

POND RE-EXCAVATION IN FORMER ENCLAVES

ACC probing alleged irregularities in Panchagarh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A probe body formed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) is investigating the alleged irregularities in pond re-excavation project at former enclave villages in Sadar and Debiganj upazilas of Panchagarh.

Fisheries Department implemented the Tk 94.88 lakh project to re-excavate 27 ponds including four state-owned water bodies and 23 other private owned ones for development of fish cultivation in the two upazilas.

Four contractors, namely, Tofazzol Hossain, Kamrul Islam, M M Mahfuzul Haque and Zakia Khatun were given the work order.

During this correspondent's recent visit to different erstwhile enclave villages, the beneficiary pond owners alleged that the fisheries department officials embezzled major portions of the money allocated for re-excavating ponds with the connivance of the contractors.

Md Ibrahim of Garati village in Panchagarh Sadar upazila said Tk 3.63 lakh was sanctioned for excavating about 2,363 cubic feet of earth in his 0.33-hectare pond.

The time frame of the work was February 18 to April 18 but it was done only three days with an excavator, the total worktime being 25 hours, he said.

"Usually soil is dug for Tk 1,500 to Tk 2,000 per hour with an excavator on rental basis. Accordingly, the contractor spent Tk 50,000 at most for digging my pond, against the allocation of Tk 3.63 lakh. And he put up a sign with a brief descriptive note," he said.

Md Nuruzzaman of the same village said Tk 1.82 lakh was allocated for his 0.32-hectare pond to remove 1,184.82 cubic feet of earth but the contractor used excavator for the work only for 17 hours.

The excavated soil was dumped in an unplanned way and the pond got refilled with mud washed by rainwater, he said.

"Seventeen ponds in the upazila were re-



A re-excavated fish pond at Garati village in Panchagarh Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

excavated under the fisheries department's scheme but the ponds returned to their previous conditions in a short time as the work was not done properly," said Muntahin Billah of Dahala Khagrabari village in Debiganj upazila.

"The officials or contractors didn't tell us clearly about the budget and amount of the work, apparently to embezzle money," he added.

On July 4, one Selim Sohag made complaint about misappropriation of project money during a public hearing organised by the ACC at Panchagarh Government Auditorium.

Consequently, ACC Commissioner AFM

Aminul Islam formed a three-member investigation committee headed by the additional district magistrate (ADM) of Panchagarh and asked them to file report within 15 days.

Tofazzol Hossain, one of the contractors, at first denied working under the project. As this correspondent referred to the information provided by the fisheries directorate he said he re-excavated two ponds following instructions of the work order.

Rabiul Islam, engineer of fisheries department, said, "I have tried to get the re-excavation work done as per schedule. The duration of work was short as the

contractors used large excavators for digging. We reduced the payment to the contractor concerned where less than the stipulated work was done."

Refuting the allegation of irregularities, District Fisheries Officer Dr Aftab Hossain said a little anomalies might occur in such type of contractual work.

He claimed that the engineer measured the work and most of the beneficiaries were happy.

Contacted, Panchagarh ADM Abdul Mannan said, "We started investigation last week and already talked with several beneficiaries. It will take a few days to complete the probe."

Floodwater recedes but thousands still waterlogged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Although floodwater started receding from Saturday, low-lying areas along the Jamuna river basin are still waterlogged, causing immense sufferings to over 15,000 people in five upazilas of Sirajganj.

The flood-hit people who took shelter on highlands, roads or flood protection embankment are suffering a lot due to insufficient supply of relief materials, said villagers.

The Jamuna has swelled in early this month and flooded 39 unions in Sirajganj Sadar, Kazipur, Belkuchi, Shazadpur and Chouhali upazilas.

Over 3.28 lakh people in the upazilas have been affected by flood, said district administration sources.

Flood victim Alam Sheikh of Shontosha village in Shazadpur upazila who took shelter at the flood protection

embankment of Water Development Board (WDB) said although floodwater started receding from the area, he cannot return his house along the river basin as it is still waterlogged.

Like Alam hundreds of flood-hit people at the embankment in the village cannot return their homesteads as those lie in the low-lying areas.

Although the water level in the Jamuna decreased, it will increase in next one or two weeks, flooding the area again, said another victim Julhas Mollah of the village, adding that "We are waterlogged for about a month and the waterlogging may continue next two or three months."

Sirajganj WDB Sub-divisional Engineer AKM Rafikul Islam said as the river is now flowing below the danger level, floodwater receded.

The areas may be flooded again

as the water level in the Jamuna may increase once or twice this year, he said.

Sabuz Mollah along with his four-member family and two goats has been staying in a makeshift tin-shed room at the embankment since his house went under floodwater.

"We often need to repair the room after gusty winds left it damaged," said Sabuz.

Sirajganj Deputy Commissioner (DC) Dr Faruk Ahmed said they always stand by the flood affected people.

They had distributed 398.3 tonnes of rice, 3,250 packets of dry food and Tk 7 lakh in cash were distributed among the victims, he said.

Each flood-hit family got either rice, dry food or cash money, said the DC.

"We will continue providing the flood victims with relief as long as their houses are waterlogged," he said.

Myanmar's intentions

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western Myanmar during a 2017 military-led crackdown the United Nations has said included mass killings and gang-rapes executed with "genocidal intent". Almost 400 Rohingya villages were burned to the ground during the violence.

"The continued destruction of residential areas across 2018 and 2019 – clearly identifiable through our longitudinal satellite analysis – raises serious questions about the willingness of the Myanmar government to facilitate a safe and dignified repatriation process," Nathan Ruser, one of the researchers at ASPI's International Cyber Policy Centre, said in a statement.

Spokesmen for the Myanmar government did not answer calls seeking comment. Kyaw Swar Tun, deputy director of the Rakhine General Administration Department, declined to comment.

Myanmar has repeatedly said it is

ready to take back refugees, blaming Bangladesh for failed efforts to kick-start returns.

A report by the disaster management unit of the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean) – a 10 nation regional body that includes Myanmar – had praised the country's efforts to ensure "smooth and orderly" returns. The AHA Centre report, leaked to media in June, predicted that half a million refugees would come back within two years.

Human rights groups said the assessment glossed over atrocities and ignored ongoing conflict in the region. The UN has said conditions in Rakhine are not yet conducive for returns.

Government troops in the northern part of the state are now battling insurgents belonging to the Arakan Army, an ethnic armed group seeking greater autonomy for the region that recruits from the mostly Buddhist majority.

ASPI's report described a pattern

of "securitization" in the region since 2017, with six facilities suspected to be military bases built on top of former Rohingya settlements.

A Reuters investigation in December 2018 found authorities have built houses for Buddhists in former Rohingya areas. A resettlement map drafted by the government revealed that refugees, rather than returning to their original villages, would be herded into several dozen Rohingya-only settlements.

In early July, the Indian government handed over 250 prefabricated houses in several villages in northern Rakhine to Hindu families displaced by the violence. None of the homes were for Rohingyas.

"Hindus and Rakhine people lost their houses and we also lost ours," Zuyarman, a Rohingya villager in Maungdaw township, told Reuters at the time. "We Rohingya wish that we would have houses like them."

Insects replace

FROM PAGE 1

sprays his crops with pesticides, instead hanging small bags of mites on the plants, leaving them to attack parasites while sparing his produce.

He owns two hectares (five acres) in the so-called "Sea of Plastic", some 30,000 hectares of greenhouses in southeastern Spain's Almeria province, where much of Europe's fruits and vegetables are grown.

The sparkling mosaic of white plastic bordering the Mediterranean -- which is visible from space -- produces tomatoes, cucumbers, courgettes, peppers and aubergines all year round to supply Europe's supermarkets.

Last year 2.5 million tonnes of produce was exported from Almeria,

half of Spain's total vegetable exports. Like Zamora, virtually all pepper growers in Almeria have replaced insecticides with so-called "biological control" using insects.

About 60 percent of tomato growers have done the same, along with a quarter of courgette producers, according to the producers' association Coexphal.

Consumption of insecticides in Almeria -- where agriculture employs some 120,000 people and accounts for 20 percent of economic output -- has dropped by 40 percent since 2007, according to local authorities.

The use of insecticides surged in the 1960s, but farmers have adopted new methods under pressure from consumer groups as

well as the fact that their crops have become increasingly resistant to the chemicals.

"We have had to change course. The use of pesticides became excessive," said Jan van der Blom, an expert in biocontrol at Coexphal.

Encarnacion Sambas of environmental group Ecologists in Action described the change as a "very positive step".

"In many cases the reduction in the use of chemical products has been drastic, and the substances that are still in use are softer," she said.

French agricultural cooperative InVivo, which has yearly sales of 5.5 billion euros (\$6.2 billion), recently opened a "biofactory", Bioline Iberia, in the heart of the Sea of Plastic.

Half of Spain's total vegetable exports.

Female schoolteacher hacked dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Unidentified criminals hacked a female schoolteacher to death at Gopinathpur village in Gurudaspur upazila of the district on Tuesday night.

The deceased, Monjura Khatun, 35, wife of Momin Uddin, was an assistant teacher at Briakaso Government Primary School of the upazila.

Monjura, a divorcee, had been living with her mother at her Gopinathpur village, since she got separated with her husband about six to seven years ago, while her 15-year-old daughter lives with her husband Momin, a resident of the same village.

Meanwhile, police detained victim's husband Momin yesterday morning for interrogation.

Quoting neighbours, Officer in Charge (OC) of Gurudaspur Police Station Mozaharul Islam said Monjura went to bed after having her supper on Tuesday night.

Later, hearing her screams, locals rushed to her house and found her lying in a pool of blood around 11:00pm and informed the police, who recovered the body and sent it to the hospital for autopsy.

The victim might have been murdered over previous enmity, the OC said.

Four to die for killing college student

Another sentenced to 7 years imprisonment

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A Manikganj court yesterday sentenced four people to death and another to seven years imprisonment for killing a college student in Singair upazila in 2017.

Manikganj District and Sessions Judge Mamta Begum pronounced the verdict in the presence of the convicts.

The death sentence awardees are Hafiz Ali, Samsu Mia, Rakib Ahmed and Jahangir, while Helalur Rahman was sentenced for seven years imprisonment.

According to the case statement, Rasel, 18, son of Ansar Fakir of Purbabakum village in the upazila, also an Intermediate student at Savar Legend College, went missing on November 26, 2017.

Two days after the incident, Rasel's father Ansar lodged a general diary (GD) with Singair Police Station in this regard.

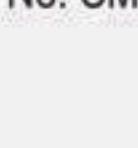
Later, a gang phoned the victim's family members and demanded Tk 2.5 lakh for Rasel's release.

After six days of the missing incident, police recovered Rasel's body from an abandoned site of a housing company.

On July 12 in 2018, police submitted the charge-sheet before the court against five people.

After cross examining 22 witnesses, Judge Mamta Begum handed down the verdict yesterday afternoon.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh



Office of the Director
Chattogram Medical College Hospital
www.cmch.gov.bd

Date: 23-07-2019

Invitation for Tender

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from experienced Importers/Contractors/Suppliers/Distributors to supply MSR goods for CMCH in the fiscal 2019-20. As per PPA-2006 & PPR-2008 (Including all corrigendum); Terms and conditions are as follow(s):

KEY INFORMATION

1	Ministry/division	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
2	Agency	Chattogram Medical College Hospital, Chattogram.
3	PE name, designation & contact details	Brigadier General Mohsen Uddin Ahmed; Director, Chattogram Medical College Hospital. Telephone: +88031630179, Fax No.: 88-031-610022, E-mail address: cmch@hospi.dgbs.gov.bd
4	Procuring entity code & district	GOB, Chattogram.
5	Invitation for	Procurement of MSR goods for Chattogram Medical College Hospital in the fiscal year 2019-20.
6	Tender Ref. No. & date	CMCH/Tender/2019-20/MSR/6847 Dated: 23-07-2019.
7	Procurement method	Open Tender Method (National), Item-by-item.
8	Budget and source of funds	GOB, Economic code: 3252105
9	Tender publication date	23-07-2019
10	Tender schedule selling starting date and time	31-07-2019 during office hours.
11	Pre-tender meeting	22-08-2019, 11:00am.
12	Tender last selling date and time	28-08-2019, 12:00 noon.
13	Tender dropping & closing date and time	Dropping date: 29-08-2019, Dropping time: from 09:00am to 12:00 noon, Closing time: 12:01pm.
14	Tender opening date and time	29-08-2019 at 01:00pm.
15	Name and address of the office's	
(a)	Selling tender documents	1. Cashier, Office of the Director, Chattogram Medical College Hospital.
(b)	Receiving tender documents	2. Cashier, Office of the Civil Surgeon, Chattogram District.
(c)	Tender documents opening place	1. Office of the Director, Chattogram Medical College Hospital.
		2. Officer In-Charge, Panchlaish Model Thana, Chattogram Metropolitan Police.</