



As part of their programme to travel to all the 64 districts of the country, these four girls, riding on two motorbikes, visit Provati Parishad Primary School in Pabna on Tuesday. Inset, the four girls reached Pabna town the same day.

# Migratory birds decrease in Hakaluki Haor

Shortage of feed, traps blamed for the situation

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Migratory birds usually start flocking in Hakaluki Haor, the largest water body in the country, and delight visitors with their chirping and fluttering this time every year.

This year, arrival of migratory birds sees a fall in their numbers from that of the previous two years.

After conducting a survey on January 26 and 27, organisers told this correspondent that about 37,931 birds of 51 species were counted during the two-day survey programme.

The number of migratory birds last year was 45,100 of 44 species, 58,281 of 50 species in 2017 and 34,264 of 56 species in 2016.

Besides, the number of birds which usually arrive a bit early has also decreased from that of the previous years, bird watchers said.

The census, organised by Bangladesh Bird Club and Bangladesh unit of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), was conducted by a team, led by prominent bird specialist Enam Ul Haque, also national coordinator of Waterfowl Census in Bangladesh.

Motin Mia, a resident of Pusainagar village in Kulaura upazila of Moulvibazar, said due to high water level in wetlands and shortage of bird feed this winter a smaller number of migratory birds arrived in the haor areas.

Bird specialist Bashir Ahmed, also a member of the survey team, said this year they counted 37,931 birds of 51 species in the haor areas, which is much lower than the last two years.

They found some dead migratory birds in Balijuri Beel under Hakaluki haor area during the survey program on January 26 and 27 this year, he said, adding that he suspects that the birds were killed by setting poisonous traps.

One of the journalists of the haor area recently informed him that bird hunting is going on by setting poisonous traps and many locals are eating such dead birds, he said, adding that local conscious people should raise their voices against such an ill practice as eating poisoned dead birds is harmful for human health.

Aquatic trees like Hizol, Koroch Boran and Murta, which are being planted to set up resting places for the migratory birds in Chatalbil and Dohobil areas, are inadequate, Centre for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS) Officer Moniruzzaman Chowdhury said.



A number of migratory birds were found dead in Balijuri Beel under Hakaluki haor area in Moulvibazar's Kulaura upazila recently.

# 'Our tour is for raising awareness for women's empowerment'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Before the start of their service or family life, four young girls are now visiting different districts of the country riding on scooters.

With an aim to raise awareness for women empowerment, break the taboo and search for history and heritages, they have already travelled to 49 districts of the country.

The four brave hearted girls are Dr Manashi Shaha and Dr Sakia Haque of Dhaka Medical College and Silvi Rahman and Shamsun Nahar of Dhaka University, who have almost completed their studies and are in line for jobs.

The four girls, all are members of 'Travelletes of Bangladesh', a female tourist organisation, reached Pabna on Tuesday and then Sirajganj yesterday.

Wishing to visit all the 64 district of the country, the four girls, riding on two scooters, started their journey from the capital on April 6, 2017.

"We started our journey in the final stage of our academic carrier in 2017 and already visited 49 districts in seven phases, between intervals in study, and we are hopeful to finish our tour within April this year, before starting our service or family life," Dr Manashi told the Daily Star.

Dreaming to visit the countryside beauty, historical places and heritages of the country they formed 'Travelletes of Bangladesh' on November 27, 2016, she added.

"Through our journey we are raising awareness among the girl students across the country for women empowerment," Manisha said.

As part of their journey, the four girls reached Provati Parishad Primary School in Pabna on

Tuesday noon and talked with the students.

"We are trying to share our knowledge with the students as their monthly periods start in their adolescent stages and they don't even share it with their family members," Dr Sakia said.

"We are trying to educate them about their adolescent age problem and inspiring them to break the taboo and make them eligible for the society," she said.

In the current phase, the four girls started their tour on January 12 and visited 16 northern districts under Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions till yesterday.

"We believe that if we want to do something for the society we must go out of our home," Silvi said, adding that during their journey in different districts they have faced many problems and solved those by themselves.



Like 11 others of the kind, this OMS outlet at Saptana Road in Lalmonirhat town reopened yesterday, much to the happiness of poor people who would buy rice and coarse flour from there for fair prices.

# Ultra poor people happy as OMS outlets reopen

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

All the twelve Open Market Sale (OMS) outlets in the town reopened yesterday after being closed for around one month as there was no allocation of ata (coarse flour) by the ministry concerned during that period.

The ultra poor people from slums, remote villages and char areas crowded around the OMS outlets to purchase ata at fair price.

Lalmonirhat Sadar Upazila Food Controller (UCF) Ayub Ali told this correspondent that ata is being sold at fair prices to ultra poor people from the OMS outlets as they got the fresh allocation order from the ministry concerned. "The OMS outlets were closed as no allocation was issued for a month," he said, adding that the outlets will remain open until the government orders them to be closed.

Rokonuzzaman Roman, an OMS dealer at Saptana Road in the town, said nearly 2,000 to 2,500 low-income group people

from the slums, chars and remote areas buy ata from 12 OMS outlets in the town every day. Each beneficiary can buy 1 kg to 5 kg of ata at Tk 18 per kg from the OMS outlets, he said.

Nader Ali, 52, a day labourer at Kazi Colony in the town, said they are happy now as they can buy ata at Tk 18 per kg, while it is sold at Tk 30 per kg in the local market. "We were upset when the OMS outlets were closed," he said.

Rahela Bewa, 48, of Char Shiberkuti in Sadar upazila, said she comes from 15 km away for buying ata at fair prices from OMS outlet. "I purchase ata two days in every week," she said, adding that OMS ata benefits them.

Lalmonirhat Marketing Officer Abdur Rahim said ata prices will fall in the local market as the OMS outlets have started selling ata at fair prices. "Ata prices jumped suddenly when OMS outlets were closed for the last one month," he said.

## 3 students get gold medal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Three students of Government Rajendra College in Faridpur received AF Mujibur Rahman Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Mathematics at a ceremony at the college campus yesterday.

The awardees are Shahinur Akter, 22, of Charmurardia village, and Md Tuhin Mandal, 22, of Kapsadia village in Faridpur's Madhukhali upazila and Champa Nandi, 24, of Khankhanapur village in Rajbari Sadar upazila.

AF Mujibur Rahman Foundation introduced the award at the college in 2014.

Principal of the college Mosharrar Ali was the chief guest at the programme presided over by SM Md Abul Bashar, head of mathematics department of the college.

# 6 Rohingyas, one trafficker held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Police arrested six Rohingyas and an alleged human trafficker from Hotel Suncity under Benapole Port Police Station in Jashore yesterday.

The arrestees are Tohora Aziz, 17, Hafiza Khatun, 20, Sharifa Khatun, 18, Manzida Khatun, 15, Shakina Khatun, 15, and Yeasmin Akter, 16, and trafficker Manjur Ahmed, 30, of Chandpur.

Masud Karim, officer in charge of the police station, said on secret information, the law enforcers raided the hotel and arrested the seven.

The six came from the Rohingya camp in Cox Bazar and were being trafficked to India through Benapole border, said the OC.

A case was filed in this connection, said the police official.

# Saidpur UNO's SIM card cloned

The UNO filed GD after criminal gang tried to use it for cheating local headmasters in the name of giving laptops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Criminals cloned the official SIM card of Saidpur upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) on Monday and tried to use it for fraudulence.

The members of the gang called headmasters of different educational institutions and asked them to send money through mobile money transfer service bKash, telling them that they would be provided laptops.

After getting complaints from a number of headmasters, Saidpur UNO SM Golam Kibria filed a general diary (GD) with Saidpur Police Station on Monday night, Officer in Charge of the police station Shahjahan Pasha said.

"A man identifying himself as Saidpur UNO called me and asked me to send Tk 5,000 through bKash," Headmaster of Baniapara Azizia Government Primary School Illius Hossain said, adding that he also asked him to go to his office and receive a laptop allocated for his institution.

Being suspicious, the headmaster instantly contacted the UNO, who denied making any call and directed him not to pay any money and record the calls.

Saidpur Upazila Primary Education Officer (UPEO) Shahjahan Mondol said after hearing about the phone calls he talked to the UNO and came to know that fraudsters might have cloned his SIM card and tried to use it for criminal purpose.

"To my knowledge no computer has been allocated against any schools in the upazila," UPEO Shahjahan said.

"I talked to the law enforcement agency members and asked them to trace the culprits," UNO Kibria said, adding that he also posted a message in his official Facebook page and asked all not to fall in the trap.



Blooming silk cotton adorns a tree, heralding the advent of the spring. The photo was taken from Gaibandha's Palashbari.