

# School health centre hardly serves its purpose

Most of govt supplied medicines remain unused as only a few patients go there

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Nilphamari

The government-run school health centre at Sarkerpara in Saidpur municipality under the district, meant for providing medical treatment for school students, virtually fails to serve its purpose.

The then government in early 80s set up this school health centre, to be manned with two doctors, a pharmacist and an MLSS, sources said.

One doctor is now providing treatment there while the other post of doctor, supposed to visit schools to teach students about health rules and motivating them

to visit the centre for treatment, is lying vacant for years.

Only 10-12 students visit the health centre daily as most are not aware about it due to lack of motivation programme, said Dr Sharmin Aktar, the only physician now serving the centre.

Locals said the physician lives in Rangpur city and she often fail to maintain regularity due to adverse weather, transportation problem etc.

Upazila education office sources said around 35 thousand students study in 77 primary schools, 28 high

schools and 20 madrasas in the upazila.

Visiting the centre at 12:15pm on Thursday, three students were found to have come there for treatment that time.

One of them, Minhaj, a Class V student of Sunflower School, said he went there with cough and fever as he lives nearby.

Class X students of Islamia High School in Saidpur municipality, Sohag, Jibon and Nawshad, said they never heard about the school health centre.

Service time of the health centre, 9:00am to 5:00pm, is not suitable for students'

visit there as the time coincides with school hours, said Anwarul Islam, headmaster of Saidpur Pilot High School.

Pharmacist Nazrul Islam of the centre said district civil surgeon's office provides sufficient medicines every year but a good quantity of them remains unused for want of patients.

Contacted, Civil Surgeon Dr Abdur Rashid said, "The school health centre at Saidpur is not running properly due to different reasons and I have brought the matter to the knowledge of the higher authorities a number of times."



PHOTO: STAR

School health centre at Sarkerpara in Saidpur municipality under Nilphamari district sees only a few treatment seekers as the service hours coincide with class time of its beneficiaries, the school students, while one of the two posts of doctors, supposed to make field visits to motivate students to get its services, is lying vacant for long.

# Former enclave residents free to dream of a better future

SHYKH SERAJ

An electricity pole rarely brings excitement, but one installed in the farming community of Dasiar Chhara in Kurigram's Phulbari upazila on September 1, 2015 is symbolic of a new beginning.

"Development works are progressing quite quickly?" I suggest.

"Yes," replies a local, happily.

It's almost as if everything is new in Dasiar Chhara, one of the 162 parcels of land known as enclaves that were exchanged between India and Bangladesh on August 1 this year.

"It feels like we were in our mother's womb all these years," said a woman back in August, "and finally with identity we are born!"

"After 68 long years we became Bangladeshi," another man said on that historic day.



PHOTO: STAR

Media personality and agriculture development activist Shykh Seraj talks with a smiling farmer at Dasiar Chhara in Fulbari upazila under Kurigram district.

At the time of Partition in 1947 the map of division overseen by British lawyer Radcliffe included 111 Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh and 51 Bangladeshi enclaves inside India. Despite attempts in 1974 to simplify the border it never happened, until last August.

The agreement between Sheikh Hasina and Narendra Modi released a total of 17,160 acres of land from the complications of enclave status and freed enclave residents to dream of better futures. Their hopes are high.

"You had the opportunity to go to India," I ask an old man, "Why didn't you choose that option?"

"We fought hard for this country," he replies, "Why should we go to India?"

In terms of agriculture, since August site visits and offers of training, supplies

of fertilizer and pesticide, poultry, cows, cattle feed and other provisions have been made to the people of the Dasia Chhara. "But we are still not getting sufficient agriculture inputs," says one farmer, "though I'm sure the dealers will be here soon."

Deputy director of the Department of Agriculture Extension in Kurigram, Shawkat Ali Sarker, says that as it is tree planting season farmers in the area have been given saplings, and

assured that measures will be taken to accelerate the availability of both agricultural credit and quality seeds.

"We never had the dignity of humans, not even the dignity of animals or birds," says one man, recalling how it was to live in an enclave. "We didn't have ID cards and were not counted on government lists. There are exact tallies of animals in the Sundarbans, but not for us, until now!" His excitement and its parallel across the

entire community reminded of the joy of liberation in 1971, when I was just 15 years old.

Infrastructure projects have already begun. There is a new police camp and those startling markers of a new beginning, the electricity poles.

"Agricultural facilities are coming," says one local farmer, "So many things are happening. We have an electricity pole. Tomorrow we'll get rice. We're extremely happy."



Shykh Seraj is a Media and Agriculture Development Activist. He is an Ashoka Fellow and recipient of Ekushey Padak, FAO A.H. Boerma Award and many other prestigious accolades. At Channel i, he is Director and Head of News. He is also Director and Host of the popular agro-documentary, "Hridoye Mati O Manush".

## ARSON CASES

# 12 BNP-Jamaat men land in Dinajpur, Joypurhat jails

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Twelve BNP-Jamaat men, accused in arson cases, were sent to jails in Dinajpur and Joypurhat districts yesterday and the day before.

A court here yesterday sent eight Jamaat-Shibir men to jail, rejecting their bail prayer in an arson case filed with Chirirbandar Police Station during the parliamentary elections on January 5, 2014.

They are Jafar Ullah, 40, an executive committee member of Chirirbandar upazila unit of Jamaat,

activist Hazrat Ali, 45, Moynul Haque, 35, Syed Ali, 38, Faridul Islam 32, and Shibir activists Nur Alam, 30, Zakir Hossain 28, and Kawsar Alam, 27.

They were charge sheeted accused in the case, said Anisur Rahman, officer-in-charge of the police station.

Police said District and Sessions Judge Hossain Shaheed Ahmed passed the order after the eight surrendered to the court at noon.

According to case statement, Jamaat-Shibir men set fire to Saitara High School

centre in the upazila during the voting. They also snatched ballot papers and boxes from the presiding and polling officers of the centre.

The presiding officer later filed a case with Chirirbandar Police Station, accusing a good number of BNP-Shibir men of the area.

Meanwhile, a Joypurhat court on Monday sent four BNP and Jamaat men to jail, rejecting their bail prayer.

They are Sardar Md Liakat Ali, son of late Nur Mohammad of Shalban village under Khetlal upazila and vice president of Joypurhat district BNP, Jamaat activists Raju Hossain, son of Mozammel Hossain of Matirghar village, and Nurul Islam, son of late Nazir Uddin of Fakirpara village, and Khetlal upazila BNP leader Abdul Mannan.

Police said they were accused in a case for setting ablaze a Dhaka-bound passenger bus and a banana-loaded truck at Matirghar village in Khetlal upazila of Joypurhat district on February 24.

Motiar Rahman, counter manager of the passenger bus, filed a case on the same day, accusing 11 unidentified people.

The accused yesterday appeared before the Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court of Md Abdullah Al Ameen Bhuiyan, seeking bail. But the court rejected their bail prayer and sent them to jail.

Police said they had earlier arrested two more Jamaat men in connection with the case, who were given bail by the court.

Monirul Islam, officer-in-charge of Khetlal Police Station, confirmed it.

## Alleged killer of ex-army man held in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Police arrested an alleged killer of a former army man at his house at Kumbhokhali village in Baulal upazila of the district early Monday.

Arrestee Bacchu Hawlader, 27, gave confessional statement under Section 164 before the court of Senior Judicial Magistrate ASM Tarique Shams in the afternoon the same day, said court sources.

On April 19 this year, Md Jamal Hossain Sikder, 50, was hacked to death in Dumki upazila. Police later recovered the body from a field near his house.

The following day, the victim's brother Masud Sikder filed a case with Dumki Police Station in this connection.

Bacchu in his confessional statement said the victim's wife Ferdousy Begum alias Lucy along with her relative named Sohail hired him to kill Jamal. They also paid him Tk 5,000 for the purpose, he said.

Earlier, police arrested Lucy, her daughter Maria, 15, brother-in-law Dulal and another relative Motiar for their alleged involvement in the killing, said Dewan Joglul Hasan, sub-inspector of the PS.

Of them, three were released on bail while Maria is now in a safe home in Jessore district as per order of the High Court.

The charge sheet will be submitted before the court soon, said the SI, also investigation officer of the case.

# Take permanent steps to stop Jamuna onslaught

Demand victims at human chain along the river bank in Fulchhari upazila of Gaibandha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Residents of Katlamari village in Fulchhari upazila of the district formed a human chain yesterday, demanding permanent measures for arresting widespread erosion along the western bank of the Jamuna River.

Organised by Katlamari Nadi Bhangon Protirodh Sangram committee, villagers, including women and students, lined up along the bank for two hours to press the government to take immediate steps to protect them from the onslaught by the river.

They alleged that the local Water Development Board (WDB) did not take any permanent measure against erosion that has engulfed a large number of homesteads, structures and croplands, rendering over 2000 people shelterless during the last two years.

The WDB often takes up programmes for dumping sandbags to prevent erosion, especially in the rainy season, speakers at the human chain said.

Last year, local people erected bamboo barriers and dumped sandbags on self-help basis to control erosion, but all the structures got washed away by

the surging water in the rainy season, said Khorshed Ali Khan, convener of Sangram Committee.

Last week, around 110 families lost their homesteads and croplands as the rushing water engulfed large chunks of the river bank. The onslaught of the river is still going on along the western bank of Katlamari village, said Shakwat Hossain, member of the union parishad.

"My three bighas of cultivable land were eroded last month, and now my homestead is threatened," said freedom fighter Nazrul Islam.

"Erosion has taken

alarming turn along 1000 metres of the river bank, large areas are being devoured everyday," said Abdul Baki a social worker.

The speakers at the human chain announced they would launch a march from Katlamari to the house of Deputy Speaker Advocate Fazley Rabbi Mia, MP demanding permanent steps to stop erosion.

"A master plan is essential to permanently protect vast tracts of croplands, homesteads, educational institutions, markets, mosques and temples from erosion," said Habibur Rahman, upazila chairman of Fulchhari upazila.



PHOTO: STAR

People of Kalmati village in Fulchhari upazila under Gaibandha district form a human chain on the bank of the Jamuna River yesterday demanding effective steps to check river erosion in the area.

## বিশ্ব প্রবীণ দিবস সফল হউক

বিশ্ব প্রবীণ দিবসের প্রাক্কালে আমি খতিব আব্দুল জাহিদ মুকুল আপনাদের জন্য স্মরণীয় শ্রদ্ধা ও ভালোবাসা। দৃঃখজনক হলেও সত্য যে, পিতামাতার অপরিণীম ত্যাগ-তিতিক্ষার বিনিময়ে সমাজে প্রতিষ্ঠিত, সচ্ছল অনেক সন্তানই বৃদ্ধ পিতামাতাকে অবজ্ঞা করছে, তুচ্ছ-তাচ্ছিল্য করছে; যা সত্যই কাম্য নয়। আমরা কি বদলাতে পারি না? অবশ্যই পারি। আমি অত্যন্ত আশাবাদী একজন মানুষ। আমার আশা আগামী প্রজন্মের কাছে।

বিশ্ব শতাব্দীর এই ত্রিমাত্রিক জগতে দাঁড়িয়ে, হে নবীন তোমাদের বলছি আজ থেকে হাজার হাজার লাইক হউক পিতামাতার জন্য, সেলফি হোক পিতামাতার হাসিমুখ। আব্দুল নয়, হৃদয়-এর স্পর্শেই যেন জানতে পারো বাবা-মার প্রয়োজন। পৃথিবীর যেখানেই থাকো না কেন Facebook নয়, পিতামাতার প্রশান্তিময় Face হউক দিন গুরুর অনুপ্রেরণা। সন্তান ও পিতামাতার ভালোবাসায় সিক্ত হউক বাংলাদেশ। প্রচণ্ড শক্তিশালী পারিবারিক বন্ধনে আবদ্ধ হউক আগামীর বাংলাদেশ।

পরিশেষে এ দেশের সবার প্রতি আমার আকুল আবেদন, যে সমস্ত প্রবীণদের আল্লাহ ছাড়া পৃথিবীতে কেউ নেই তাদেরকে অবহেলা করবেন না। আমাদের এই অসহায় প্রবীণদের সেবা করার সূযোগ দিন। আমি আমার 'বয়স্ক পুনর্বাসন কেন্দ্র'-এ আমন্ত্রণ বিনা খরচে অন, বস্ত্র, চিকিৎসা ও বিনোদন-এর ব্যবস্থা করে আসছি এবং ভবিষ্যতেও তাদের জীবন সুখময় করে তুলতে সচেষ্ট থাকব। ইনশা আল্লাহ।

**খতিব আব্দুল জাহিদ মুকুল**  
চেয়ারম্যান  
"বয়স্ক পুনর্বাসন কেন্দ্র"  
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