

HOMAGE TO BANGABANDHU



Right, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina showers rose petals on the graves of her family members in Banani graveyard yesterday. Top left, wreaths piled up in front of a portrait of Bangabandhu on Dhanmondi-32 as the nation observes National Mourning Day. Journalist leaders pay homage to the Father of the Nation at Jatiya Press Club.

PHOTO: BSS, ANISUR RAHMAN, PRABIR DAS

THE BONE COLLECTORS

|| SHAHEEN MOLLAH ||



DHAKA VIBE

Shohag collects skulls and jawbones, and puts them in his sack -- after scraping off excess skin and meat, which go into another bag.

PHOTO: STAR

For most people of Rony's age, Eid-ul-Azha is an opportunity to spend some leisurely time with friends and family, and feast on various preparations of beef and mutton. But for the 25-year old resident of Bhashantek slum in Mirpur, it is a day of hard work that can earn him several weeks' worth of income.

Most parts of a sacrificial animal are of use to the general people -- from the tongue to the tail. But one body part that everyone throws away is the skull and jawbones. And that is what Rony, and hundreds of other tokai (scrap collectors) like him, look to collect every Eid-ul-Azha from across the capital.

The bones go to scrap shop owners, which are then sold off to factories and used in production of melamine resin to make kitchen utensils etc.

Rony, who has been an Eid-day "bone collector" for a few years, received a van and Tk

2,000 from a scrap shop owner for the day's work, with a target of collecting 1,000kg of bones. Each kg of bone fetches him Tk 6, although around 20 percent of the weight is subtracted during payment because of attached skin and flesh with the noes that would have to be removed before processing it.

"I targeted large apartment buildings, because you can get seven to eight cow heads at once," Rony told this newspaper at Mirpur-14 on the afternoon of Eid. Each head weighs between three to five kg depending on size, he said, adding that he would collect 200-300kg at once in his sack at once, drop them off at the shop, and head out for more.

By 8pm, Rony's earning for the day rang up to Tk 5,500, he told this newspaper over phone.

While collecting donated meat from door to door and

then selling them is also an option, there is a lot more competition in that as it is the more obvious choice, said some others engaged in collecting bones.

Shohag, another teenager who was collecting bones near Kazipara, was making the best of both. "Many of the 'butchers' working on Eid day are not professionals -- most of them are in fact rickshaw pullers. So often they cannot cleanly remove the meat from the head before throwing it away," he said.

Shohag kept a small blade while collecting the heads, and scraped off additional meat whenever he could. In front of this correspondent, he sold nearly a kilo of that meat for Tk 300. "However, it takes up some time to do this, and maybe I will not be able to collect as many heads as someone else. But that's okay," he told this correspondent.

Rokon Mia, owner of Sabina Enterprise -- a scrap shop owner in Mirpur-14, said he had assigned 12 scrap collectors to collect bones on Eid day, who brought back nearly 3,000kg of bones. "I managed to collect nearly double the amount last year; this year has not been that good," he said.

Some 15 scrap shops on the same road had all contacted scrap collectors beforehand to gather bones, Rokon said, adding that they paid the experienced ones some money in advance, while others get paid after they bring back their haul.

Asked where these go, he said his clients come and take those away in trucks to Mirdha Bari area of Jatrabari, where these are processed in melamine factories.

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Efforts on to bring fugitive killers back: Quader

AGENCIES

Road, Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday said the government has intensified its diplomatic efforts to bring back the fugitive killers of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

"The government has strengthened its diplomatic efforts to pave the way for bringing back the killers of Bangabandhu who remain fugitive and have taken shelter in different countries," he said.

The minister came up with the remark while talking to journalists after paying homage to Bangabandhu and his family members at Banani graveyard, reports BSS.

Quader urged all to work together for a hunger-and-poverty-free "Sonar Bangla" as dreamt by Bangabandhu.

The general secretary of Awami League also vowed to build a corruption-free country under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, based on Bangabandhu's ideology, UNB adds.

On August 15, 1975, Bangabandhu was brutally assassinated by a group of conspiring army officers. His wife, sons, daughters-in-law and other relatives were also killed in the massacre, one of the most heinous in world history.

Bangabandhu's daughters Sheikh Hasina

and Sheikh Rehana, survived as they were abroad at the time.

The Supreme Court on November 19, 2009 upheld a High Court verdict, confirming capital punishment of 12 people for killing the Father of the Nation and most of his family members in a coup d'état.

Five killers of Bangabandhu -- Syed Farooq Rahman, Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan, Bazlul Huda, AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed and Mohiuddin Ahmed -- were executed on January 27, 2010. Another killer, Aziz Pasha, died of natural causes in Zimbabwe in 2001.

Those who remain fugitives are Col (dismissed) Khandaker Abdur Rashid, Lt Col (relieved) Shariful Haque Dalim, Maj (ret'd) Noor Chowdhury, Maj (ret'd) Rashed Chowdhury, Capt Abdul Majed and Risaldar Moslehuddin Khan.

A taskforce comprised of ministers and high officials of the foreign, law and home ministries was formed in 2010 to locate and bring back the six.

The government had also made global appeals in bilateral, regional and international forums to track down the culprits. However, only two of the six could be traced -- Rashed Chowdhury in the US and Noor Chowdhury in Canada.

Build 'Sonar Bangla' as dreamt by Bangabandhu

Chief justice urges nation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain yesterday suggested all work together to materialise the dream of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for building the country as "Sonar Bangla".

"The Father of the Nation had a dream to turn the country into Sonar Bangla. Our responsibility and target will be working to implement his dream. If it is done, his [Bangabandhu] departed soul will find peace," he said.

He was speaking at a blood donation programme organised by the Supreme Court in association with Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University at the SC auditorium, marking National Mourning Day. Judges, officials and staff of SC attended the programme.

The chief justice said August 15 is the most shocking and watershed day in Bangladesh's history, as Bangabandhu and most of his family members were brutally assassinated on the day in 1975. He paid respects to all those who

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NBR to introduce app to check tax evasion

UNB, Dhaka

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has taken an initiative to introduce a mobile application and a software, aiming to check cases of tax evasion and increase the number of taxpayers.

The revenue-collecting authority thinks launching of the app and software will bring dynamism into the revenue administration, and help bring a large number of eligible taxpayers under the tax net, an NBR senior official told the news agency.

According to the existing income tax law, any business entity and service-providing person must hang the taxpayer identification number (TIN) in their offices or business organisations. But it is not practised properly, which causes confusion as to whether the business or service-provider have their TINs or not.

"That's why NBR is planning to make it mandatory to hang tax payment certificate," said the official.

He said using the software, all 649 tax circles will be linked to the mobile app. Through this app, anyone will be able to check whether the tax payment certificate is genuine or effective, or an expired one.

"With the app, it will even be possible to lodge

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DHAKA TODAY

WORKSHOP

Introduction to Astronomy & Astrophysics Research
Organiser: SPSB
Venue: Sheltech Niribili, Elephant Road
Time: 3pm

MUSIC CLASS

Guitar for Beginners
Venue: Studio 6
Time: 3pm

CULTURAL EVENT

Remembering Bangabandhu
Organiser: Bangabandhu Online Archive
Venue: Shilpakala Academy
Time: 12pm

SESSION

Emotional Intelligence
Venue: Mind Mechanics Academy, Road 17A, Banani
Time: 5:30pm