

Trapped into 'slavery' in fishermen's colonies

10,000 boys under forced labour in coastal belts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Victims of forced child labour, a large number of minor boys are passing days amid horrendous conditions in the fishermen's colonies along the coastal belt of Dublarchar from where law enforcers rescued over a thousand of minor boys in last four years.

Scanty information is available about what is going on in the remote fishermen's colonies.

Sources, however, said over 10,000 minor boys are employed in arduous and risky jobs under six thousand fishermen in areas along the coastal belt.

The minor boys, employed in hard work for long hours without adequate food and

other facilities including healthcare services, are brought from different parts of the country in the name of providing jobs.

But once taken to the 'labour camps', the minor boys are disconnected from their families and made to do arduous works of cooking, sorting of fishes and drying them up for which they hardly get any wage.

There are allegations that the minor boys have to undergo various forms of torture including sodomy by fish traders.

According to a survey carried out by non-government organisation (NGO) CPD, 67 boys were killed by tigers, crocodiles, sharks and wild boars from 1998 to 2003 in the coastal

belts of the Sundarbans.

Over 3,000 tonnes of shutki fish are transported to different places of the county every peak season from Dublarchar and other coastal belts, sources said.

The inaccessible Meheralir Char along the Bay of Bengal serves as a concentration camp for the ill-fated boys who have hardly any scope to escape from what could be compared to slavery.

Similar is the situation in Alorkol, Narkelbariar Char, Shelarchar and Chaprakhalir Char near the Sundarbans where dried fish business is thriving on labour exploitation from minor boys.

"It is quite impossible to know what is going on in the fishermen's colonies in the name of dry fish (shutki)

business in the coastal belts," said Babu Swapan Guho, executive chief of NGO Rupantar.

The director of another NGO Prodiapon, Sajjadur Rahim said a project has been taken up to stop forced child labour in the fishermen's colonies of coastal belts and create awareness among parents of minor boys about its adverse effect.

"To deal with the problem of forced child labour, we have planned different programmes including Social Watch Group at all coastal belts," he said.

Concerted efforts by humanitarian, government and non-government organisations are needed to resolve the problem.

PROF TAHER MURDER Execution of verdict demanded

RU CORRESPONDENT

Teachers, students and employees of the Geology and Mining Department of Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday demanded execution of the verdict in Prof Taher Ahmed murder case.

They raised the demand at a memorial meeting held in the department's seminar room marking the third death anniversary of Prof Taher.

Prof Taher, a senior teacher of the department, was killed on February 1, 2006. Three days later, the body was recovered from an underground sewerage tank behind his campus residence.

Prof Golam Sabbir Sattar Tapu read out a keynote paper on life and works of Prof Taher at the meeting with Prof Dr Kamrul Hassan Majumder, chairman of the department, in the chair.

Speakers expressed their deep concern over delay in execution of the court verdict and demanded punishment to the mastermind of the murder.

5 hurt by tigers in Thakurgaon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Thakurgaon*

Five people were injured seriously as two tigers coming from India swooped on them at village Basnagar in Ranishankoil upazila yesterday, police said.

The tigers attacked them before Magrib prayer, said Ranishankoil Police Station officer-in-charge. The injured are Helal, 12, son of Yasin Ali, Sarwar, 16, son of Abdus Sattar, Abdul Pagla, 40, son of Jonaku, Arifur Rahman, 14, and Nurul Islam, 30, all of the same village, he said.

Of the injured, Arifur, Anwar, Helal and Nurul Islam were admitted to Ranishankoil Health Complex for treatment.

As soon as the news of attack by tigers spread all over, hundreds of people including a 12-member police team encircled a graveyard where the animals took shelter. People set fire to bushes in the surrounding area. Police sought help of firefighters to catch the tigers.

About 23,270 hectares of land have been brought under potato cultivation against the target 23,000 hectares with production target of 3-lakh 68-thousand tonnes in the current season.

AED officials however, said potato crops only on 108 hectares of land in the entire district were attacked with leaf blight disease.

Leaf blight disease dims potato prospect in Thakurgaon

Agri officials say situation under control

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Thakurgaon*

Spread of 'leaf blight' disease, locally known as patamora rog, has put potato farmers in five upazilas of Thakurgaon district in a difficult situation.

As the affected farmers are reaping potato before its attaining maturity, production target in the current season now seems unattainable.

Farmers are also fearing losses as spraying medicine to save potato from the disease is, adding to the production cost.

"The leaf blight disease that attacked the potato crops is a kind of fungal disease, which is locally known as

'patamora rog' in the district. This has been caused by cold and foggy weather, fluctuation in temperature that helped the disease to spread on potato plants soon, said Abul Hayat, deputy director of Agriculture Extension Department (AED) in Thakurgaon.

Claiming that the situation is still under control, he said field workers and officials are advising farmers about what to do.

Upazila Agriculture Extension Officer Monsur Alam told The Daily Star, "We are advising farmers to spray 2 gram of 'Mencozeb' or 'Metalexyl' groups medicine mixed with one litre water on their potato fields at regular intervals to combat the dis-

ease. During a recent visit at Borunagaon, Salondar, Farabari, Bhully, Balia and Nargun villages under Sadar upazila, this correspondent saw attack of massive leaf blight attack on potato fields.

"I spent about Tk 37,000 to cultivate potato on 2.5 bigha of leased land but the disease damaged all the crops. I made futile attempts to save the crops by spraying medicine several times," said Shasin Barman of Salondar village under Sadar upazila.

"I cultivated potato crops on 3-bigha (one acre) of land. The disease has attacked the crops. At first leaves fell and then the plants died soon. Nobody identified the disease

and suggested any remedy," Ahsanur Rahman, a farmer of Balia village, said.

Many other farmers in different areas said the disease damaged huge tract of potato crops. They worried about its drastic fall of production in the current season and would incur huge loss.

AED officials however, said potato crops only on 108 hectares of land in the entire district were attacked with leaf blight disease.



PHOTO: STAR

Potato farmers spraying medicine at a field at Salondar village in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila as leaf blight disease has affected the field like many others throughout the district.

Housewife killed for dowry

A CORRESPONDENT, *Lalmonirhat*

A young housewife was killed for dowry allegedly by her husband at village Chaltartol in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila yesterday, police said.

Misty Begum, 24, was killed by her husband Babul Ahmed, 30, after being hit by an iron rod at their village home at noon. Later, police arrested the killer and sent body of the deceased to Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Most often Babul used to torture Misty since their marriage about a year ago, police and locals said. He demanded Tk 50,000 as dowry from her. But she could not meet up his unjust demand. On the fateful day, Babul developed a quarrel with his wife over some pretext and started beating her with an iron rod. At one stage of torture, she died. The killer tried to flee but local people caught him and handed over to police.

Paddy price fall makes farmers loser in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

With around 25 percent fall in prices of paddy in the local markets during the recent days, marginal farmers in Barisal district are facing huge losses.

During a visit to different wholesale markets, this correspondent saw that a maund of paddy is selling at Tk 500-550 while the price was Tk 600-700 only a week ago.

Manik Howlader, a marginal farmer of Nalsheri under Banaripara upazila of Barisal, said he sold paddy after Aman harvesting at Tk 620-700 per maund, which has now reduced to Tk 525-560.

"I sold different types of Aman paddy at Tk 600-650 per maund last month, but it has now come down to Tk 485-550," Abdul Malek of Bharakhata of uzirpur upazila in the same district said.

Several farmers said they are facing hardship to sell paddy at

Tk 500-550 per maund as production cost of Aman paddy was Tk 620-700 per maund due to high prices of seeds, fertilisers and pesticides in the Aman cultivation season.

Now mahajans (money lenders) and farias (middlemen) in different markets are purchasing Aman paddy at the lowest price for profit making later, adding to the frustration among the farmers about Boro paddy cultivation.

"Aman paddy was cultivated on 1.37 lakh hectares of land in Barisal district this year. With average 4.5 tonne yield per hectare, the district saw 3.96 lakh tonne production," said Manirul Islam, district officer of the Barisal Agriculture Extension Department.

"Bumper production of paddy caused the fall of price and we have requested the government to purchase paddy from farmers by giving them at least the production cost," he added.



PHOTO: STAR

Schoolchildren take part in a painting competition on the premises of Pabna Town Hall where Ekushey Book Fair began yesterday.

Textbook crisis persists in C'nawabganj, Faridpur

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Crisis of textbooks is hampering study of students of high schools and madrasas in Chapainawabganj and Faridpur districts.

Almost one month has passed after beginning of classes in the new academic year but students are suffering a lot due to crisis of textbooks, said our Chapainawabganj Correspondent.

Books on religion, agriculture and home economics of

classes six, seven and eight and those of geography, physics, chemistry, history, agriculture and zoology of class nine are not available at local markets.

Moreover, students have to pay extra money for buying textbooks which are available in markets.

Local booksellers have blamed it on publishers and distributors in Dhaka. Despite having sufficient stocks of books at Bangla Bazar in the capital, publishers have created, its artificial crisis, said

Moshiur Rahman, proprietor of Momtaz Book Stall at Ranihati Bazar in Shibganj upazila. They are selling books at higher prices and compelling booksellers to buy books at much higher prices, he said. In Faridpur, only 25 per cent textbooks are available in markets than actual demand, said a correspondent. Students and their guardians are returning homes empty handed everyday after visiting different bookstalls here due to non-availability of books.

Bangladesh Bridge Authority						
Setu Bhaban New Airport Road, Banani, Dhaka-1212 www.bba.gov.bd						
Invitation for Tenders						
1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Communication/Bridges Division				
2	Agency	Not Applicable				
3	Procuring Entity Name	Bangladesh Bridge Authority				
4	Procuring Entity Code	Not Applicable				
5	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka				
6	Invitation for	Supplying and Installation of Customized Software and Hardware of Bangladesh Bridge Authority, Setu Bhaban, Banani, Dhaka				
7	Invitation Ref No	BBA/F & A/1009/2008-90				
8	Date	January 26, 2009				
KEY INFORMATION						
9	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method				
FUNDING INFORMATION						
10	Budget and Source of Funds	GoB/BBA				
11	Development Partners (if applicable)	Not Applicable				
PARTICULAR INFORMATION						
12	Project / Program Code (if applicable)	Not Applicable				
13	Project / Program Name (if applicable)	Not Applicable				
14	Tender Package No.	1 (one)				
15	Tender Package Name	Supplying and Installation of Customized Software and Hardware of Bangladesh Bridge Authority, Setu Bhaban, Banani, Dhaka				
16	Tender Publication Date	Date: February 01, 2009				
17	Tender Last Selling Date	Date: February 22, 2009 Time: During office hours				
18	Tender Closing Date and Time	Date: February 23, 2009 Time: 12:00 pm				
19	Tender Opening Date and Time	Date: February 23, 2009 Time: 12:30 pm				
20	Name & Address of the office(s)					
20.1	Selling Tender Document (Principal)	Asstt. Director (F & A), Bangladesh Bridge Authority, Room # 413, Setu Bhaban, Banani, Dhaka				
20.2	Selling Tender Document (Others)	Not Applicable				
20.3	Receiving Tender Document	Conference Room, Bangladesh Bridge Authority, Setu Bhaban, New Airport Road, Banani, Dhaka				
20.4	Opening Tender Document	Conference Room, Bangladesh Bridge Authority, Setu Bhaban, New Airport Road, Banani, Dhaka				
21	Place/Date/Time of Pre-Tender Meeting	Deputy Director (Road), Room No-409, Bangladesh Bridge Authority, Setu Bhaban, New Airport Road, Banani, Dhaka Date: February 12, 2009 at 11:00 am				
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER						
22	Eligibility of Tenderer	i) Potential Tenderer who has general experience in the Software and Hardware supply work shall 5(five) years. ii) The Tenderer who has specialized experience in developing the customized software and supply & installation of national or international corporate house in Bangladesh. iii) Having similar type of works shall be completed at least 2 nos. over a period of last 3 (three) years and the value not less than Tk. 5.0 lakh each (1 for Software and 1 for Hardware) iv) The intending Tenderers shall have to apply in their letterhead to the designated officer to obtain permission for the issuance of the Tender Documents.				
23	Brief Description of Goods or Works	Supplying and Installation of Customized Software and Hardware of Bangladesh Bridge Authority, Setu Bhaban, Banani, Dhaka				
24	Brief Description of Related Services	Not Applicable				
	Lot	Identification of Lot	Location	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	Tender Security Amount (Tk)	Completion Time in Weeks/ months
25	1	Supplying and Installation of Customized Software with Hardware Accessories of Bangladesh Bridge Authority, Setu Bhaban, Banani, Dhaka.	Setu Bhaban, Banani, Dhaka	500.00	30,000.00	4 (four) months
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS						
26	Name of Official Inviting Tender		Md. Liaquat Ali			
27	Designation of Official Inviting Tender		Deputy Director (Road)			
28	Address of Official Inviting Tender		Bangladesh Bridge Authority, Setu Bhaban, New Airport Road, Banani, Dhaka			
29	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender		Tel. No.: 8854720		Fax No.: 9888414	
30	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders					

Signature
26.01.09
(Md. Liaquat Ali)
Executive Engineer (Road)

বাংলাদেশ বনশিল্প উন্নয়ন কর্পোরেশন
বনশিল্প ভবন
৭৩, মতিঝিল বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, ঢাকা

রাবার কাঠ শক্ত, টেকসই ও উন্নতমানের।
আপনিও রাবার কাঠ ব্যবহার করুন।

১৯৮৩/১৯৮৪(১০২)/২০০৭-২০০৮/ অংশ ০১-০২-২০০৯

স্টাফবাস ভাড়া নেয়ার পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

০১	সংস্থার নাম	বাংলাদেশ বনশিল্প উন্নয়ন কর্পোরেশন।
০২	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং	১/২০০৮-২০০৯।
০৩	কার্যের বিবরণ	ক্রমিক ১৪ এর তালিকা অনুযায়ী।
০৪	দরপত্র সিকিউরিটি	২
০৫	দরপত্রদাতা/সিকিউরিটির ব্যয়গাতা	২
০৬	কার্য সম্পাদনের সময়	২
০৭	বাজেট এবং অর্ডার উৎস	কর্পোরেশনের নিজস্ব তহবিল।
০৮	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিজ্ঞপ্তির স্থান	সচিব, বনশিল্প, সদর দপ্তর, ঢাকা এর দপ্তর।
০৯	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিজ্ঞপ্তির তারিখ ও সময়	১৭-০২-২০০৯ তারিখ বিকাল ৩:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১০	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	১৮-০২-২০০৯ তারিখ বেলা ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১১	দরপত্র গ্রহণের স্থান	সচিব, বনশিল্প, সদর দপ্তর এর অফিস কক্ষ।
১২	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	সচিব এর অফিস কক্ষ, বনশিল্প, সদর দপ্তর, ঢাকা, ১৮-০২-২০০৯ তারিখ, দুপুর ১২.১৫ মিনিটে।
১৩	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	নিম্নোক্ত কার্যের তালিকা অনুযায়ী।
১৪	কার্যের তালিকা	

ক্রমিক নং	কার্যের নাম	সিডিউলের মূল্য	আর্নেস্টমানির পরিমাণ (টাকায়)	শর্তাবলী	দরপত্রদাতা/সেবারবররাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের যোগ্যতা
০১	কোন্সটার/মিনিবাস (মন এসি) ৩১ সিটের জন্য ভাড়াক্রম	২০০/-	৫০০০/-	শর্তাবলী সফলিত দরপত্র সিডিউল অনুযায়ী	প্রকৃত পাড়ি ব্যবসায়ী প্রতিষ্ঠান

বিজ্ঞপ্তি: যদি ১৮-০২-২০০৯ তারিখে অনিবার্য কোন পরিস্থিতির সৃষ্টি হয় তাহলে পরের দিন বেলা ১২:৩০টার মধ্যে দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে এবং ঐ দিন দুপুর ১২:১৫ মিনিটে নির্ধারিত সময়ে খোলা হবে। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই সকল দরপত্র বা আংশিক দরপত্র বাতিল বা গ্রহণ করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

মোঃ শহীদুল হক
সচিব

১৯৮৩/১৯৮৪(১০২)/২০০৭-২০০৮/ অংশ ০১-০২-২০০৯