

Creating green patches in the heart of desert

Bangladeshi peacekeepers helping Malians grow vegetables



Thanks to Bangladeshi peacekeepers, farmers in Mali are now capable of producing beans, watermelons, tomatoes and more.

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA, back from Mali

With much of it set across the barren Sahara, Mali does not grow a lot of vegetables. The people are more used to meat and dairy, since traditionally they are not accustomed to vegetable cultivation.

But things started changing since last year. That was when Bangladeshi peacekeepers started encouraging local people to cultivate vegetables.

Now, Malians grow vegetables on a one-hectare plot on the bank of the Niger river that traverses 2,000 kilometres of Mali.

Bangladeshi troops have also set up water pumps on the river for irrigation.

Food is mostly imported into the landlocked Mali. But that need not be the case at all.

"The land is so fertile that all one needs to do is sow the seeds and tend to them. The production is

quite impressive," said Contingent Commander of Bangladesh Battalion-6 Col M Khair Uddin.

Peacekeepers distributed seeds and other agricultural supplies among the locals and trained them in vegetable farming. They also showed Malians how to cook vegetables.

"Now the farmers in Mali are capable of producing beans, watermelons, tomatoes and more. We regularly monitor their activities and guide them," said Maj Abu Gofur, who looks after the civil-military activities.

He also said as part of civil-military cooperation, they have undertaken such engagement with the local community to win them over -- enabling the peacekeeping operations to run smoothly.

Mostafa Younesa, a 50-year-old farmer in Wabaria of the Gao region, said Bangladeshi peacekeepers have opened their eyes and created greenery in the heart of the desert.

"They give us all kinds of support, including seeds and guidance," he said, expressing gratitude.

Sixty-year-old Yeahia Yousuf, another local, said he never had the opportunity to try vegetables but now they have become part of his regular diet.

He also earns some money selling the vegetables, Yousuf said.

"Bangladeshi peacekeepers provide us seeds and we produce the vegetables. We consume some and sell the rest," he said.

Col M Khair Uddin said the extreme weather makes it difficult to cultivate vegetables in the heart of the desert.

"But we encourage them through various initiatives. We buy their vegetables so that they feel more encouraged to produce," he said.

Deputy Speaker of the Mali Parliament, Mamadou Fah Simpara, said the Bangladeshi government

PHOTO: STAR

'Drive to continue till graft, drugs uprooted'

Says Obaidul Quader; home minister also warns of stern action

AGENCIES

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday said the ongoing drives against corruption, drugs and other criminal activities will continue until the menaces are uprooted.

"The prime minister said not to spare anyone even if they are affiliated with the ruling party," he told reporters at the Secretariat.

Quader said the prime minister had ordered senior leaders, law enforcers and high officials not to compromise and spare any godfather, extortionist, corrupt, tender manipulator, or drug smugglers, reports UNB.

"She also spoke about breaking the cycle of corruption and asked not to compromise with anyone," the Awami League general secretary said.

Many are being arrested at the district level for corruption during the ongoing drive. "It will continue until criminalisation and corruption are uprooted," he said.

The minister said the media should have run reports on these matters. "Criminals, irrespective of their political affiliations, won't be spared," the minister reiterated.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said those who commit crimes will face stern action and exemplary punishment for their misdeeds, reports BSS.

"I would not bother whether it is small or big fries... action will be taken if anyone commits crimes," he told reporters at his Secretariat office.

Intelligence agencies have been working on it and collecting information about illegal business and tender manipulations, he said.

Replying to a query, the home minister said immigration police are always alert and they have the list of criminals. So, the criminals will not be able to flee from the country through airports or land ports.

Houses of AL leaders are now 'banks': BNP

UNB, Dhaka

BNP senior joint secretary general Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday alleged that the ruling party leaders have formed "personal banks and treasuries" in their houses by depleting both state-owned and private banks.

Speaking at a press conference at BNP's Nayapalton central office, he wondered whether the recent drive against some clubs and ruling party leaders is mere eyewash, as the "kingpins" still remain out of touch.

"Awami League and Jubo League leaders have formed banks and treasuries in their own houses after turning banks in Bangladesh penniless. They're keeping the surplus money at home after siphoning off huge amounts abroad," the BNP leader alleged.

He said the ruling party leaders, including those of its associate bodies, amassed massive wealth through "corruption and plundering".

"The entire country is exhausted due to plundering, gambling, extortion, tender manipulation and other misdeeds by ruling party leaders. There's a question in public mind whether the sudden drive against corruption is just an eyewash to create a positive image of the government," Rizvi quipped.

"None of the godfathers have been arrested yet. Hundreds of crores of taka are found at the office of a minor leader of the ruling party's associate body; what about its main leaders, ministers, and the big fish?"

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A tea stall is being run while a pile of bamboos have been kept on this land, where a Bangladesh Water Development Board sign says this is the property of the government agency, and such encroachment is a punishable offence. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Govt to provide free sanitary pads for schoolgirls

AFP

Girls in rural areas will get free sanitary pads to stop skipping school during their periods -- a result of social taboo around menstruation, said state minister Murad Hasan yesterday.

This feeling of shame surrounding period has caused more than 40 percent of Bangladeshi schoolgirls to stay at home during menstruation, researchers say.

"This is very alarming. We cannot put their future at stake," State Minister of Information, Murad Hasan, told AFP.

Hasan said the "unavailability of menstrual pads" and "cost of hygiene products" were mostly to blame for the absence in village schools where some 63 percent of the population lives.

"Parents who are living in poverty often prefer keeping their girls home during their period, rather than buying them hygiene products," he added.

Hasan, a doctor and former state minister of health, said the government has planned to roll

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Climate change accelerated during 2015-2019: WMO

Record greenhouse gas concentrations mean further warming, it says

UNB, Dhaka

The tell-tale signs and impacts of climate change -- such as sea level rise and extreme weather -- increased during 2015-2019, which is set to be the warmest five-year period on record, according to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

Greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere have also increased to

record levels, locking in the warming trend for generations to come, said the WMO yesterday.

The WMO report on The Global Climate in 2015-2019, released to inform the United Nations Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit, says the global average temperature has increased by 1.1 degree centigrade since the pre-industrial period, and by 0.2 degree centigrade compared to

2011-2015.

The climate statement -- which covers until July 2019 -- was released as part of a high-level synthesis report from leading scientific institution 'United in Science' under the umbrella of the Science Advisory Group of the UN Climate Summit 2019.

The report provides a unified assessment of the state of earth, under

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Sewerage pipes have been left on this road in the capital's Uttar Kamalapur for around two months, resulting in regular traffic congestion. Dhaka South City Corporation has been working on sewage line after digging up the road. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Ad-interim injunction issued on new JCD exec committee

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued an ad-interim injunction on the functions of the newly-elected executive committee of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the pro-BNP student body, for the next seven days.

Judge Nusrat Sahara Bithi of the 4th assistant judge's court of Dhaka passed the order after Md Aman Ullah Aman, a former assistant religious affairs secretary of JCD, filed an application seeking a temporary injunction on the functions of the newly-elected executive committee.

It also asked the JCD committee to explain in seven days why a permanent injunction in this regard should not be imposed.

On Sunday, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and nine others appeared before the court and sought time for submitting written objections to

the notice issued by this court earlier. The court granted them time.

The JCD committee was elected at its council on September 19, where Fazlur Rahman Khokon was elected president and Iqbal Hossain Shyamol general secretary.

BNP Standing Committee Member Mirza Abbas declared the new committee on behalf of party's acting chief Tarique Rahman, now in London.

Earlier on September 12, Aman filed a case saying that he had purchased a nomination form for contesting the post of JCD president but the council commission cancelled his nomination paper without any reasonable grounds.

Advocate Masud Talukder, a pro-BNP lawyer, told The Daily Star that the court should have issued a notice to the newly-elected JCD committee before issuing the injunction order.



Apollo Hospitals Dhaka
welcomes
Dr. Akhil Chandra Biswas
MBBS, MS (Otolaryngology)
Senior Consultant - ENT



• Dr. Akhil Chandra Biswas obtained his MBBS from Sir Salimullah Medical College in Dhaka. Thereafter, he joined the government service and served as an Assistant Registrar and Registrar of ENT in Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital.

• Dr. Biswas obtained his MS in Otolaryngology & Head-Neck Surgery from the Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education & Research (ex-IPGMR) under the University of Dhaka, now converted as BSMMU. He went on to work with the department of ENT at Mymensingh Medical College as Registrar of ENT. Leaving the government service on 2004, Dr. Akhil Chandra Biswas joined as Assistant Professor at Bangladesh Medical College (BMC) and served a tenure of almost 15 years, earning a credible name and fame. At the time of his exit from BMC, he held the post of an Associate Professor.

• Apart from general ENT surgical procedures, Dr. Biswas has unparalleled mastery over head-neck surgery, micro-ear surgery, endoscopic sinus surgery and skull base surgery (the challenging discipline of surgical enterprise). He received specialized training in the respective fields from India, Malaysia and Italy.

• Pioneering some special and challenging arenas in the ENT field of Bangladesh, he has given a momentum in the subject. Facial nerve related surgery (decompression or repair), Tympanomastoid Paraganglioma (glomus jugulare tumour) surgery and surgical treatment of Extensive Malignant Otitis Externa - significant breakthroughs in the ENT-Skull base surgical super-specialty in our country has been made possible by Dr. Akhil Chandra Biswas.

Apollo Hospitals Dhaka is delighted to have Dr. Akhil Chandra Biswas on board.

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Request for Proposal of Advisory services on Transformation Management Office (TMO), Digital Transformation and Enterprise IT Architecture

BRAC Bank Limited delivers a full array of banking services to individuals as well as business entities having a network of 187 branches, 460 ATMs, 456 SME Unit Offices, 140+ Agent Banking outlets and 224 remittance delivery points across the country. To embark on a digital transformation journey and to strategize on key pillars viz. Business Growth, Alternative Digital Channel Strategy, Operational Excellence, Data Driven Decision Making, superior customer experience and service, the bank intends to procure Advisory Services on Transformation Management Office (TMO), Digital Transformation and Enterprise IT Architecture.

Request for proposal (RFQ) is issued for the mentioned purpose at Bank's website at <https://www.bracbank.com/en/information/e-tender> to get details of the bidding process.

Interested eligible bidders are requested to bid as per the mentioned bidding process by 31st October, 2019.



DHAKA TODAY

WORKSHOP
Workshop on The Climate Game
Organiser: Mekateam and ActionAid
Venue: ActionAid Bangladesh, Gulshan 1
Time: 4pm

RALLY
Climate Strike
Organiser: Global Climate Strike - Bangladesh
Venue: Jatiya Press Club
Time: 10:30am

EXHIBITION
Buddhi Diye Buddhi Aaki
Organiser: 100 Million Mindset
Venue: EMK Center, Dhanmondi
Time: 11am

WORKSHOP
IELTS Preparation Workshop
Organiser: British Council and EducationUSA
Venue: EMK Center, Dhanmondi
Time: 4:30pm