



PHOTO: STAR

Remains of a recently fallen mahogany tree at the garden of Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall of Rajshahi University bear testimony to the stealing of valuable trees from the campus.

# Illegal loggers denuding RU campus of trees

A. M. JAHID, Rajshahi University

The green campus of Rajshahi University (RU) is facing a grave threat as illegal loggers are chopping down trees.

The sounds of felling trees are often heard from the residential halls at night. Even smaller trees and saplings from different gardens which are too young to be used as timber are not spared.

At least seven tall mahogany trees were chopped by the illegal loggers from a garden of Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall recently, said some students.

Peeled skins of trees locally known as ashok, horitoki, horifol and other medicinal plants are a common scene. Trees without branches and leaves are often found. Some species of the medicinal plants ultimately die or their growth is hampered.

Around 10,000 trees of about 600 species on the campus charm visitors. There are also a number of medicinal

plants in the university botanical garden.

Cashew nut, rubber, coffee tree, pine, beet and a number of trees locally known as jorakander, lohakath, ashok, horitoki, horifol, sundari, agnichutra, gamber, cycus, chalata, chatim, krisnachura, naspati, karbi, lotkon, sofeda, sishu, etc are available in the gardens.

According to botany department of the university, the temperature on the campus remains two to three degrees lower than that of usual temperature throughout the year because of large number of trees.

So inhabitants here enjoy a pleasant weather even during the summer. People from outside visit RU campus to get relief from the heat. Fifty tall gogon shirish trees on both sides of the university's Paris Road offer a pleasant view at night under sodium lamps.

"If anyone walks through the gardens on the campus especially of Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall and Shaheed Habibur Rahman Hall, he will see obvious signs of cut trees," said Nazmul Alam Oronno, a resident of Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall, also a student of law and justice department.

"We chased the thieves one night recently after hearing a loud sound of tree felling, but the thieves managed to flee the spot leaving tree," he added.

Mirza Toufiq, a student of mathematics department, also a resident of Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall, said one night thieves threw stones and brickbats at them as they shouted after hearing the sound of chopping tree.

"We informed the hall provost of the matter," he said.

Prof Murtaza Khaled, provost of Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall, told this correspondent that when he learnt the matter, he informed the university authorities to take steps in this regard.

"I also asked the guards and members of law enforcement agencies who are on duty at the hall to be alert about the theft at night," he added.



PHOTO: STAR  
Jhumu Pal gives the final touch to a statue of Swaraswati, the Hindu goddess of wisdom, at her Kagojir Pool residence in Baufal upazila of Patuakhali district ahead of the Swaraswati Puja to be observed on Tuesday.

## SNIPPETS

### Man held in cheating case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police arrested an official of the NGO -- Jubo Samaj Unnayan Shangstha -- from Chhoto Bongram area in the city on Friday night on charge of cheating. Mahbulul Hasan Sharif, area manager of the NGO was picked up at around 8:00pm and a court sent him to jail on Saturday, said Shahadat Hossain, officer-in-charge of Boalia police station. He said Sharif was arrested in connection with a cheating case filed by Rustam Ali of Narayanpur in Durgapur upazila. The case was filed with the Chief Metropolitan Court of Rajshahi on February 1 alleging that Sharif took Tk 20,000 from him six months ago in the name of giving him a job at the NGO.

### Sust founding day Feb 13

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A day-long programme has been chalked out on 13 February to observe the 20th founding anniversary of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (Sust). Education minister Nurul Islam Nahid will be the chief guest at the inaugural function while University Grants Commission chairman Prof Nazrul Islam and education Secretary Dr Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury will be the special guests. Vice-Chancellor Prof Saleh Uddin Ahmed will chair the occasion. Official sources informed yesterday that the day-long programme would start through hoisting of the national and varsity flags in the morning while the other features include procession on the campus, giving VC awards, discussion by the former students and cultural function by different organisations of the campus.

### Youths held with arms

UNB, Chittagong

Three youths were arrested along with a revolver at Rohenpur municipal bazaar in Gomostapur upazila Friday noon. The arrestees were identified as Masud, 22, son of Saiful Islam and Ripon, 25, son of Erfan Ali of Rahmatpara area of Rohenpur municipality and Ferdous, 23, son of Hasan Ali of Khoymor area of the same municipality. Police said Masud and Ripon went to Rohenpur bazaar to buy chickens at noon. At one stage they locked in an altercation with the chicken seller and pointed a revolver at him. Later, locals caught the duo red-handed with the revolver and gave them a good beating. On information, a team of Rab-5 rushed to the spot and arrested them. The elite force later arrested Ferdous from the nearby area.

### Teenager jailed for mugging

UNB, Sylhet

A speedy trial court here on Sunday convicted a teenager and sentenced him to two years imprisonment for mugging. The convict was identified as Mohammad Azad, 15, son of Ashraf Ali of Bakarkanda village in Sadar upazila. The court also fined him Tk 1000, in default, to suffer three months more RI and ordered to send him to youth correction centre in Gazipur. According to the prosecution, Azad along with his two accomplices in a motorbike intercepted one Rafiqul Islam at Sapmari Uttarpara Road in Sadar upazila and snatched away Tk 9,500 from him at gunpoint on November 6, 2010. Hearing the cry for help locals after a hot chase caught Azad along with his bike and handed him over to police. Later, a case was filed against the trio.

### Man beaten to death

UNB, Sylhet

A man was beaten to death by his relatives over a trifling matter at Jhalopara in South Surma upazila Friday night. The deceased was identified as GM Umar Faruk Sumon, 35, son of America expatriate Abdus Sattar of the area. Police and family members said Sumon and his uncle Abdul Malik locked in an altercation over their children's quarrel at about 3:00pm. At one stage, Malik along with his two brothers, Kuddus and Hashim and their four sons beat Sumon mercilessly leaving him critically injured. The victim was rushed to a local hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at about 10:00pm.

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