



PHOTO: STAR  
Badsha Gul Factory at Mahishkhocha village in Aditmari upazila under Lalmonirhat district produces tobacco dust around the clock, posing health hazard for the workers, nearby people as well as the passers-by.

# Illegal tobacco gul factory pollutes environment

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

A gul (a tobacco dust product) factory is running illegally at remote Mahishkhocha village of Aditmari upazila under the district, polluting the environment there. The factory named Badsha Gul Factory has continued production of the harmful item in the populated area for the last five years without any permission from the Department of Environment (DoE), locals said. The factory, employing poor women and children for low wages, runs round the clock and the bad smell from tobacco dust creates nuisance for the nearby people

and passers-by, they said. School going children are worst sufferers. A section of low income people use gul as a 'smokeless' tobacco, keeping the item inside the mouth. "The local environment is polluted due to spread of tobacco dust from the gul factory. We keep our noses covered with cloth while passing by it," said Nur Amin, 45, a resident of Mahishkhocha village. "I feel uneasy due to the bad smell from the tobacco dusting in the factory. It poses health hazard for the villagers," said Khadiza Akhter, a Class X student of a local school.

Local trader Ashraf Islam, 40, said he and many others in the area urged the gul factory owner to shift it from the populated area but the latter declined, saying that he has all necessary documents for it. Meherun Begum, a woman worker of the factory said she gets Tk 100 as daily wage for putting tobacco dust into 1000 mini plastic containers. "I am suffering due to bad smell of tobacco dust. About one hundred workers work in the factory," she added. The factory owner, Badsha Miah claimed that he need not take any per-

mission from DoE as the factory 'does not pollute the environment'. "I run the factory by paying revenue to the government properly," he added. "Badsha Gul Factory pays Tk 10 thousand as revenue every month. The DoE is supposed to supervise the environmental issue," said Suzon Kumar Roy, inspector of Customs Vat and Excises in Lalmonirhat Circle. Aktaruzzaman, assistant director of DoE in Rangpur Division, said, "I am unaware about the tobacco gul factory. I will take legal action after visiting the spot soon."

# Housewife found murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police yesterday recovered the body of a housewife from Kandipara Bazar area in Gafargaon upazila of the district. The victim was identified as Jakia Khatun, 35, wife of Md Shahid, a garment worker in Dhaka. Quoting family sources, Md Chand Miah, officer-in-charge of Pagla Police Station, said Jakia, mother of two children, went out of her house around 3:00pm for treatment at nearby Union Health and Family Planning Centre, but she did not return home. Family members searched for Jakia, but could not find her. Later, they informed the police. Locals found the body of Jakia at a banana orchard adjacent to the Union Health and Family Planning Centre near Kandipara Bazar around 10:00 am. On information, police rushed to the spot, recovered the body around 11:00am, and sent it to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) morgue for autopsy. The body bore several injury marks on the neck and hands, police said.

# BCL men 'grab' shop, put up party signboard

Sue shop owner, six others on charge of damaging Bangabandhu's portrait; police pick up 3 of them

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A group of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) men allegedly grabbed a bicycle mechanic's shop by putting up the party's signboard at Nilarmela Bazar in Atwary upazila of Panchagarh district recently. When mechanic Hakikul Islam, 48, entered his shop by breaking its lock with the help of local people on Tuesday, the BCL men filed a case with Atwary Police Station against seven people, including Hakikul, accusing them of damaging the portrait of Bangabandhu. The law enforcers later arrested Hakikul, his wife Sultana Begum, 45, brother Abdul Mottaleb, 35, his wife Razia Begum, 25, and their three-year-old son Rahat in connection with the case. Locals said Hakikul has been running the shop beside Boda-Atwary road at the bazar for about 27 years. In 1988, he set up the shop on the land of local union parishad. Due to his illness, Hakikul kept the shop closed for the last few months. He reconstructed the structure of the shop last month. Afterwards, the union BCL men put up a signboard and locked the shop. They also placed Bangabandhu's portrait in the room. On Tuesday morning, Hakikul broke the lock of the shop with the help of local people. Later the BCL men entered the room, damaged the portrait and filed a case against the shop owner and his family, alleged local people.

Contacted, Abdullah Al Mamun, president of BCL, said as the room remained in an abandoned state, they put up signboard and locked it. Apart from this, the shop was built on the land of union parishad. Replying to a query, the BCL leader said he was not present during the incident but he heard Hakikul and his family damaged Bangabandhu's portrait. Three people were arrested in the case, said Mohammad Shah Alam, officer-in-charge of the police station, adding that the family members brought the minor boy willingly. Of the arrestees, Abdul Mottaleb was sent to jail while others got bail when they were produced before a court yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR  
A group of local Chhatra League men put up a party signboard at a shop in Atwary upazila under Panchagarh district after ousting the shop owner. The grabbers also filed a 'false' case against the shop owner and six others.

# 9 BNP-Jamaat men land in jail

UNB, Sylhet

A court here on Tuesday sent nine local BNP and Jamaat activists to jail, rejecting their bail prayers in a case filed for subversive activities. They are Minhaj Uddin Chowdhury, Shoaibur Rahman, Shamim, Alam, Shahnur, Shahjul, Mamun, Ramjan and Jamal. All are the activists of Golapganj and Goainghat upazila units of BNP and Jamaat.

# The lure of the sea, a lifelong debt trap for fishermen

BY HABIBUR RAHMAN WITH ANDREW EAGLE

When in rough weather the waves rise up, it can take all a man's strength and then some for a fisherman to overcome. There's wit, skill and experience in sea fishing, and beyond that prayer and perhaps a little luck... The open sea: it's no place for an octogenarian. But for Taiyab Ali Sarder of Chitholiya village in Pirojpur Sadar upazila, regularly returning to the sea in his twilight years is the only option. "There's none to bear our family's expenses," he says. It's understatement. Although the family is landless, modest daily expenses could potentially be managed in safer, dry-land ways. It's rather the need to repay advance loan money called dadan to his master, the

boat owner, which chains Sarder to the sea. His story is not unique. Not only in Pirojpur but all along the Bangladeshi coast most fishermen are entrapped in an endless debt cycle. Theirs are the lives of virtual slaves. Arrangements vary. Sometimes fish wholesalers grant loans to boat owners at the beginning of a season to fund expeditions, on the condition that each catch can only be sold to that wholesaler, a practice that undermines the ability of both boat owner and fisherman to seek optimal rates on the open market. Sometimes wholesalers themselves own boats; alternatively boat owners enter into share arrangements with fishermen, often giving loans to insolvent fishermen before a boat's departure to cover family

living expenses. When a trawler returns from the sea, the boat owner's expenses are deducted first. While many a poor fisherman has embarked upon their career driven by dreams of improving the lives of their families, few succeed. Fish catches are hardly reliable. Rather, when there are not enough fish the fishermen have no choice but to take additional loans from boat owners in order to sustain their families until the next voyage. In this way they become debt entrapped. "Our masters give us Tk 2000 before going to sea for family expenses," says Md Jamal Howlader, a fisherman from Pirojpur's Bhandaria upazila. "Because we don't always get a good catch, step by step our debts increase. Fishermen here owe up to Tk 40,000 to

their masters and it's impossible to repay." "If I want to change profession," says fisherman-of-twenty-years Nur Ali Howlader, of Badur village in Pirojpur Sadar upazila, "I will have to repay the dadan money which I will never be able to do." In addition to his sizeable debts, Howlader has a nine-member family to support. "Fishing is the only work I know," says Azizul Pashari, 22. "I cannot change my profession easily." Even at this young age, Pashari owes his master Tk 18,000. In the hope of ridding themselves and their families from the curse of poverty, insolvent men head to sea. They risk mishap, storm and cyclone. Many have a tale or two to tell of attacks by pirates. But instead of changing their fates for the better, the lot of the fisherman enslaves them.

In Bangladesh, a fisherman's reward for determination, hard work and fortitude is most often permanent indebtedness, with loans never repaid prior to a fisherman's death. In order to ensure a fisherman's rewards are more commensurate with their efforts, the country's fishing sector is crying out for reform. Better government regulation and enforcement might play a role. NGOs could assist by offering flexible loans and explore ways of facilitating fishermen to collectively purchase their own vessels. Retailers and consumers can help by preferring fair-trade sea fish caught in circumstances of more progressive business models, in the same way that supermarkets already pride themselves in offering chemical-free fresh produce. It's a big challenge but change must come so that one day all Bangladeshis can wake to a morning when no octogenarian is compelled to head out onto the high seas. Only on such a day can Bangladeshis be truly proud of their fishing industry... even the fish will surely taste better. Sarder still recalls his first trip to sea at age 20, more than sixty years ago. Back then, like many he believed a risky fishing expedition could bring a life-changing windfall. But nowadays, too old to haul nets he works as a cook on the FB Maa Ganga fishing boat. His family is settled on a kindly neighbour's land. He's worried that due to his debts his youngest daughter, now 16, will never marry. "I have no son who will repay my dadan," says Sarder, despondently. "So I go to sea again and again in the hope of repaying." He currently owes Tk 25,000.

# Five cops among 6 sued on murder charge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole, Jessore

A woman filed a case on Tuesday against six people, including five policemen, with the Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court of Jessore in connection with the killing of her husband. Sheuli Begum, wife of slain Enamul Haque of Isali village in Jessore Sadar upazila, filed the case, accusing sub-inspectors Tapan and Russell, constables Ibrahim and Shahid of Isali police camp, sub-inspector Masud of Khajura police camp; and police informant Arun. Senior Judicial Magistrate Abu Ibrahim took the case into cognizance and ordered Jessore Police Bureau of Investigation (JPBI) to submit a report on the incident to his court. According to the case statement, Isali and Khajura police jointly raided several houses of Isali and Mathurapur villages on October 9 and arrested Enamul Haque.

Later, Enamul's family members searched for him in several police stations and police camps, but failed to find him. Family members found Enamul's body on October 10 at Jessore General Hospital morgue. Hospital sources said police had recovered the body from a rail track and sent it to the hospital for autopsy. Police killed Enamul Haque after picking him up from his house and left the body on the rail track, family members alleged.



PHOTO: STAR  
Fishermen Taiyab Ali Sarder prepares meal for colleagues at a trawler at Badura port in Pirojpur Sadar upazila. Struggling to make both ends meet for the family, the elderly man often has to take loan as 'advance payment' from his employer.

# TRADEMARK AND DESIGN WARNING NOTICE

This notice is for all concerned that our client's company "ASIA BATTERY LIMITED" is a reputed company in Bangladesh, which produces top quality batteries for "Easy Bikes" from their own factory and have been selling and marketing the same in different areas of Bangladesh for a long time with great success and reputation. The schedule mentioned "trademarks and designs" are being used on their batteries since 07.12.2012 and they have duly applied for registration of the said "trademarks and designs" before the Registrar (Patent, Design & Trademark) appointed by the government of Bangladesh, which applications are now under processing.

Unfortunately, on 16.10.2015 a company named Asia Car BD Ltd. has published a warning notice on the 7th page of the Daily Ittefaq claiming that they are the authorized owner of 4 trademarks used on their batteries, but out of their 4 logos, the 1st and 2nd logos are fully identical to the 1st and 2nd logos of our batteries (shown below). Therefore, they have no legal right to use the said two logos on their batteries and they have no document to show in support of such claim. Due to their misrepresentation our client's customers and dealers from all over the country have become highly misguided and thus it has caused a serious loss and damage to their business and goodwill. We, therefore, seriously protest against the said Notice. In this regard, our client has filed a GD Entry being No.1095 dated 18.10.2015 before the Vatara Police Station, DMP, Dhaka praying to take immediate legal action against the illegal traders.

In this circumstances, we earnestly request our valued customers, wholesalers and retailers not to believe the false propoganda of the said Asia Car BD Ltd. and not to become confused by their misrepresentation. We request you to avoid buying the low quality batteries with counterfeit trademarks marketed by the dishonest traders and only buy the original batteries sold by "ASIA BATTERY LIMITED" by seeing the trademark, design and logos given below.



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