

Beggars turn dignified earners

They learn handiwork under 40-day job scheme

EAM ASADUZZAMAN,
Nilphamari

One hundred and six beggars of Kishoreganj upazila under the district have pledged to live with dignity through earning by work, thanks to the 'creative diversification' of the government's 40-day seasonal job programme meant for the extremely poor people.

Visiting the project area on the premises of Kishoreganj upazila parishad complex on Monday (April 22), this correspondent saw a good number of beggars, mostly women, engaged in making various goods from bamboo, wood and aquatic plants.

They were making nice-looking baskets and fancy household articles using bamboo strips or fine sticks. Some were making mats using aquatic plants called 'motha'.

"We have formed several groups among the participants and arranged a trainer for each. At beginning of their work every day, the upazila nirbahi officer of Kishoreganj conducts an oath, having the participants pledge to give up begging and opt for a dignified life," said Apela Begum Rina, chairman of the project, also member of Nitai union parishad.

The government's 40-day job programme for the ultra poor, so far limited to making or repairing earthen roads in rural areas, often saw hindrance due to lack of earth, said Mohammad Golam Azam, upazila nirbahi officer of Kishoreganj.

"As part of the authorities' steps to add other suitable works, we have launched a pilot project for 106 beggars with a portion of the fund for 40-day programme in the upazila. Under the project, the beggars are working for daily wage, paving the way for their self-employment," he said.

The second phase of 40-day job programme with a



PHOTO: STAR

Inspired by the upazila nirbahi officer, a group of ultra poor people in Kishoreganj upazila under Nilphamari district pledge to give up begging and lead a dignified life through earning by making and selling household items that they learnt at a training programme under 'creative diversification' of 40-day seasonal job programme meant for the extremely poor people. Inset, the former beggars making useful items with bamboo strips.

fund of Tk 3.13 crore started in the upazila on April 4, upazila office source said, adding that total 4341 extremely poor people are participating in the programme under several projects, including the innovative pilot project for 106



beggars.

The beneficiaries get Tk 175 for working eight hours a day.

"After my husband's death I started begging as I became helpless with my three teenage daughters. Now I am learning to make

bamboo goods and getting paid for it. I have decided to give up begging," said Mohosena, 45, a participant at the training.

Several others including Joimala, 50, Meraj Ali, 55, Azmol, 45, Safia, 55, Morjina, 45, expressed

happiness over the opportunity to earn through the training.

From the money got by selling the things they are now making, instruments and working capital will be provided to selected participants, the UNO said.

Five youths missing for four days

Abducted by fake DB men!

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Tangail

Five youths of Tangail Sadar upazila have remained missing since a gang in the name of Detective Branch (DB) of police had them get into a microbus four days ago, family members of the youths said at a press conference in Tangail Press Club yesterday.

The victims are Monir Hossain of Ramdevpur village and Shukur Mahmud, Nurul Islam, Shahidul Islam and Ayez Uddin of Kalikeotil village.

Six people including a woman, introducing themselves as DB men, lifted Monir and Shukur onto a

microbus at Collegepara in Tangail town on Sunday morning and took them to Omarpur village, the family members and relatives of the youths quoted witnesses assaying.

Later, they called Nurul, Shahidul and Ayez by the cell phones of Monir and Shukur, took them also on the microbus and went towards Tangail town.

Later, family members and relatives of the youths went to the police station and offices of DB police and Rapid Action Battalion in Tangail town but did not get any trace of the missing youths.

They told the press con-

ference that there was no complaint or case against the missing youths with the local police station and as per their knowledge the five youths had no enmity with anyone.

Expressing fear that the youths were abducted in a pre-planned way, the family members demanded that the police rescue the youths immediately.

Earlier, they lodged a general diary (GD) with Tangail Model Police Station in this regard.

When contacted, Saleh Mohammed Tanvir, superintendent of police in Tangail, said police were investigating the matter.

300 BNP men sued in police assault case

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Jessore

Three hundred BNP leaders and activists were yesterday sued for assaulting three police officers of Bagherpara Police Station in Jessore on Tuesday morning.

Sub-Inspector (SI) Uttam Kumar of Khajura police outpost filed the case with the police station at noon.

Of the accused, 40 have been named by the complainant, while the rest are unidentified.

Police arrested three BNP activists-Babu Mondol, Tokon Biswas and Shamim Hossain of Mirzapur village under the upazila yesterday morning. They were shown arrested in the police assault case.

During hartal hours on Tuesday, opposition activists unleashed violence, injuring three cops of Bagherpara Police Station in the district.

The injured cops are Assistant Sub-Inspector Haidar Ali, Officer-in-Charge Ramprasad Bhakta and Sub-Inspector Mafizur Rahman.

Of them, Assistant Sub-Inspector Haidar Ali, who suffered critical head injuries, was flown to Combined Military Hospital in the capital by a helicopter as his condition deteriorated at Jessore Medical College Hospital (JMCH).

His injured colleagues--Officer-in-Charge Ramprasad Bhakta and Sub-Inspector Mafizur Rahman--are undergoing treatment at JMCH.

Two BNP activists and a female passerby were also injured in a nearly 30-minute clash that ensued around 10:30am after the attack on the cops, said SI Jahangir of the police station.

SI Jahangir said a police team went to Bhatar Amtala

Bazaar on Jessore-Magura highway, some 20km off Jessore town, yesterday morning.

The OC, accompanied by SI Mafiz and ASI Haidar, went to talk to a group of pickets who had barricaded the road. They left behind the other members of the team and tried to negotiate with the activists on removing the barricade.

Suddenly, some BNP men started beating the officers with sticks and bricks. ASI Haidar fell to the ground; the activists kept hitting him, particularly in the head.

Shah Dara Khan, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Bagherpara Police Station said they have launched a drive to arrest the accused in the case.

1,100-year-old structure unearthed in Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Dinajpur

Archaeologists have unearthed relics of an about 1100-year-old brick structure at remote Bewla village in Ghoraghat upazila under the district.

"We assume the ancient structure might be built

during the Pala era, between eighth and ninth centuries. More excavations will be needed to ascertain whether the structure belonged to the Buddhists or the Hindus," Swadhin Sen, associate professor of archaeology department of Jahangirnagar University,

also chief of the excavation team, said on Sunday.

The 40-member team started excavating the site on March 27 and found the structure on a 52 X 32 metre platform on a khas land near Gopalpur Eidgah field at Belwa village on Saturday.

Earlier the land was

leased to a local for farming.

Around eighty years ago, two copper plates inscribed with the names of Mohi Pala and Bigraba Pala were found at Bewla village, which indicates the ancient brick structure might be of Pal era. The copper inscriptions are now in Kolkata Museum.

In 2011, a survey carried out by a team led by Syed Quamrul Ahsan of archaeology department of Jahangirnagar University found 51 archaeological sites in Ghoraghat.

Archaeologist AKM Jakaria in his book 'Bangladesher Pratinatwa Sampad' describes Ghoraghat as a historically important area, said Swadhin.

The team led by Swadhin informed Dinajpur deputy commissioner and the Department of Archaeology to take initiative to protect the archaeological site at Bewla village.

The team also requested Maksud Begum, Ghoraghat upazila nirbahi officer, to cancel the lease of the site.

Many bricks from the site have already gone missing, said Sunny, a member of the team.

Earlier, a Pala era structure was found in Birampur upazila of Dinajpur.



PHOTO: STAR

Workers under the supervision of a team of archaeologists of Jahangirnagar University conduct an excavation at Bewla village in Ghoraghat upazila under Dinajpur district to unearth the relics of a 1,100-year-old structure.

অভিনন্দন

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