

# Innovative fish farming in once barren land

SHYKH SERAJ

It is a surprising tale. In Rangpur region, in the northern part of Bangladesh, no one was able to do well in fish farming. Although Teesta, Brahmaputra, Ghagot, Dharla and other rivers flow across the region, still during the dry season water crisis does not allow fish farming in the region. The Gangachhara region was born on a dead river called Gaang, but and it now sees remarkable success in fish farming. A fish farmer named Mahfuz Shah did the miracle.

Mahfuz is a fish farmer with indigenous knowledge. He has tried to understand the latest advancement in fish farming technologies. He is a self-taught farmer. That is why his confidence is super high. Now, he knows the many mysteries of fish farming.

In 2009, he started off with only one pond with credit from a mahajan (money lender). Now, he has expanded it to 14 ponds. This is certainly a rare success.

"I always had the confidence that I'd be able to do really well with my fishes," says Mahfuz.

"And here I am, doing pretty well and earning my livelihood," adds Mahfuz. Bangladesh is performing really well in fish farming sector and now stands fourth in producing sweet water fish, and farmers like Mahfuz have played a key role in this process.

In a region dominated by tobacco farming for ages, fish has been a real surprise for sure in the hands of Mahfuz.

"My country is a food secure country, but protein is also important as we all know. My focus is on that," says Mahfuz.

Mahfuz also believes that Rangpur region will surpass the fish farming success of Mymensingh district in a short time.

Mahfuz has not only been successful himself, but has also encouraged others. Many young entrepreneurs



PHOTO: STAR

**Agriculture development activist and media personality Shykh Seraj talks with innovative fish cultivator Mahfuz Shah at the latter's fish farm in Gangachhara upazila under Rangpur district. Inset, Mahfuz holds a large fish reared at his pond.**

were attracted to fish farming following the success of Mahfuz.

I met Yousuf, a young fish farmer from Thakurdaho. "I was unemployed. But, Mahfuz Bhai showed me the way and encouraged me towards fish farming," says Yousuf. "I tell you, I am doing very well now."

All over Gangachhara, there are hundreds of ponds where the fish farming revolution took place. Mahfuz has also triggered the activities of the Department of Fisheries with his tremendous work.

"Mahfuz is an icon and certainly an idol for many. Definitely, we're going to support him and all the fish farmers of the region," says Aminur Rahman,

assistant director of the Department of Fisheries in Rangpur.

Mahfuz is a man whose love is rooted in the ponds. He never looks down. His aims are sky high. His success has also inspired the local UNO, Abu Zafar. He also spends his time at Mahfuz's farm and learns the new techniques. He is actively helping others for the extension of fish farming in the region.

There are many farmers who are using their cultivable lands for fish farming as well, something that I saw many years back. Rangpur farmers have taken this technique now to grow more fish.

Many traders come to Gangachhara from nearby

districts to sell fish fry. Mahfuz aims at preserving the indigenous fish varieties. He is already doing a lot of research on his own.

Dear readers, real endeavours make one successful. Mahfuz is such a progressive farmer who has done almost the impossible. He doesn't want individual success. He wants the whole community around him to see big dreams and succeed.

"I want to make Rangpur the home of fish," says Mahfuz firmly. And, he's keeping up the work relentlessly, yet silently.

I believe he'll be more successful in the coming days and change the scenario of fish farming in the northern district of Rangpur.



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".

## JAMUNA BASIN AREAS IN BOGRA

# Bumper tomato yield brings smile to farmers

MAMUN-UR-RASHID, Bogra

The tomato growers of Jamuna Basin areas of Sariakandi upazila under the district are delighted due to the bumper yield and good price of the popular winter crop.

The farmers of Jamuna basin areas in Phulbari, Narsi and Bhelabari unions of Sariakandi upazila are hopeful to recoup the losses due to recurrent floods during the last rains, said locals

and agriculture office sources.

Sowing of the tomato seeds started early August this year and the seedlings were transplanted in the prepared lands after around 25 days, they said.

Mohidul Islam of Nayapara under Phulbari union said he planted 3,700 seedlings of Mintu variety of tomato on 33 decimals of land spending Tk 40 thousand this season.

"I nourished the tomato

field with great care following the suggestions of the agriculture officials. The vegetable grew well, weight of 2/3 tomatoes being around one kg. I started reaping it a few days ago. It is selling for Tk 3000-3200 per maund," he said.

Sirajul Islam and Sanaul Islam of the same village have cultivated tomato on 40 decimals and 66 decimals of land respectively.

They have started reaping the vegetable from their

land and they are hopeful of getting good profit.

Agriculture officials provided suggestions to the grassroots level farmers, especially in the Jamuna basin areas, to help them get good yield and earn huge profit so that they can recoup their losses of their aman crops due to the recurrent three times flood two/three months ago, said Sariakandi Upazila Agriculture Officer Md Kamruzzaman.



PHOTO: STAR

Mohidul Islam and his family members reap tomatoes from their field at Nayapara village in Phulbari union of Sariakandi upazila under Bogra district. A large number of farmers in the area have cultivated the popular winter vegetable to recoup the losses of last season's aman paddy due to recurrent floods.

## 6 return from Indian jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Six Bangladeshis returned home after serving two years in an Indian jail through Burimari immigration check post in Patgram upazila of the district on Tuesday afternoon.

The Indian immigration police handed them over to Bangladesh immigration police at Burimari-Changrabandha border zero line in presence of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and Indian Border Security Force (BSF).

They are Nabi Hossain, 18, son of Bangsher Ali, Year Hossain, 22, son of Nadu Sheikh, Haridas Roy, 23, son of Bhabeshwar Roy, and Shyamal Kumar Roy, 18, son of Nishi Chandra Roy of Battali village of Deviganj upazila in Panchagrah district, and Rabiul Islam, 18, son of Alek Miah of Adamdighee upazila, and Shahidul Islam, 20, son of Amzad Hossain of Dupchaehia upazila in Bogra district.

BGB and immigration police sources said the six were arrested by BSF personnel while they were entering India illegally through different borders in India's Cooch Behar district two years back. They were produced in a court that sent them to jail.

Returnee Shahidul Islam said he went to look for jobs in brick kilns or at construction sites in India.

Sub-Inspector Aminul Islam, in-charge of Burimari immigration police, said police handed over the six to their family members at the immigration check post on Tuesday night.

## Bullet-hit body found on Sylhet border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

The bullet-hit body of a youth was found at zero line near Lalakhal in Jaintapur upazila of Sylhet district yesterday morning.

The deceased is Jamir Miah, 22, son of Farid Miah of Horni village in the upazila.

Locals said Jamir went to the border area for grazing his cattle around 7:30am.

When he entered the Indian Territory, people of Indian Khasi community fired gunshots at Jamir, leaving him dead on the spot, they said.

Contacted, BGB-41 Battalion Commander Lt Col Shah Alam Chowdhury said he heard about the death.

The body was sent to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy, said Shafiul Kabri, officer-in-charge of Jaintapur Police Station.

## Schoolteacher stabbed to death

UNB, Netrakona

A primary schoolteacher was stabbed to death by unidentified criminals at Manash village in Barhatta upazila yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Arjun Chandra Sinha, 42, headmaster of Manash Government Primary School.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) Salimuzzaman of Barhatta Police Station quoted witnesses as saying that a gang of criminals swooped on Arjun and stabbed him indiscriminately while he was going to the school around 10:00am. He died on the spot.

He had an enmity with Abul Kashem, a member of Asma Union Parishad, over formation of the school managing committee, the OC added.

On information, police went to the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police arrested a man named Babu in connection with the murder.

# Thakurgaon tasted freedom on this day in '71

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

On this day in 1971, Thakurgaon was liberated from the Pakistani occupation forces.

A heavy gun battle took place at night on December 1 in 1971 between freedom fighters and Pakistani forces.

Failing to resist freedom fighters and allied forces, the occupation forces started to leave the town from December 2 morning. They completed withdrawal by that night and took shelter at Saidpur Cantonment.

Next morning, the freedom fighters entered the town. People from all walks of life came out on the streets in the town chanting slogan 'Joy Bangla' with freedom fighters.

During the war period a large number of innocent people were killed by the Pakistani forces and their collaborators in Thakurgaon.

Rickshaw puller Mohammad Ali was the first martyr of the Liberation War in Thakurgaon. He was shot dead by Pakistani army on March 27.

In Jathibhanga village under Sadar upazila of the district, at least 3500 innocent people including women and children of different villages who were fleeing to India for safety were killed and buried by the Pakistani forces and their local collaborators.

Skulls and bones of more than 8,500 people were recovered from Khuniadighi under Ranishankoil upazila of the district after Liberation War. They were killed during the Liberation War and their bodies thrown into a big pond.

Freedom fighters and allied forces intensified

attacks on the Pakistani forces from the beginning of November in the area.

The freedom fighters took control of Amarkhana on November 20, Jagdalhat on November 25, Shingpara village on November 26, Talma village on November 27, Panchagarh CO Office, Atwary, Mirzapur on November 28 and finally entire Panchagarh was liberated on November 29, 1971.

The Pakistani occupation army and their collaborators fled the areas and soldiers took shelter at Thakurgaon EPR camp after leaving Panchagarh.

To mark the day, district unit of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangshad

and district unit of Bangladesh Udichi Shilpi Gosthi jointly have taken different programmes including placing wreaths on the martyrs' monument and Shaheed Mohammad Ali and Nareh Chowhan's graves, bringing out colourful procession titled 'Mukti Shovajatra' in the town.

Discussion on Liberation War, recitation, drama and cultural programme will also be held at the district's Central Shaheed Minar in the town.

Former Water Resources Minister and lawmaker Ramesh Chandra Sen is supposed to attend the programme as chief guest.



PHOTO: STAR

Aparajeya '71, a lofty monument built in honour of the Liberation War martyrs in Thakurgaon.

## GUNFIGHT WITH COPS

# Robber killed in Jessore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole, Jessore

An alleged robber was killed in a 'gunfight' between his cohorts and Detective Branch (DB) of police on Jessore-Jhenidah highway in Rahmatpur area of Jessore Sadar upazila yesterday.

The identity of the deceased could not be known immediately, said Abul Khayer, sub-inspector of Jessore DB police.

Informed that a gang was making preparation to commit robbery on the highway, a police team raided the area at 2:45am.

Sensing the presence of the law enforcers, the robbers opened fire on the policemen.

Police fired back, triggering a 'gunfight' that left the robber dead on the spot. However, his cohorts managed to flee the scene.

Three policemen were also injured during the incident, said SI Abul Khayer.

The injured are SI Tofael Ahmed and constables Sirajul Islam and Abu Russel.

The body was later sent to Jessore Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police also recovered one pistol and a sharp weapon from the spot.



PHOTO: STAR

A large number of indigenous people join a procession in Rangamati town yesterday demanding full implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord as the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) and its associate organisations observed the 18th anniversary of the peace deal signed between the government and the PCJSS.

Office of the Superintending Engineer  
Nagar Bhaban, 81, Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212  
Dhaka North City Corporation

Memo No: 46.207.014.09.03.257 (3)/2015 Date: 25/11/2015

### e-Tender Notice (OTM)

e-Tenders are invited in e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Superintending Engineer (Civil Circle), Dhaka North City Corporation for the procurement of:

Sl No.	Tender ID & Ref No.	Name of works	Last date and time for tender security submission	Tender closing date & time
1.	36992 e-GP/DNCC/SE(civil)/01/2015-2016	Emergency development/repair works by ready mix concrete of damage roads of different zones of Dhaka North City Corporation under framework contract	21 December, 2015 2:30pm	21 December, 2015 3:00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

Md. Sharif Uddin  
Superintending Engineer (Civil Circle)  
Nagar Bhaban,  
81, Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212  
Dhaka North City Corporation

সূত্র নং-৪৬.২০৭.০১৪.০৯.০৩.২৫৭.২০১৫  
তার-০১/১২/১৫  
GD-3760