



Fauzia Beethi shares a smile with schoolchildren after handing out school supplies to them, in Dhunat upazila of Bogura. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Following in her father's footsteps

MOSTAFA SHABUI, Bogura

Fauzia Beethi is not a political figure in her area, but everybody knows her in Bogura's Dhunat upazila for her philanthropic works.

An assistant teacher at Belkuchi Government Primary school, Beethi has been providing assistance to hundreds of distressed and unprivileged women and children in the upazila in the last 21 years.

When Covid-19 hit the country, Beethi started making three-layer fabric masks and distributing those among people in villages.

In order to create awareness, she went to different locations, including government offices, hospitals, clinics and markets in the upazila, to distribute the masks.

Beethi distributed around 10 thousand masks so far. She also produced 400 bottles of hand sanitizers with the help of local physicians and pharmacologists and distributed those to the unprivileged who worked in

health sector.

During the months of lockdown, Beethi provided 350 families with relief packages containing 18 kilograms of food, including rice, lentil, cooking oil and onion.

In April and May, she sacrificed two goats -- reared at her home -- and distributed the meat among 93 families who did not receive government assistance.

Beethi's husband Razzakul Kabir Biddut said, "I never questioned her about her salary. Rather, I send her Tk 15 to 20 thousand a month for the family expenses. I always encourage her philanthropic works and I feel proud of my wife."

Arzina Khatun, a resident of Belkuchi village, said Beethi is there whenever the villagers need her. "If someone in the village falls sick at midnight and calls Beethi apa, she will take the patient to hospital."

Three years ago, when her daughter was badly beaten up by her husband and his family, Beethi took her to hospital and bought her food and medication for the next five days. Beethi also helped her get legal support, said the woman.

Beethi, now in her forties, said domestic violence and abuse by her first husband inspired her to reach out to victims of similar violence.

school and for their parents.

"I learned to help people from my childhood. My father, a high-school teacher who sacrificed his whole life serving the needy, taught me to help the people in need," she added.

In 1998, three years into the marriage, her first husband beat her unconscious over his demand for dowry. Beethi said, "I was senseless for three days at the hospital after the incident. I [finally] divorced him and married Razzakul a year later."

"My life's lesson always gives me the spirit to fight for oppressed women. I will serve the poor and the oppressed till the end of my life," added Beethi.

On December 9, 2020, in recognition of her humanitarian work, Bogura district administration conferred Joyeeta award on Beethi.

Ziaul Haque, the deputy commissioner of Bogura, said Beethi has become an example for all, by displaying how one can bounce back in life. "We wanted to send a positive message to the society by recognising her."



About the source of her philanthropic expenses, Beethi said she is privileged to have been able to spend all her salary in social works during the lockdown months, as her husband, a lawyer at the Supreme Court, helps her with household expenses.

During the last two Eids, she spent her entire bonus money and salary to buy clothes for the poor, especially for students at her

CONSTRUCTION WORK OF GOVT BUILDING

Authority intervenes after half of the job done flouting rules

MINTU DESHWARA

Half of the work of a government building has been completed without ensuring the quality of the rod and other materials.

Apart from this, various irregularities have been found in the construction work of Barni Union Health and Family Welfare Centre in Moulvibazar's Barlekha upazila.

The construction work is being supervised by the Department of Health Engineering but allegations have been raised that low-quality building materials have been used in the construction.

According to Health and Family Welfare office, a two-storey building is being constructed on the four-storey building of the Centre in Barlekha under the supervision of the Department of Health Engineering.

H Construction, a construction company, is doing the work worth Tk 1.44 crore. Construction of the building started after the inauguration on December 6 last year.

Locals said low quality rods, cement, bricks and sand have been used from the beginning of the construction of the building. Despite repeated objections from locals, the contractors continued their work.

Visiting the spot, it was seen that rods (non-grade) of three companies were used on the roof of the second floor of the under-construction health center. All of which have been used without laboratory tests confirming the quality of the rod. In addition, low quality bricks have also been used in the construction.

According to the contractor, 60 grade BSI

rods have been sent for testing here. But in reality, rod (non-grade) binders of three other companies were found on the roof.

Talking to this correspondent, Iqbal Hossain, director of the contracting company, admitted the use of rods without laboratory tests.

Monirul Haque, Moulvibazar assistant engineer of the Department of Health Engineering and also the in charge of supervising the work, demanded the use of BSI rods in all parts of the roof for casting, but he could not show the rods everywhere.

Asked about the rod's laboratory test report, he said, "The report has not come yet. Not everything is reported. It has to be done in the light of experience."

Shafiqul Islam Pathan, executive engineer of the Health Engineering Department in Moulvibazar, said rod (non-grade) and low-quality materials of different companies have been used in most of the works of the building without ensuring the quality of the rods in the laboratory tests.

He said, the roof of the second floor of the health center scheduled to be cast on Sunday.

"We have stopped the casting due to some irregularities. No irregularities will be tolerated. If there has been any negligence, the contractor must redress," he added.

Barlekha Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Shamim Al Imran said, "I have visited the construction site after getting news and instructed the concerned to stop the construction work as irregularities were found."

The matter will be reported to the higher authorities, said the UNO.



The under-construction building of Barni Union Health and Family Welfare Centre in Moulvibazar's Barlekha upazila. PHOTO: STAR



Dr Abdul Alim, an associate professor of the Bangla Department at Pabna University of Science and Technology (PUST), stages a sit-in programme in front of the university campus yesterday to press home 101-point demand, including investigation against PUST Vice Chancellor Dr M Rostom Ali for his alleged corruption and irregularities. PHOTO: STAR

Three siblings killed in Cox's Bazar fire

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Three siblings were killed when a fire broke out at their house in Chakaria upazila early yesterday.

The deceased are Zahedul Islam, 12, son of Zaker Hossain of Uttar Harbang Sabanghata village, and his two younger sisters--Meem Akter, 10, and Mitu Moni, 8.

Victims' family members and locals claimed that the fire originated from an electric short circuit at Zaker's house around 12:00am when all the family members were asleep.

All the family members except the trio, who were sleeping in a separate room, managed to come out of the house when the fire broke out.

Harbang UP Chairman Miranul Islam said a firefighting unit went to the spot and doused the fire.

DRIVE AGAINST JATKA NETTING Fisherman injured in police firing dies

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

A man, who sustained bullet wounds when police opened fire during a clash with a group of fishermen in the Meghna river in Matlab North upazila on Monday midnight, died at a hospital in the capital yesterday.

Bullet-hit Masud Hossain, 22, a fisherman from Munshiganj's Kalichar, succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in the morning.

The clash took place around 12:15am when a team of River Police was conducting a regular drive against jatka netting.

In Charge of Mohonpur River Police Mohammad Hossain, who sustained injuries when the fishermen hurled brick chips targeting the law enforcers, received primary treatment locally.

Mohammad Kamruzzaman, a member of Chandpur River Police, said while patrolling in the Meghna river they chased a group of fishermen, who were catching jatka.

Being chased by the law enforcers, the fishermen threw brick chips on them, prompting the police team to fire shotguns in self-defence, he said, adding that Masud was hit by a bullet in his left thigh.

After the clash, police detained bullet-hit Masud and two other fishermen from the spot.

Later, Masud was taken to Matlab North Upazila Health Complex, from where he was shifted to DMCH as his condition deteriorated. He died at the hospital yesterday.

Injured BCL leader dies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

A district-level Chhatra League leader, who sustained severe stab injuries in an attack allegedly by his rivals in the town five days ago, died yesterday.

The deceased, Takdir Islam Khan, 26, was joint secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), district unit.

On Thursday, Takdir was stabbed during a clash that took place allegedly between two factions of BCL.

He succumbed to his injuries at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital around 3:00pm.

Earlier, a clash between two groups of BCL--one led by Takdir, and another by Abdur Rouf, secretary of Bogura Government Azizul Haque College unit BCL--took place following an altercation between the two factions.

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