaganj and

Dumki upazilas, according to Patuakhali forest division. These are supplying saplings of fruit, timber and flower plants.

Not only males but also female workers are involved in nurseries.

Lovely, 20, a poor woman of Khaserhat village under Sadar upazila has changed her life by

converting her 25 decimal courtyard into a nursery four years ago.

This year, she purchased 10 decimals of land at Tk 30,000 and leased another one bigha to expand her nursery. Her younger brother and sister had dropped out of school due to poverty. Now they go to school.

Lovely said she left school six years ago when she was a student of class seven. Her father was a poor rickshawpuller and earned only Tk 40 to 50 a day.

"Sometimes he even could not buy rice to feed a big family with four brothers and two sisters", he said.

"Today I earn about Tk 50,000 from the nursery annually, which is enough to maintain the family, Lovely said. She hopes to earn around Tk one lakh annually from her expanded nursery.

She received a month-long training on nursery.

Many others in the village have been encouraged by her success.

Another nursery owner Keshob Chandra says he is making a significant contribution to developing fruit trees in the area with good and high-yielding varieties. He supplies mango saplings of Him Sagar, Langra, Gopal Bhog and Fazi Amropali.

Selim Howlader was unemployed after passing SSC examination. He started a small nursery on 10 decimals of his courtyard in 2000. This has changed the lot of his family. He has now employed five men. This year he expanded the nursery to one acre with about two lakh fruit and timber saplings.

Selim earned Tk 60,000 last year and expects to earn Tk 1,00,000 in the coming season.



PHOTO: STAR

Young Lovely of Khaserhat village in Sadar upazila, Patuakhali takes care of plants at her nursery. Once a poor woman, she has changed her lot through nursery trade.

Obituary

A CORRESPONDENT, Naogaon

Shahabuddin Master, a veteran librarian of famous Naogaon Parry Mohan Co-operative Public Library died at his Chakmukhter residence here recently at the age of 107 years.

He was suffering from old age ailments.

He was buried at the central graveyard following his namaz-e-janaza at Chak-Enayet Jame mosque.

A large number of people including the elite of the town, educationists, intellectuals and book lovers of all ages attended his janaza.

Born in 1898, Shahabuddin passed the Entrance examination in 1914 from Chakla High School. He started his career as a teacher at Chak-Enayet Primary School.

Later, he joined the then Naogaon Samity Pubic Library as its librarian which was renamed as Naogaon Parry Mohan Co-operative Public Library afterwards. He served there for over 50 years.

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