

# Sea devours huge Kuakata forestland

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

In recent years, forestland in Kuakata beach area, including the coconut garden, tamarisk garden, Palm trees and vast areas of Kuakata Jatiya Udyan, have been continuously disappearing due to erosion by the sea.

About 1,150 acres of forestland in the 18 kilometre beach area had been washed away in last 10 years.

In the dry season, students from different schools, colleges and universities across the county come to Kuakata beach for research work or to enjoy study tour.

Besides, a good number of Hindu devotees come here to celebrate Rash Purnima in November every year.

After the government declared Kuakata as a 'Tourist spot' in 1998, many investors have started investing in the tourist industry.

Ruman Intiaz Tushar, managing director of Kuakata Tourist Centre, said investors are worried over their healthy investments as erosion has taken a serious turn in recent years.

Many eye-soothing spots are disappearing faster due to natural disasters like cyclone, storms and floods, he said, adding, but no steps have been taken to protect the beach from erosion.

Kuakata municipality Mayor Abdul Bareq Mollah said the government is taking many development projects, including construction of watch tower, stadium, airport and circuit house, but nothing to protect the beach from erosion.

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If such a situation continues all the development works will go in vain, the mayor added.

According to Patuakhali forest department, about 2,166 acres of fresh land were turned into a forest since 2010 to make the beach more attractive. Of them, nearly 1,135 acres have been washed away by the Bay and the rest may be eroded anytime.

On an average, over 100 acres of forestland are washed away every year while nearly 75,000 trees of different species are uprooted.

Patuakhali Divisional Forest Officer Ajit Kumar Rudhro said vast tracts of forestland in Kuakata zero point, Kwar Char, Gongamoti, Jatiya Udyan, Lembur Char and Khajura are reducing day by day due to continuous erosion.

They have sent several letters to Water Development Board (WDB) authorities to take steps in this regard, he added.

During a visit in 2016, Water Resource Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud said steps will be taken to protect the beach, but nothing has been done yet.

WDB Executive Engineer Abul Khayer said a study was done in 'Karalla Model' earlier but a fresh study in 'Home Model' is ongoing now.

After completion of the study they will submit the report to the ministry concerned, he said.



Vast tracts of forestland in Patuakhali's Kuakata beach area are washed away into the Bay every year due to natural disasters like cyclones and floods.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN



Abdur Rashid Hawlader, claiming to have spiritual power, blesses a customer after selling 'taga' to him in Pirojpur town.

PHOTO: STAR

## Livelihood on 'taga' selling

HABIBUR RAHMAN, Pirojpur

Seventy-year-old Abdur Rashid Hawlader comes out of his Chalisha village home in Pirojpur Sadar upazila everyday with a bundle of thick black thread locally known as 'taga', which is generally tied around the waist for getting relief from pain.

He then goes to different areas of Pirojpur town and sells those, claiming that they will remove pain of waist, ankle or elbow.

Rashid also claimed that he has a spiritual power, which he uses before giving the thread to his customers.

"I got the power in my dream and use it to help people," Rashid said.

Rashid, father of four sons and two daughters, said "My sons are not that solvent to provide me extra money

after meeting their family expenses."

Rashid said he earns at least Tk 150 everyday from selling the thread.

Tapan Datta, who is currently living in Pirojpur for job purpose, said he earlier bought a taga from Rashid for one of his relatives suffering from pain for long.

"Today I bought a taga for my wife, who is suffering from pain in her hand," Tapan said while paying Rashid Tk 20.

When someone says he was benefited using his thread he felt happy to serve people, Rashid said.

Trader Omar Ali of Pirojpur town said he has been seeing Rashid selling the taga for the last couple of years.

"I have seen both men and women collecting the thread from him, but don't know if it works or not," Omar said.

## Man to die for killing niece after rape

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A court here yesterday sentenced a man to death for killing his six-and-a-half-year-old niece after rape in Mymensingh Sadar upazila in 2015.

The convict was identified as Saiful Islam, 20, son of Abdul Aziz of Char Ishwardia village in the upazila.

Judge Mohammad Helal Uddin of Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal also fined the convict Tk one lakh, said Court Inspector Najesh Ali Mia.

According to the case statement, deceased Sumaiya Akhter, daughter of day labourer Mohammad Siraj Mia, was alone at home as her father went out of the house in search of work around 10:00am on January 23, 2015.

Sumaiya's mother Marzina Khatun, who used to work as a domestic help in others houses, along with her four-year-old son Jobayer also left for her workplace in the town at the same time.

Around 4:00pm, Saiful, step brother of Siraj, entered the house and raped the minor girl when none of the family members were present.

He later strangled Sumaiya and hung the body from the ceiling of her room so that the incident looks like suicide.

After returning home around 5:00pm, Marzina spotted Sumaiya's hanging body and raise a hue and cry.

Hearing screams, villagers caught Saiful in suspicion and handed him over to police, who recovered the body and sent it to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

## Six caught while kidnapping girl

Jamalpur court sends them to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A Jamalpur court yesterday sent six alleged abductors to jail in a case for kidnapping a schoolgirl on Saturday.

Police produced the accused before the judicial magistrate's court yesterday, seeking five-day remand for each.

Judge Nazmul Haque fixed November 7 for hearing on the remand prayer submitted by Investigation Officer (IO) Abdul Alim, also sub-inspector of Sadar Police Station.

The accused are Rubel Miah, 22, son of late Abdul Jabbar and Abdul Motaleb, 22, son of Yusuf Ali of Lakkhichar Uttarpara village, Tarek, 24, son of Shafir Uddin Maznu of Nandina Railgate area, Habibur Rahman Sohad, 21, son of Bablu Miah of Nandina Nekjahan Road Nayapara, Imran Hossain, 21, son of Muksed Ali of Nandina Nekjahan Road Balia, and micro-bus driver Alam Hossain, 25, of Kharkharia village in Sadar upazila.

As the girl, a resident of Lakkhichar Uttarpara and a Class IX student of Nekjahan Girls' High School in Nandina, refused to have a relationship with neighbour Rubel, he sent a proposal to the girl's father to give his daughter in marriage to him (Rubel) four months ago. The girl's father rejected the proposal.

According to the case statement, Rubel and his four accomplices took the girl forcibly into a micro-bus when she and her two classmates came out of their private tutor's house near the school on Saturday and left the place immediately.

The girl's classmates told the private tutor about the incident and he instantly informed the victim's father about the matter over phone, the case statement says.

The girl's family members informed relatives and acquaintances in nearby places about the matter.

Locals stopped the micro-bus at Tulsipur Battola intersection in Sadar upazila around 10:30am, rescued the victim and caught the abductors, the IO said.

The victim's father filed a kidnap case accusing the six kidnapers with Sadar Police Station on Saturday night.

## Python Indigo freed after observation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Python Indigo was released to Lawacherra National Park in Kamaganj upazila on Saturday after a year of observation.

Animesh Ghose Ayon, wildlife biologist at Creative Conservation Alliance, said a radio transmitter was installed in the body of the Indigo in October last year. It was attached to learn about the life cycle of the snake, its behavior and eating habits.

Members of Creative Conservation Alliance named the python Indigo. They named the snake alphabetically for research, he said.

Generally, the battery of the radio transmitter lasts from 12 months to 24 months. The transmitter in the Indigo's body had been attached 12 months ago. Due to this, the transmitter was removed from its body on November 1 this year.

Dr. Abu Sayem Arif, veterinary surgeon of Sreemangal, said the operation was done at the Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Center in Janokichara area.

Regarding surgery, he said that the weight of the radio transmitter is only 1% of the total weight of the snake and internationally recognized.

It has not yet been a physical problem to the snake. At present, Indigo's weight is 7.5 kg and it is 73 inches long, he said.

This study was done in collaboration between Bangladesh Forest Department and Creative Conservation Alliance. Creative Conservation Alliance has been using Radio Telemetry technology for over five years to monitor the movements and habitats of



Tin walls and roofs of the houses for the Sidr affected people have disappeared, making it impossible to live in. The houses were built under Ashrayan project at Hajipur village in Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali.

PHOTO: STAR

ASHRAYAN PROJECT

## Sidr-hit families leave as houses become unfit

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Sixteen Sidr affected families have left their houses built under Ashrayan project at Hajipur village in Kalapara upazila as their abodes have become unfit to live in.

Four other Sidr-hit families are still staying there as there is no alternative.

The walls and roofs of the 16 houses were looted after the families left the project area. The pillars of the houses have also become damaged.

The lone tube-well has been out of order for long while the toilets are

unfit to use, Rezaul, a resident, said, adding that if the authorities concerned do not repair these houses immediately they also might shift elsewhere.

Sixteen families have already left the houses as they cannot live in those, he said.

Widow Salina Begum is staying in her house with her son Shahin and daughter-in-law Ayesha.

"We are living here as there is no alternative because we are landless and helpless. Before coming here we lived in a hut on a nearby flood control dyke, but that was blown away by

cyclone Sidr," she said.

"At the beginning we felt comfortable here, but now we have to face great suffering as rainwater comes in through the holes in the tin roof," she added.

Kalapara Upazila Project Implementation Officer (PIO) Sumon Devnath said 20 houses in two separate barracks were built for the victims of cyclone Sidr in the 2009-10 fiscal year at a cost of Tk 26 lakh funded by Japan.

Upazila Chairman Md Motaleb Talukder said steps will be taken after assessment of the damages.

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### বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ২০১৭-২০১৮ অর্থবছরে অনুন্নয়ন রাজস্ব বাজেটে মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা বিভাগ, শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের অধীন শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান, শিক্ষক ও ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের জন্য বিশেষ মঞ্জুরী হিসেবে বরাদ্দকৃত অর্থ উপযুক্ত শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান, শিক্ষক ও ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের মধ্যে স্বচ্ছ ও সুষ্ঠুভাবে বিতরণের লক্ষ্যে ইতোমধ্যে একটি নীতিমালা জারি করা হয়েছে। নীতিমালাটি মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর, শিক্ষা প্রকৌশল অধিদপ্তর, সকল জেলা প্রশাসক ও জেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার বরাবরে বিতরণসহ মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা বিভাগ, শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের ওয়েবসাইটে ([www.shed.gov.bd](http://www.shed.gov.bd)) দেয়া হয়েছে। উক্ত নীতিমালা অনুযায়ী নিম্নে বর্ণিত শর্তে শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান, শিক্ষক-শিক্ষিকা এবং ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের নিকট হতে আবেদন আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

- (ক) দেশের সকল স্বীকৃতি প্রাপ্ত/এমপিওভুক্ত বেসরকারি সাধারণ শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের মেরামত ও সংস্কার, আসবাবপত্র তৈরী, খেলাধুলার সরঞ্জাম, প্রতিষ্ঠানকে প্রতিবন্ধী বান্ধব করাসহ পাঠাগারের উন্নয়ন কাজের জন্য মঞ্জুরীর আবেদন। শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান বাছাইয়ের ক্ষেত্রে অনগ্রসর এলাকার অসচ্ছল শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান অথচ লেখা পড়ার মান ভাল এরূপ প্রতিষ্ঠান-কে অগ্রাধিকার প্রদান করা হবে;
- (খ) বেসরকারি সাধারণ শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের শিক্ষকগণ তাঁদের দুরারোগ্য ব্যাধি ও দৈব দুর্ঘটনার জন্য মঞ্জুরীর আবেদন করতে পারবেন;
- (গ) সরকারি বা বেসরকারি শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের ছাত্র-ছাত্রীগণ দুরারোগ্য ব্যাধি, দৈব দুর্ঘটনা এবং শিক্ষা গ্রহণ কাজে ব্যয়ের জন্য আবেদন করতে পারবে। তবে এ বিশেষ মঞ্জুরী প্রদানের ক্ষেত্রে দুস্থ, প্রতিবন্ধী, অসহায়, রোগগ্রস্ত, গরীব, মেধাবী, অনগ্রসর সম্প্রদায়ের ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের অগ্রাধিকার প্রদান করা হবে;
- (ঘ) উক্ত খাতে মঞ্জুরী/অনুদান প্রাপ্তির নিমিত্ত আর্থহী শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান, শিক্ষক এবং ছাত্র-ছাত্রীকে আগামী ৩১ জানুয়ারি ২০১৮ তারিখের মধ্যে সরাসরি/স্ব স্ব জেলা প্রশাসকের মাধ্যমে সচিব, মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা বিভাগ, শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা বরাবরে আবেদন দাখিল করতে হবে। নির্ধারিত সময়ের পরে কোন আবেদন গ্রহণ করা হবে না;
- (ঙ) ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদের আবেদনের ক্ষেত্রে অবশ্যই তার স্থায়ী ঠিকানা উল্লেখ করতে হবে;
- (চ) যে সকল আবেদনকারী জুন, ২০১৭-এর পর আবেদন করেছেন তাদের পুনরায় আবেদন করার প্রয়োজন নেই;
- (ছ) জেলা যাচাই-বাছাই কমিটির সুপারিশকৃত আবেদন এবং বিভাগে সরাসরি প্রাপ্ত আবেদনসমূহ বিবেচনা করে মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা বিভাগের যাচাই-বাছাই কমিটি চূড়ান্ত তালিকা প্রণয়ন করবে।

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