

Tree stealing unabated

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

The trees that were planted by Water Development Board (WDB) near the Teesta Barrage in Dala upazila of the district are being stolen regularly, but the authorities concerned seem to be indifferent to it.

The man-made forest on 33 acres of land at the eastern end of the barrage was created in 1993-1994 to hold the soil firmly around the barrage and protect it from erosion by the Teesta river.

Mathogany, shishu, teak, akashmoni, eucalyptus and other trees were planted.

The forest is a part of the protection for the barrage with usual river control measures like dams and groins. WDB, with support of the government's forest department, takes care of it.

In a recent visit, this correspondent saw that most of the big trees had been stolen.

Abdul Kashem, of Sadhar Bazar village close to the forest, said the thieves cut and remove trees at night. They tell the poor people to dig out the roots to use as fuel. Thus, wiping out evidence that there had been trees there.

Locals alleged that a section of WDB men and some members of the Ansars posted in nearby Doani camp are cooperating with the thieves.

Doani Ansar Camp Commander Jonayed Hossain said there was a tree-felling syndicate in the area one year ago, which is inactive now due to constant vigilance of his force. He said locals sometimes remove branches or parts of trees, but not live trees.

Sub-assistant engineer, also in charge of the forest, Tanvir Hossain admitted stealing of trees, adding that they even recovered logs of stolen trees from nearby sawmills and sued the thieves.

"Many big trees were stolen in numerous times and will hold more auctions in future," he added.

However, he did not specify the total number of trees sold in auctions, how many auctions took place so far and the total amount WDB got by selling the trees.

"I have joined here recently and do not know about those matters," he said.



A trunk left after Dala stole the big tree from a forest of Water Development Board near the Teesta Barrage in Dalia upazila of Nilphamari.

Mahmudur in Joypurhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A defamation lawsuit of Tk 500 crore was filed against Bangla daily Amar Desh acting Editor Mahmudur Rahman in Joypurhat yesterday.

The case was filed for making derogatory comments about Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the independence and sovereignty of the country.

Joypurhat Awami League General Secretary Sa Solaiman Ali filed the case with Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court in Joypurhat.

Judge of the court Iqbal Bazar asked the police to investigate the allegation.

In the case statement, it was mentioned that Mahmudur Rahman demeaned Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in his speech at a meeting at National Press Club on December 1 and also insulted the independence and sovereignty of the country.

Bank booth to remain open on holidays

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

The Sonali Bank booth at Akhaura land port will remain open on Fridays and Saturdays from now on to facilitate payment of travel tax by travellers while going to India.

The bank schedule has been changed considering the convenience of the travellers and the new rules are going to be effective from soon, said Akhaura Land Port Export Import Association President Shaiful Islam.

Deputy Commissioner Rezwanur Rahman said the booth will remain open from 7:30am to 6:30pm on weekly and public holidays.

Charge not framed in 4 years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

No charge has been framed, four years into the brutal killing of four people in an attack by BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami activists on the motorcade of local lawmaker Asaduzzaman Noor (now minister for cultural affairs), at Ramganj Haat in Nilphamari Sadar upazila.

On the night of December 12 in 2013, BNP-Jamaat men set fire on over 200 houses of Hindu families and injured many at Polashbari, Trohbari, Laxmichap, Betahli and Kachhari villages in the upazila.

This was done apparently to vent their wrath after execution of Jamaat's central assistant secretary general Abdul Kader Mollah on charge of crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War.

Noor coming from Dhaka went to the spots with a motorcade to give aid to affected families.

On way, several hundred BNP-Jamaat activists attacked them with sharp weapons at Ramganj Haat, killing Krishok League leader Khorsheed Alam, 50, Jubo League leader Murad Hossain, 28, and his brother Farhad Hossain, 18, and activist Lebu, 30.

The charge framing in the case filed in connection with the incident is being delayed as the state side sought time again and again.

"The case was transferred to District and Sessions Judge's Court on September 1 last year for framing charges," said Abdul Mazid, court inspector in Nilphamari.

Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court fixed July 13 this year for framing charge and then re-fixed the date for November 22, but each time government lawyers filed prayer for times showing the reason that they were not prepared. Now the next date is 15 February next year.

Nazmul Huq Shah, 55, father of killed Farhad Hossain and Murad Hossain, said, "We are waiting for justice. Our agony is doubling when we learn that state side is not ready for the proceedings."

Contacted, Additional Public Prosecutor Azizul Haq admitted taking time through prayer and said, "It is done for greater interest of the case as we are working to bring the culprits to book."

The then officer in charge (investigation) of Sadar Police Station Babul Akter filed a case in connection with the incident and later another petition case was lodged by a deceased family.

Dead bodies of four accused, killed by unknown quarters, were later found at different places.

Charged sheet was submitted in mid July 2015.

In the 206 accused, 26 are fugitive, one is in jail and the rest are free on bail granted by the High Court.

A tale written in blood

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Local freedom fighters demanded construction of a memorial at Ketna Beel killing ground in Agailjhara upazila.

"It was one of the biggest killing grounds of Pakistani army. Around five hundred people were killed here on May 15 in 1971. But we are yet to build any memorial on the site," said Freedom fighter Nurul Mia, a member of this party family.

On that day during the Liberation War, the local collaborators with the help of their local collaborators killed around 500 people in Ketna Beel area in Agailjhara upazila, said the members of martyrs families.

Equipped with heavy arms, they started carrying out the deadly attack from 11:00am and it continued till sunset.

People, mostly belonging to Hindu community, from Gournadi, Basali, Batajore, Torky and Chandsi area of Agailjhara and Gournadi upazilas took shelter in Ketna Beel area.

The water body was covered with Aush paddy. People tried to take shelter there, but the Pakistani troops with the help of local rajasaks carried out massacre on innocent people in the area, said Elias Talukder, chairman of Rajaraj Union Parishad.

Bodies of the victims lay scattered as the Pakistani army and their collaborators let loose a reign of terror through killings, arson and looting in the area, said Amulyo Patra of Rangta village, who lost three family members in the genocide.

"We remember this killing and we have sent a letter to the authorities concerned to build a memorial on the site," said Deputy Commissioner Md Habibur Rahman.



Growing spinach remains open at Amir Hossain's plot at Badpukuria village in Jhenidah Sadar upazila. PHOTO: STAR

Malabar spinach fruit a winner for Jhenidah farmer

AZIBOR RAHMAN with ANDREW EAGLE

Jhenidah farmer Amir Hossain, 50, from Badpukuria village in Sadar upazila, can't help himself; he's creative. To achieve self-reliance growing any ordinary crop might be good but would hardly satisfy the man. Rather, he favours novelty. It's a preference that has led him to become one of the very few farmers in Jhenidah to pursue Malabar spinach fruit, locally known as 'mechuri', on a commercial basis. It's a crop, he discovered, with a good deal of promise.

"I first grew Malabar spinach on ten decimals in 2015," he recalls. "My father-in-law gave me the idea and I took some seeds from him. That year I spent Tk 10,000 to grow the crop and earned a profit of Tk 30,000." The following year, Hossain expanded his crop to cover 40 decimals, spending Tk 25,000 to earn a profit of Tk 1.1 lakh.

This year he grew Malabar spin-

ach on 90 decimals and has so far earned Tk 2 lakhs profit with hopes for the same amount again, if the weather stays favourable. "I sow the seeds in April," he explains, "and harvest starts towards the end of July. Malabar spinach requires fertiliser, insecticide and a trellis structure of bamboo and wires."

Malabar spinach, known in Bengali as 'pui shak', is a perennial vine that as a leaf vegetable and also in the form of 'mechuri', its fruit, is low in calories but high in protein, vitamins A and C, iron and calcium. In Bengali cuisine it is often prepared with red pumpkin or cooked

with hilsa fish bones or shrimp. Hossain's ingenuity has attracted interest.

"A good many farmers have visited my plot to know more about this crop," says Hossain. "They are keen to grow this vegetable in the coming season." Amir Hossain is a skilled farmer," observes vegetable trader Shamsul Mia of Jhenidah district town. "His produce is consistently good quality and he's making a decent income from Malabar spinach."

The deputy director of Jhenidah's agriculture extension department, Dr Khan Mohammad Moniruzzaman, has also visited Hossain's farm. "I was really happy to see him growing Malabar spinach on such a large scale. It's the biggest spinach plot in the district," he remarks. "From this crop variety he has achieved self-reliance and some renown among farmers."

STALKER STILL AT LARGE

3 sisters, family under threat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The police are yet to arrest an alleged stalker, five days into filing of a case with Gouripur Police Station under the district.

Amid harassment and threat allegedly by Delwar Hossain, 25, son of Tara Mia of Hatior village in Gouripur, three sisters stopped attending their classes last month.

Victims' father lodged a case on Friday accusing neighbour Delwar and his accomplice Abdul Aziz.

"Delwar and Aziz are staying in the area. The stalker and his family members are threatening to withdraw the case," he said.

Delwar had been disturbing an SSC candidate girl of the area for long. Her elder sister is an HSC candidate while the youngest sister is a seventh grader at a local school.

"Now I have to escort my seventh grader to school as her annual examinations are going on. I sent my SSC examinee girl to a relative's house in Gouripur on Monday," said the hapless father, expressing concern about his daughters' education and security of the family.

As the girl rejected Delwar's marriage proposal, he attended nuisance, and the victim stopped attending school three months ago.

"On November 25, when the SSC examinee was returning home from a coaching centre, Delwar and Aziz waylaid her with their weapons and forcibly took her to Sabaganj area. As they started torturing her, local came to her rescue," said the father.

Gouripur Police Station Officer-in-Charge Delwar Ahmed said they continued efforts to arrest the accused.

Indian held with gold

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Border Security force (BSF) arrested an Indian national with 17 gold bars worth Tk 85 lakh from Indian gate area opposite to Benapole check post yesterday.

The arrestee is Firoj Mahmud, 45, of Gardnas area in Kolkatta.

Haradhan Sarkar, deputy commander of Benapole check post BSG camp, said acting on a tip-off, BSF raided the area and arrested Firoj with the gold bars.

BIRDEM GENERAL HOSPITAL
(An Enterprise of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh)
122 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh

INVITATION FOR TENDER

01.	Invitation For:	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 1.5 Tesla MRI machine for BIRDEM General Hospital.
02.	Invitation Ref. & Date:	BIRDEM/Pur./IL/2017/05 Dated: 13 December 2017
03.	Details of Work:	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 1.5 Tesla MRI machine for BIRDEM General Hospital.
04.	Procurement Method:	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
05.	Source of fund:	BIRDEM General Hospital
06.	Date of selling tender document:	Tender document will be available from 17 December 2017 to 29 January 2018 on all working days (09.00 am-1.00 pm)
07.	Price of Tender Document:	Tk. 5000/- (Five Thousand Taka) only.
08.	Tender closing date:	30 January 2018 at 12.00 Noon
09.	Tender opening date:	30 January 2018 at 12.30 Noon (In presence of the tenderers or their authorized agent, if anybody available)
10.	Name & address of the officer selling tender document:	Procurement Section at Room # 230, 1st floor of OPD Building, BIRDEM General Hospital.
11.	Name, designation & address of official inviting tender:	Prof. Nazmun Nahar Director General, BIRDEM General Hospital
12.	Eligibility of tenderers:	(a) The tenderers should be manufacturer or their authorized supplier/distributor or dealer of the item. (b) The tenderers shall have updated trade license, TIN, VAT & Income Tax Certificate (c) Other terms & conditions have been mentioned in the Tender document.
13.	Prebid meeting:	A prebid meeting will be held on 18 January 2018 in the form of Demand Draft or Pay-order from any local commercial bank in favour of DG, BIRDEM General Hospital.
14.	Tender security:	1% of the quoted amounts have to be deposited in the form of Demand Draft or Pay-order from any local commercial bank in favour of DG, BIRDEM General Hospital.
15.	Detail specification, terms & conditions, warranty & After sales service shall be enumerated in the tender schedule.	
16.	BIRDEM authority reserves the right to accept or reject any of all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.	

Note: In case of holiday or any unavoidable circumstances last date of dropping will be the next working day.

Prof. Nazmun Nahar
Director General
BIRDEM General Hospital