



The academic building of Bir Protik Momin Ullah Patwary Academy in Moishadi union under Chandpur Sadar upazila. Inset, in addition to regular classes, students of the institution are seen attending classes on computer studies.

PHOTO: STAR

BIR PROTIK MOMIN ULLAH PATWARY ACADEMY

FF’s school with quality education

ALAM PALASH, Chandpur

The fight for his country did not end with independence for Bir Protik Momin Ullah Patwary. The 70-year-old went on to serve his country in various public and private capacities over the years. However, perhaps his most notable contribution is setting up a school -- Bir Protik Momin Ullah Patwary Academy -- in Moishadi union under Chandpur Sadar upazila. It was with passion that he set up this institution and that is evident in the fact that the school achieved 100 percent pass rate in the Junior School Certificate (JSC) examinations last year. The school has set a standard of excellence in the union that has three other schools, and other neighbouring districts as well. Currently, the school has 14 full time teachers and 186 students, who pay a fixed tuition of Tk 600 as they mostly belong to low income families.

In addition to regular classes, the students are given lessons in computer studies, sports, cultural affairs, and debate in the school that got government approval in 2016. But its academic activities began in 2017 after construction of the five-storied campus on an acre of land. Talking to The Daily Star, Momin said, “I took

an initiative to set up the school so that children of our village could grow up receiving quality education and achieve success in every sector.” “The school came to the limelight after it achieved a 100 percent pass rate in the JSC level examinations last year.” A total of eleven persons, including Momin, contributed the funds to acquire the land and construct the building, said Nurul Islam, one of the eleven donours. The school was constructed at a cost of around Tk 3 crore. Of the amount, Momin himself chipped in Tk 2 crore, added Nurul. After serving as superintendent of police in different districts for 19 years, Momin served in deputation under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and worked in Bangladesh embassy and high commission in Senegal and Australia. Upon returning to the country, he worked at the jute ministry for four months. Later, he joined the Prime Minister’s Office and worked there for five years. When BNP assumed power, he was sent into forced retirement. However, after Awami League came back into power in 2009, he was made an additional secretary with retrospective effect. Later, he went into retirement as a secretary. He used all his savings from his salary, pension and business to donate to the school. Even now, he pays the tuition of two students directly from his freedom fighter’s allowance and

sometimes takes classes as well. “There are three other schools in our union. But the Bir Protik Momin Ullah Patwary Academy is a unique one for its quality education, extra-curricular activities and discipline,” said Moniruzzaman Manik, chairman of Moishadi Union Parishad. Emdadul Haque, the academy’s head teacher, said all the teachers, founders and patrons of the school are working hard to improve the school. The students too are delighted with the facilities available to them. “We are lucky to get such an educational institution at our village. Here, the quality of education is better than other educational institutions in the vicinity,” said Salma Akhter, a Class IX student. Sifat Hossain, another student of the same class, said, “Our school has all the modern facilities that are normally found in schools in the metropolitan cities.” Their future plans include taking the academy to the Higher Secondary level by next year. Earlier in 2009, Momin Ullah Patwary set up the ‘Bir Protik Momin Ullah Foundation’ that contributed to the rehabilitation of beggars and education of ultra-poor children. The foundation also distributed academic materials and uniforms at eleven schools in nearby areas. But the foundation’s activities were shut later.

‘End extortion by transport leaders’

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Auto-bike drivers staged a sit-in programme at Thakurgaon intersection in the town yesterday, demanding an end to extortion by transport leaders. They organised the programme under the banner of Thakurgaon District Easy-bike Workers’ Union. Speakers at the programme said a driver has to pay Tk 10 at each point in the town every day. Some drivers even have to pay up to Tk 40. Auto-bike Sramik Kalyan Society in Thakurgaon collects Tk 50,000 from 5,000 auto-bike drivers daily in the name of giving toll to the municipality, said the speakers. They also urged the municipal authority to collect Tk 300 as license renewal fees instead of Tk 650. To get relieve from the toll collection, they urged the authorities concerned to take immediate steps in this regard. The speakers also threatened to launch tougher agitation programmes if their demand is not met by December 2. Mahabub Alam Rubel, president of Thakurgaon Easy-bike Workers’ Union, and its General Secretary Abu Aslam Labu spoke.

Woman gets life term for killing husband

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A court here yesterday sentenced a woman to life term imprisonment for killing her husband in 2011. The lifer is Doly Khanam, 36, daughter of Belayet Mollah of Chowgharia village in Dinajpur Sadar upazila, and wife of late Sazzad Ali of Shuktail village in Gopalganj Sadar upazila. Anwarul Haque, judge of district and sessions judge’s court, also fined the convict Tk 10,000, in default, she is to suffer another one year in jail. According to the prosecution, Doly strangled her husband on the night of November 4 in 2011 following a family feud. Later, the victim’s brother filed a murder case with Dinajpur Sadar Police Station against Doly.



Thanks to contributions made by Didarul Alam, a philanthropist and politician from Khagrachhari town, and several locals, a new five-foot-wide wood bridge was built recently on the Chengi river in Uttar Ganjpara near the town. The bridge replaces a makeshift bamboo footbridge that the villagers used to build every year to communicate with the town. When water rose in the river, the villagers would dismantle the bamboo bridge and use boats to cross the river. Below, the photo of the makeshift bamboo bridge published in this paper on September 5. PHOTO: SAIKATDEWAN

Time to tap the blue economy opportunity

SHYKH SERAJ

Dear readers, in October this year, I went to China to participate in China International Agricultural Machinery Exhibition (CIAME) 2019, held at Qingdao in Shangdong province. I had the opportunity to visit the Ocean University that mainly teaches oceanography, aquatic ecosystem, blue economy and many other issues related to the ocean. The university has been working closely on the prospects of ‘Blue Economy’. Some Bangladeshi students are also involved in this research, which emphasises on sustainable usage of ocean resources for economic growth, while preserving the ecosystem. It is one of the most renowned universities for oceanography studies. We are facing environmental disaster backed by climate change and man-made pollution. Global warming and rise of sea level is coming along to give a higher threat to the nature and people. This is also alarming for the undiscovered resources in the sea. There are many Bangladeshi students at Ocean University who are either doing their graduation or working on their PhD. Bangladesh is now working in the sector of blue economy. I believe when these students will come back from China’s Ocean University, they would be able to contribute greatly to this wonder sector which will definitely boost up the country’s economy. Sea is the reservoir that ensures the nutrition of China’s huge population. Apart from that, blue economy has valuable contribution to their economy. In term of discovering the sea resources they are way ahead today. In this regard, Ocean University is one of the most credible for oceanography research and it’s great to know that Bangladeshis are studying



Ocean University’s Marine Ecology Professor Zho Hong discusses the diverse prospects of blue economy.

PHOTO: HRIDOYE MATI O MANUSH

and working here so intensely. It was really great to know about their work and research. Professor Zho Hong from the Department of Marine Ecology is researching on marine nematodes where Saifuddin, a Bangladeshi student is assisting. Nematodes are very important since it is an indicator of the sea’s environment. You can learn about the ocean’s environment by reviewing nematode’s condition. The whole world is now concerned about it. It plays a vital role in assuring favourable habitat for animal species in the sea, food and biodiversity of the ocean. Professor Zho Hong says Bangladeshi students can well apply their research in the Bay of Bengal which will tell us more about the fruitful resources of Bay of Bengal. Professor Hong is very much concerned about the pollution in the seas and she told me that people are ruining the sea resources in the name of ‘so called’ development. Bangladeshi students Sadia Zaman, Partha Prodip Barman and Farrukh Rahman Rumi are doing their research under the fisheries department. Their works contains great value too. That is to identify the amount of fishes in the ocean. It is called Fish Stock Assessment. Chun Liu is their professor and supervisor. Environment and biodiversity are given

highest priority in China’s economic development, says Chun Liu. The professor said their government has passed strict laws for protecting fish species and their family. It is forbidden to catch fishes in China’s sea from May till August every year. None catches fish during this time. He showed great worry on marine fishes going extinct but praised his government’s role in preserving it. Liu believes Bangladesh has great prospect in the sea and can make use of the great resources under it. “What would be the output of your studies on the fishery ecosystem in the seas?” I asked a Bangladeshi student. “Bay of Bengal is a huge ocean. There are plenty of marine species in it. Based on the knowledge acquired from research here, if I can identify the fisheries ecosystem of Bay of Bengal, then we can find a way to sustain it and utilise it for long-term purposes,” she replied. Another Bangladeshi student is studying the biological reference points of commercially important fish species in the sea. Bangladeshi student Sadia Zaman is researching on Kaptai Lake, one of the renowned lakes of Southeast Asia,

“How do you see Kaptai Lake?” “It is in very bad state right now. A month ago, I visited the fish landing station over there. All the trawlers and fishing boats mostly had Kachki fish. I couldn’t find any big fish.” “The stocking density should be improved,” she added. Scientific Officer of Bangladesh Fish Research Institute Golam Sajed Riyad, who is doing his PhD at this university, is researching on fish’s larvae nutrition. I had a little discussion with him. “After a fish hatches from its egg, the nutrition it needs, the kind of organ development it needs, these are the things I am working on with Professor Liu,” says Riyad. “I am working on a Chinese species now. It is called large yellow carp,” he adds. “Fish has the highest mortality in larvae stage. We are doing this research to save the larvae from the sea,” says Riyad. I went to the lab of Ching Huei. Here researchers are doing research on nutrition and feed of marine fish species. I talked to the professor of Aquaculture department. He said nutrition is very important for protecting fish reproduction. And that has to be ensured at

the larvae stage. “Our work is based on larvae’s nutrition. It is very important. If nutrition is not ensured at this stage, fish will not have a good growth,” said the professor. “Global warming is also harming fish larvae of the sea. Excessive pollution and rise in temperature is making the environment hostile for larvae,” he added. “If the temperature rises to 25 to 30 degree Celsius, larvae dies. Thus, many species are getting extinct. At present, the government of China is concerned about it. Other countries must be conscious about it too. We need to keep ocean environment normal for the sake of sustainable development,” he urged. Dear readers, blue economy promises to bring new opportunities to our country. International research on oceanography sees this possibility to be very high. Fish covers a big part of China’s animal protein demand. Different species of seaweed contributes a huge portion of China’s food and nutrition. Most of the grocery stores and super shops have seaweed for sale. The entire world is working on protecting ocean resources. Sea is in danger because of illegal netting of fish and due to other manmade reasons. Some countries are dedicated to protect the internal and external diversity of the sea. I have seen the dedication in the Netherlands. Over there, for protecting the North Sea, they have many initiatives. Bay of Bengal is important for the economic prosperity of our country. If we don’t identify the sea resources and protect them, our future will be in danger. We hope that the Bangladeshi students at the Ocean University, will work on protecting the Bay of Bengal and discover the greater opportunities of blue economy after they return to the country. The sea will surely bring fortune for us. The ocean contributes more than USD 6 billion to the country’s economy annually and has the potential to generate more income, said a news report on experts’ meeting to identify areas for development early this year. Bangladesh has the right to fish and explore resources within 1,18,813 square kilometres of the Bay of Bengal. The country is yet to tap the opportunity. Steps need to be taken to explore deep sea fishing. There is the scope for marine aquaculture, which is done in several countries including China. Five years have passed since the nation won the case on maritime boundary at the International Court but we are yet to catch fish beyond the 100 metre depth of the sea. We are also yet to utilise the scope to do marine aquaculture or mariculture, which is already popular in countries like India, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and China. It is important now to ensure sustainable use of ocean and addressing the problem of pollution, and it is also necessary to make more investment.

Shykh Seraj is Bangladesh’s pioneer development journalist. He received country’s two highest civilian honours, Swadhinata Puroshkar and Ekushey Padak, respectively. He is an Ashoka and Bangla Academy Fellow. He also received highest award for agricultural journalism from the United Nations, FAO A.H. Boerma Award, Gusi Peace Prize (Philippines) and many other prestigious accolades at home and abroad. At Channel i, he’s the Founder Director and Head of News. He’s also Director and Host of Channel i’s popular agro-documentary, Hridoye Mati O Manush.

