

Lives, environment, ecology at risk as illegal hill cutting still rampant in Khagrachhari

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

Unabated hill cutting in eight upazilas under Khagrachhari district is posing serious threat to lives, natural environment and biodiversity of the hill district.

As hill cutting continues in the name of development work, houses and business centres are being made ignoring existing environmental laws and defying ban by Department of Environment (DoE).

At least 50 thousand people in hill district Khagrachhari are facing threat of hill slides at the onset of the rains as they built their houses, business centres and other development structure cutting the natural hill and without any environment friendly plan, sources said.

Divisional Forest Office (DFO) and District Agriculture Extension Office (DAEO) sources said, despite a government ban, illegal hill cutting continues unabated in different parts of hill district Khagrachhari posing serious threat to lives, natural environment and biodiversity of the hill districts. Taking illegal help from government officials groups of influential people including a section of dishonest businessmen are involved in illegal hill cutting, sources said.

In Khagrachhari, hill cutting is a common sight at Shalban, Comilla Tila, Sabujbag, Panchmire area, Zia Naghor, Boghiroth Para, Rashiknagar, Jamtali, Maischhari, Maidda Karallachhari, Bichitla, Kengalchhari, Tongthakpara, Khagrachhari, Kamalchhari, Bhuchhari, Golabari, Laxmichhari, Ramghor, Matiranga, Khagrachhari College Para area, Tetultala and No-1 Kadamtali area.

Several government establishments are now dangerously exposed to collapse during the rainy season due to the hill cutting.

Local environmental activists and journalists filed several general diaries with police stations in Khagrachhari hill district in regard to hill cutting. But the administration is taking minor initiative to protect the hills from depletion.

Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) issued legal notice to secretaries of three



PHOTO: STAR

As scene of hill cutting by a government organisation at Bogirathpara in Dighinala upazila in Khagrachhari district.

ministries for taking immediate actions against the plunderers of hills in last year, sources said. The ministries are environment and forest, land and public works.

In last year, BELA also issued notice to divisional commissioner of Chittagong, deputy commissioner of Khagrachhari, environment departments in Dhaka and Chittagong, SP of Khagrachhari and UNO of Dighinala upazila in this regard.

In Khagrachhari hill district, this syndicate employs a number of day labourers in hill cutting in different areas in the districts paying Tk 150 to 200 per day as wages. Plunders always cutting hill which created bad impact for the environment. It damaged property, lives, filled up river, canals, create flash flood in the areas, said Abu Daud Muhammad, Member Secretary of local organisation 'Parivesh Surukha Andolon'.

Cheonghi and Mainee rivers in the district have become filthy due to hill erosion, local journalist and

environment worker Omar Faruk Shamim said.

"We have recently submitted a proposal to district administration to save water bodies and hills," he said.

The unscrupulous businessmen supply hilly soil to fill up canals and low lands for constructing houses and markets in the districts and as well as Chittagong city and its adjacent areas, said Mohammad Khalilur Rahman, secretary of Parivesh Andolon Forum.

"Soil supply has become a profitable business among the hill cutters as they need only a little investment for a huge profit. A truck of hilly soil is sold at Tk 700-1000, said Tazul Islam, a truck driver from Bazar area under Sadar upazila in Khagrachhari district.

Hill cutting causes landslides in rainy season in eight upazilas in Khagrachhari hill district which decreasing soil fertility and damaging life and property in the districts, said Khagrachhari Additional

Deputy Commissioner Masud Ahmed.

Divisional Forest Officer Ali Kabir said, many hilly areas are facing an unexpected danger, at any time an accident would might happened causing harm for people and properties. An integrated approach is necessary for saving environment of natural hilly areas, he said.

When contacted, Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Shahadat Hossain said he has taken many initiatives to save hills. He has already formed a six-member committee to survey actually how many people are vulnerable in the district. His officials filed at least 21 cases against hill plunders and four people are in jail now, he said.

"I have sent show cause notice to many people including government organisation Roads and Highways Department to explain why they have been cutting hill without permission from Department of Environment.

4-MURDER CASE

Jamaat leader Zia on 2-day remand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court in Sirajganj yesterday approved two days remand for arrested Jamaat-e-Islami leader Ziaul Huq Zia in a four-murder case.

Zia, who was arrested from Ullapara Bazaar on Sunday, is also chairman of Narina Union Parishad in Shahjapur upazila.

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) placed him before the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court yesterday afternoon and submitted prayer for taking him on ten days remand.

Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate ABM Musa, granted two days remand.

CID police said Zia allegedly masterminded the killing of cloth trader Rejaul Karim Bhutto, his wife Zinzira, son Ashik, 5, and daughter Rimi, 3, of Bachamora village in Shahzadpur upazila on June 20 in 2004.

Boy murdered in Chuadanga

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kustia

A boy was killed at Allatnagar village in Alamdanga upazila in Chuadanga district following previous enmity with his relatives Sunday night.

The dead is Nazmul, 16, son of Nazrul of Kamapur village in the upazila. Police said Nazmul was ambushed by three cousins at Chitla field while he was on way back home to Kamapur from Chitla village at about 9.30 pm.

Police arrested one of Nazmul's cousins Zed Ali on suspicion.

Arrested Zed Ali was interrogated at the police station during filing of the report at about 5.30 pm yesterday.

4 outlaws held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Police yesterday arrested four members of banned outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) from remote Borochora village in Chalon Beel area in Tarash upazila of Sirajganj district.

The arrestees -- Abdul Kayum, 35, Abdul Jalil, 45, Hossain Mandal, 36, and Mozibar Rahman, 35, of Borochora village -- are wanted in several cases for killing, robbery and kidnapping, police said.

Assistant Superintendent of Police in Raiganj Circle, Ayub Ali said they started special drives against extremists after a report titled "Outlaws raise heads in three dists again, commit crimes" was published in The Daily Star on Saturday.

Drug peddler gets life

OUR CORRESPONDENT, C'nawabganj

Chapainawabganj District and Sessions Judge's Court yesterday sentenced a drug peddler to life-term rigorous imprisonment under Narcotics Control Act.

The convict, Md Abdul Latif, 52, was arrested with 200 grams of heroin from bus stand at Chapainawabganj town on August 01 in 2007, goes the prosecution.

Fake doctor arrested in Narail

A CORRESPONDENT, Narail

Narail police yesterday arrested a fake doctor from Daar-ush Shefa Clinic in Narail town.

The arrestee was identified as Abdus Sabur, 39, of Bhoakhali in the town.

Police arrested the fake doctor following a complaint lodged by Nasrin Begum wife of Qudus Sheikh of Mirapara in the town. In the complaint, she alleged that her husband was operated upon a month ago by Sabur who introduced him as a surgeon. But instead of recovery, new complications arose after the operation, she alleged.

While contacted, Abdus Sabur claimed himself to be a village doctor who was doing medical practice for 18 years.

Fake NGO official held in Natore

A CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Police yesterday arrested an official of a fake NGO at Baddybelghoria village in Sadar upazila.

The arrestee is Isahaq Ali, executive member of Provati Gram Unnayan Sangstha, a fake NGO. Hailing from Baddybelghoria village in Sadar upazila, Isahaq Ali allegedly collected crores of taka from hundreds of people in name of poverty alleviation.

Police said there are at least three dozens of cases filed against him in Natore and Naldanga police stations.



PHOTO: STAR

Sudden erosion by Jamuna River threatens this spar at Banijan in Dhunat in Bogra district. Water Development Board officials said about 46 metre of the spar was devoured till 5:00pm yesterday as the river turned furious.

Khulna street children turning into criminals' accomplice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A large number of street boys in Khulna city and nine upazilas of the district have got involved in different types of crime as criminals use them as convenient accomplices.

The number of street children in the district has risen to over 50,000 this year from 41,000 last year and many of them are involved in crimes, says a report jointly prepared by UNICEF and non-government organisation Aparajeo Bangladesh.

Poverty and wayward life of their parents, loss of shelters due to natural calamities such as floods and cyclone, drug addiction, bigamy or polygamy of parents and missing during journey from one place to another are among the factors that are responsible for a large number of street boys' get involved in crimes, says

ther report.

NGO Aparajeo Bangladesh, which works for welfare of the disadvantaged children, has undertaken a project styled 'Protection of children at risk'.

Funded by UNICEF, this project under supervision of the Ministry of Social Welfare is mainly aimed at bringing the deviated children to the right path and normal life by providing them with necessary supports to build up their career, said Project Manager Shikder Hadiuzzaman Bony.

Aparajeo Bangladesh is implementing the project, he said.

Many of these hapless street boys are being picked up by criminals for keeping arms, throwing bombs at targets, selling drugs and pilferage of food grains for small amount of money, the project manager quoted the survey report assaying.

2 pirates held after gunfight with police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police arrested two pirates after trading gunfire with their gang in Shibsha Canal area under Koira upazila in Khulna district on Sunday evening.

The arrestees -- Habib, 24, of Masjiddur village and Abdul Wahab, 26, of Amadi village under Koira upazila were held when they were trying to escape leaving two engine boats.

Police also recovered two SBL guns and eight cartridges from the spot.

None was reportedly injured in the three hour-long gunfight.

OC Ali Azam of Koira Police Station said his forces had fired ten rifles shots. But he could not say how many shots were fired by pirates.

Police has continued combing operation in pirate-infested Koira upazila.

5 robbers get 39-yr RI in arms case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kustia

A Chuadanga court yesterday sentenced five robbers to 39 years imprisonment in an arms case.

The convicts are Motiar, 33, Saiful, 43, Shahidul, 36, Rouf, 39, and Torikul, 30, all of Batikabaria village in Alamdanga upazila, Chuadanga.

Additional district and sessions judge Motaher Hossain pronounced the verdict in presence of the convicts.

The court also fined each of them Tk 10,000, in default, to suffer one year more imprisonment.

Prosecution story, in brief, is that a police team from Hijalgarai raided the house of Motiar and arrested the gang members when they were taking preparation for committing robbery at about 12.30 pm on August 26, 2006.

Police recovered one shutter gun and six bullets from their possession.

A case was filed with Alamdanga police station.

After investigation, police submitted charge-sheet on August 26, 2007.

Natore BNP leader held for extortion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police yesterday arrested Shahidul Islam Bachchu, general secretary of Natore district BNP from his Foujdaripara residence in the town on charge of extortion.

A close associate of former deputy minister Ruhul Kuddus Talukhdar Dulu, Bachchu was arrested hours after filing of a Tk 50,000 extortion case against him with Sadar police station.

Shahidul Islam, resident engineer of Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPPB) here lodged the case alleging that Bachchu had demanded Tk 50,000 as illegal toll from him for going to Madras in India for treatment in May 2005.

Shahidul was forced to pay him Tk 30,000 and Bachchu threatened him with the dire consequences for failure to pay the rest amount, he alleged.

Bachchu slapped the engineer at an open fair at Kanaikhali field here in January in 2005 for not obeying him.

Bumper yield fails to cheer up farmers in Thakurgaon, Panchagarh as price too low

A CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Despite bumper production of maize in Thakurgaon and Panchagarh districts, farmers are frustrated due to its drastic fall of prices in the local markets.

About 1.57,920 tonnes of maize was produced in the two districts against the target of 1,28,000 tonnes in this season.

Maize was cultivated on 19,450 hectares of land against the target of 18,425 hectares with the production target of 1,07,234 tonnes in Thakurgaon, Agriculture Extension Department (AED) officials said.

In Pachagarh, maize was cultivated on 6,320 hectares of land against the target of 3,562 hectares with the production target of 20,730 tonnes, AED officials said.

Maize cultivation is gaining popularity due to its lower production cost, easy cultivation process and favourable weather and soil condition in the areas and farmers had been getting good return on its cultivation for the last several years.

But this season saw unusual fall in the price of maize.

Each maund (37.3242 kg) of maize is selling between Tk 260 and Tk 280 in the village market whereas it sold at Tk 420 to Tk 460 during last year's harvesting season.

Despite decrease of prices buyers are not available in the local markets.



PHOTO: STAR

Workers at Salonar village under Thakurgaon Sadar upazila collecting maize as it gets ready for transport.

Aniquel Barman, 45, a small farmer of Moidandighi village under Boda upazila in Panchagarh, told this correspondent that he cultivated maize on one bigha (.33 acre) of land and produced 35 maunds of maize but could not sell his total produces as there are not adequate buyers.

The major portion of produced maize is used as poultry feed in the country, market sources said. As most of the poultry farms closed following outbreak of bird flu,

demand for maize greatly decreased.

Thakurgaon District Livestock Officer Dr Bimol Chandra Das, said only a few poultry farms have resumed production although there were about 150 poultry farms in the district.

Monirul Huda Helal, a maize grower and a small trader said the farmers would get profit if the government arranged procuring maize for preserving in the government godowns like paddy, rice and wheat.

428 sacks of fertiliser seized, 2 agri officials held in Chuadanga

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Joint forces seized 428 sacks of fertiliser and arrested five people including two government officials for their alleged involvement in hoarding fertiliser in separate drives conducted in various places in Chuadanga district Saturday and Sunday.

In a drive conducted on Saturday at Rana Enterprise, a business establishment at Alodika in Chuadanga Sadar upazila, joint forces arrested two fertiliser dealers Rana Biswas and his brother Madhu Biswas and seized 330 sacks of fertiliser, reports our Kustia correspondent.

On interrogation, Rana said

informed joint forces that two sub-assistant agriculture officers of Chuadanga agriculture office named Nazmul Haq and Abdul Hamid used to supply them fertiliser more than their actual quota in exchange of money.

Joint forces raided their houses in the town and arrested them on Sunday.

In another raid conducted at Tetulia village in Jibonnagar upazila the same day, police seized 98 sacks of fertiliser and arrested a fertiliser sub-dealer named Ashraf Hossain. Separate cases were filed against them with Sadar police station.

Earlier, police raided the house

of another sub-dealer named Rebeka Khatun at Madna village in Damurhuda upazila in Chuadanga district and seized 380 sacks of fertiliser Saturday night.

A Correspondent from Natore reports: Police yesterday seized 20 sacks of TSP fertilizer at Ekdala village in Bagatipara upazila.

Local people intercepted a fertiliser-loaded Nasimon (shallow engine-driven vehicle) while it was crossing through Ekdala bazar, police said.

Locals asked the driver to show relevant documents. As he failed to show it to them, they handed over the driver along with the Nasimon to police.



Jiban Bima Corporation

Engineering & Estate Division
24, Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka

Notice Invitation for Tender

1.	Ministry & Agency	M/O Commerce; Jiban Bima Corporation.
2.	Procuring entity	GM. Engineering & Estate Division.
3.	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
4.	Source of fund	Jiban Bima Corporation own fund
5.	Tender's Ref. & Date	JBC/(E/E)/Tender-22/08 Date: 07.05.08.
6.	Name of work	Repair Work Top of Roof Slab at Jiban Bima Bhaban, 1053, Sk. Mujib Road, Agrabad, Chittagong.
7.	Time for completion of works	45 (forty-five) days from the date of Work Order issued.
8.	Eligibility of tenders	The Notice invitation for tender is open to all eligible tenderers mentioned below: (a) The tenderer shall have minimum 5 (five) years of working experience in the construction works. (b) Tenderer must have up-to date income tax Clearance Certificate from the NBR. (c) Tenderer must have valid VAT Registration Certificate from NBR. (d) Tenderer must have up-to date Trade Liasence. (e) Photo copy of 'A' / 'B' Class Civil Contracts Liasence. (f) Attested copy of document mentioned in Sl. No. (a), (b), (c), (d), and (e) to be submitted along with the T tender.
9.	Price of tender document	Tk. 500.00 (Taka Five hundred) only.
10.	Amount of tender security	Tk. 15,000.00
11.	Name and address of the office selling tender document	General Manager Engg. & Estate Division, Jiban Bima Corporation, 24, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000.
12.	Name and address of the office receiving tenders	General Manager, Engg. & Estate Division, Jiban Bima Corporation, 24, Motijheel C/A., Dhaka-1000
13.	Name and address of the office opening tenders	General Manager, Engg. & Estate Division, Jiban Bima Corporation, 24, Motijheel C/A., Dhaka-1000
14.	Last date & time for submission of application to GM EE for tender document	14.07.2008 up to 4.00 PM.
15.	Last date & time for selling tender document	15.07.2008 up to 4.00 PM.
16.	Last date & time for submission of tender	16.07.2008 up to 11.30 am.
17.	Date & time for opening of tender	16.07.2008 at 12.00 Noon
18.	Special insturction	(a) The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Tenders. (b) If there any confusion arises due to printing mistakes or other reasons then "The PPR-2003" will govern. (c) The intending Tenderer must furnish the documents as mentioned in column-9 along with the application while purchasing tender document.
19.	Brief description of works	As per Specification

জীবীক/জসবি/০৪-১৮১/০৮

তারিখ: ১৫/৬/০৮

GD-2858

Quamruzzaman
General Manager
Engineering & Estate Division