



THE DISAPPEARING HILLOCK

ILLLEGAL stone extraction by vested quarters has led to the disappearance of the Shah Arefin Tila in Companiganj of Sylhet district. The mazar of the *sufi* saint Shah Arefin Mokam and the hillock encompassed an area of 137.50 acres of government *khas land*. Influential traders, taking advantage of the loopholes in the law, steadily excavated the stones, erasing an important part of the country's history and removing any trace of the knoll. Every year, many workers lost their lives while extracting the stones from the area. On January 23, some five workers were killed while lifting stone from a quarry in the area. Two others lost their lives at the same site a few weeks before.

Photo: SHEIKH NASIR

