



Delwar Kobiraj at his farm, in Kalibari village of Barguna's Amtali upazila, where he grows dragon fruit along with various other fruits and medicinal herbs.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN

Dragon fruit turned their lives around

Inspired by Delwar's success, several others took up dragon fruit farming

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Even five years ago, working as a day labourer was a bread and butter job for Delwar Kobiraj, from Kalibari village in Amtali upazila of Barguna. His family of five -- his wife and three children -- used to go to bed unfed on most nights.

A training he received on dragon fruit farming, provided by a non-governmental organisation in 2015, helped him turn the corner. He started out small -- by planting 20 saplings in his yard of about one bigha land.

After finishing up his day job, he used to tend to the plants at night. A year's hard work paid off and the plants were covered in flowers. The flowers soon produced fruits.

Delwar was overjoyed to make a profit of Tk 10 thousand from the first harvest. Next year he left his job and leased out 22 decimals of his agricultural land for Tk 3,000. He spent the money to plant 150 more saplings of dragon fruit in the yard. With the profit made in the next five years, Delwar extended the farm by purchasing six bighas of land and adding another six bighas on lease.

Delwar gradually developed

an integrated farm on about 13 bighas of land where he now has total seven hundred dragon fruit plants and various other fruit plants and medicinal herbs.

In between rows of blossoming dragon fruit plants, the orchard was seen filled with mango, guava, papaya, Malta (blood orange), Latkan (Burmese

I struggled a lot to provide for the family. Thanks to dragon fruit, those hard days are gone. Now my monthly earnings range between Tk 40,000 and 50,000.

"I have no education and couldn't educate my children either. But now I will make sure that my grandson Raju gets good education," Delwar said with

-- Halim Sardar and Sohel Sardar -- Abdul Hai has made a dragon fruit orchard with 400 plants. Once financially insolvent, this farmer now rakes in upto Tk 2.5 lakh a year from sales.

His sons could not go to school due to financial hardship, but the fruit farm helped him pay for his daughter's higher education. While investing the profits in fish cultivation, Abdul Hai also built a two-storey house, bought 30 decimals of land and married off his daughter.

In Kukua union of the upazila, dragon fruit changed things around for farmer Abdus Sattar Gazi too.

Sattar now earns nearly Tk 2 lakh every year from 300 plants in his orchard. He started the farm in 2019 with 32 saplings on 10 decimals of land beside a pond. He said his monthly harvest is about two maunds and each maund sells for Tk 8 thousand.

CM Rezaul Karim, agriculture officer in Amtali upazila, said though exotic, cultivation of dragon fruit is profitable, as it is in great demand in the country.

It bears higher profit with minimal cost and pesticides do not need to be applied on the plants or fruits, he added.

Delwar, who was overjoyed to make a profit of Tk 10,000 from the first harvest, gradually developed an integrated farm on about 13 bighas of land where he now has total seven hundred dragon fruit plants and various other fruit plants and medicinal herbs.

grape), Jamrul (Java apple) and Kaath Lichu (longan) trees. The medicinal plants include Fonimansa, Shatomul, Talmuli, Dantoshul and Tulsi.

Thanking his wife Rabia Khatun and son Mirajul Islam for looking after the farm, Delwar said it is now his source of prosperity and happiness.

"When I was a day labourer,

dreamy eyes. Inspired by Delwar's success, several others in the same upazila took up dragon fruit farming and found similar success.

Abdul Hai, another resident of Kalibari village, started his dragon fruit farm with 30 saplings three years ago, after getting training from Amtali agriculture office.

With the help of his two sons

Tangail drum makers busy as Durga Puja draws closer

About 25 families from the Hindu community at Babnapara village make musical instruments

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Drum, known as dhol, makers of Babnapara in Nagarpur upazila have been passing busy time as the Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of Hindu community, only a week away.

Dhol is one of the main musical instruments of the Durga Puja festival as the evenings during the puja buzz with the sounds of dhol all around the puja mandaps.

The drum making work is going on without any break and the drum makers, locally known as Badyakor, are not even getting much time for their meal or sleep.

Traditional musical instruments of Bengal, like dhol, table, khol, made by local Badyakors are sold at different musical outlets in the capital and many other areas across the country.

Some 20 to 25 Badyakor families from the Hindu community at Babnapara village are engaged in making musical instruments like dhol, table, khol to keep their 150-year ancestral profession alive.

However, due to the outbreak of coronavirus and lockdown dhol makers of Babnapara had no works for nearly one and a half years as all the cultural activities, wedding ceremonies and other festivals across the country were restricted.

On the other hand, local dhulis, drum players, are passing their days in hardship as they do not get call for any such programmes and they don't know any other alternative works.

After the lockdown is withdrawn, the work of drum making started again at Babnapara and recently the work orders have increased due to the upcoming puja festival.

Atol Chandra Das, 40, a dhol maker from Babnapara, said his father and grandfather was engaged with this profession and after their deaths, he joined this profession.

"Because of the corona virus situation, we didn't had any work for the last one and a half years. So local instrument makers had to pass their days amid hunger or borrowing money from others," he said.

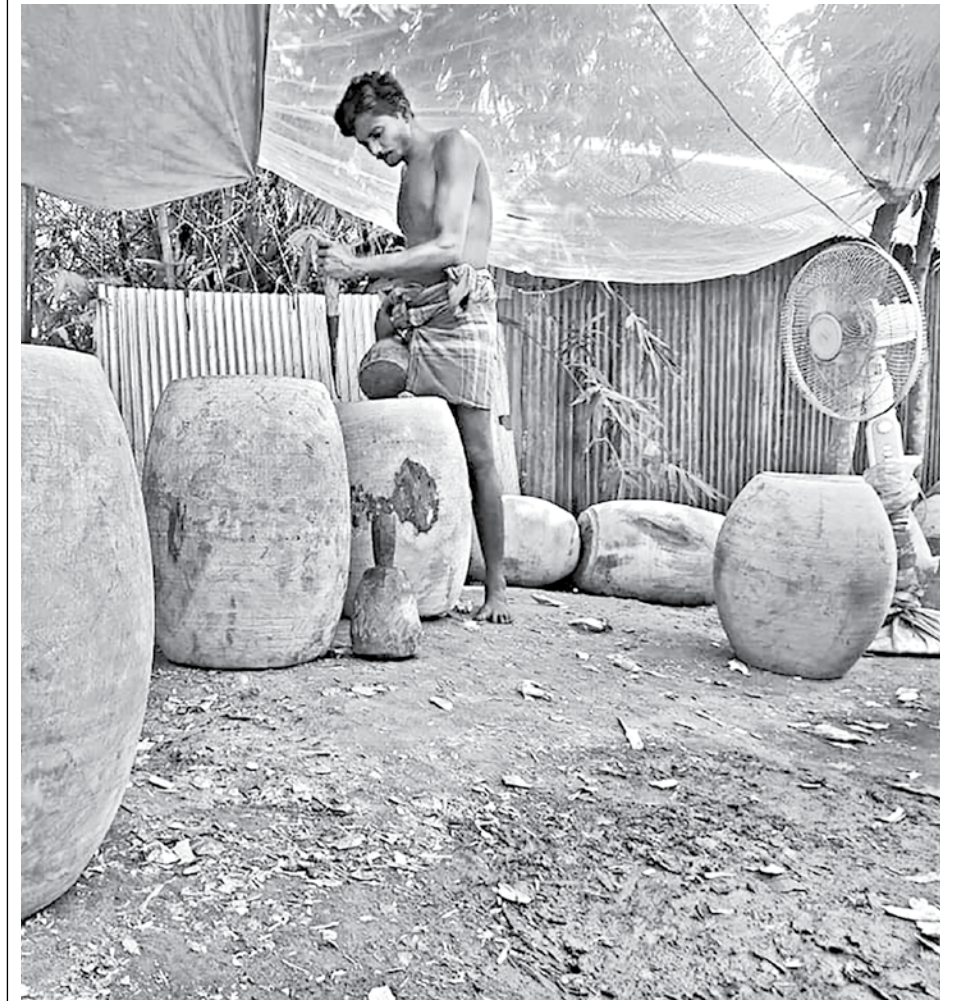
"Currently 12 artisans are working in my factory to meet the orders I got ahead if the puja festival," Atol added.

Depending on sizes, a dhol is sold at Tk 6,000 to Tk 10,000, a khol for Tk 2,500 to Tk 3,000 and a pair of tabla for Tk 4,000 to Tk 5,000.

Artisans said different materials like mango and raintree woods, bamboo, dye and hide of cattle, buffalo, goat and sheep are used as ingredients to make dhol, khol and tabla.

Depending on sizes, a dhol is sold at Tk 6,000 to Tk 10,000, a khol for Tk 2,500 to Tk 3,000 and a pair of tabla for Tk 4,000 to Tk 5,000, they said, adding that musical instruments traders from different parts of the country, including the capital, came to the area and bought those.

Moreover, when they receive any order, such instruments are sent to different districts through courier service.



An artisan is seen preparing a drum at Babnapara in Tangail's Nagarpur upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

Barrelling on political clout

FROM PAGE 1

"We got some information and a list of people who bought arms from Akul. We are now verifying the information," Mashiur Rahman, deputy commissioner of Gulshan division DB police, told The Daily Star.

So far, detectives came to know about nine AL leaders from Jeshore and Benapole who bought firearms from Akul.

Detectives said AL activist Fontu Chaklader is among the top buyers, although he sounded nonchalant when asked about the arms trade.

"I am not going to talk to you about it. If I have committed any crime, ask the law enforcers to take action," said Fontu, also a cousin of Jeshore-6 AL lawmaker Shaheen Chaklader.

Shaheen sought to distance himself from Fontu, saying he had not even seen the man in a decade.

Another name that came up as a top buyer is Alamgir Kabir Sumon, councillor of ward-6 of Jashore municipality, DB sources said.

Contacted, Sumon said he knew Akul as a BCL leader, but was unaware of his criminal activities.

Mashiur, the DC of Gulshan division DB police, said Akul used to bring arms through one of his cousins in West Bengal.

"Some hundi traders were also involved," he added.

Investigators said Akul used to

place orders through an online app, and the smugglers from the Indian side would send the consignments to Bangladesh on credit.

He has several dozen associates on both sides of the border, they said, adding that Akul was also involved in narcotics, gold, clothes and spice smuggling through the Benapole border.

Seeking anonymity, a top police official acknowledged that Akul was not arrested although he established a "mini crime world" in the bordering districts.

POWERFUL SHELTER

Akul was suspended from BCL soon after his arrest.

He became Sharsha upazila BCL general secretary in 2012, with backing from Benapole Municipality Mayor Ashrafur Alam Liton, police and local politicians said.

"Akul got the post because of Mayor Liton. Former district Chhatra League general secretary Anwar Hossain Bipul also has a hand in this," said Abdur Rahim Sarder, president of Sharsha upazila BCL.

He added that he used to avoid Akul because of his criminal activities.

"It is because of Mayor Liton that Akul evaded arrest," he told The Daily Star.

In June 2019, police recovered 12 magazines, three bullets, one bomb, six locally-made weapons and Phensedyl bottles from Akul's house

in Benapole. He went into hiding after two cases were filed under the arms and explosives act against him, said police and local sources.

But police submitted a charge sheet in the case dropping Akul's name because of Liton's intervention, said Rahim, the president of Sharsha upazila Chhatra League.

The Benapole police could not immediately give the current job location or contact details of the investigating officer or the then officer-in-charge under whom the charge sheet was prepared and submitted.


Liton, also joint secretary of Jashore AL, denied having any close links with Akul.

"I am neither aware of his criminal activities nor provided any support or shelter to him. I am a politician and many people come to me. It is very difficult to control everyone's movement."


Anwar Hossain Bipul said he was not aware of Akul's criminal activities.

"We used to be in politics together. But we parted ways around one and a half years ago," he said, adding Akul had good relations with Shaheen Chaklader, his lawmaker cousin.

Shaheen denied this, saying, "Akul may have some links with my supporters as he is involved in politics. But I have no relationship with him. I have not even seen him in the last 10 years."



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দেশী পণ্যের ব্যবহার

তারিখঃ ২০ আশ্বিন, ১৪২৮
০৫ অক্টোবর, ২০২১

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-৬৯/২০২১

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকে 'ডাটা এন্ট্রি/কন্ট্রোল অপারেটর (জেনারেল)' পদে নিয়োগের উদ্দেশ্যে অনুষ্ঠেয় স্ট্যান্ডার্ড এন্ট্রি/কন্ট্রোল টেস্টের আসন বিন্যাস ও সময়সূচি সংক্রান্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি।

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক 'ডাটা এন্ট্রি/কন্ট্রোল অপারেটর (জেনারেল)' পদে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে ০১/০৯/২০২০ তারিখে প্রকাশিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং ৪৩/২০২০-এর সূত্রে আবেদনকারী প্রার্থীদের মধ্য হতে প্রবেশপত্র ডাউনলোডকারী মোট ২২,২৪৬ জন প্রার্থীর স্ট্যান্ডার্ড এন্ট্রি/কন্ট্রোল টেস্ট নিয়োগকৃত সময়সূচি অনুষ্ঠিত হবেঃ

পদের নাম	স্ট্যান্ডার্ড এন্ট্রি/কন্ট্রোল টেস্টের তারিখ ও বার	স্ট্যান্ডার্ড এন্ট্রি/কন্ট্রোল টেস্টের সময়	পরীক্ষার কেন্দ্র	রোল	পরীক্ষার্থীর সংখ্যা
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			ডগাইর, মাতুয়াইল, ঢাকা-১৩৬২	১১৩৫২৯	৪,০০০
			ড. মাহবুবুর রহমান মেন্ডা কলেজ, মাতুয়াইল, ডেমড়া রোড, মারাবাড়া, ঢাকা।	১১৩৫৩০-১২১৫৫৩	৪,৫০০
			বাক্তা আলতুদুদুয়া উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়, বাক্তা, গুলশান, ঢাকা-১২১২।	১২১৫৫৪-১৩০৩৯৭	৩,০০০
			যাত্রাবাড়ী আইডিয়াল স্কুল এন্ড কলেজ, যাত্রাবাড়ী, ঢাকা-১২০৪।	১৩০৩৯৮-১৩৬২৬৯	২,৭৫০
			সেন্টাল উইমেল কলেজ, ১৩/২, অভয় দাস লেন, টিকাতুলি, ঢাকা-১২০৩।	১৩৬২৭৩-১৪১৭৫৮	৯৯৬
			ইউনিভার্সিটি উইমেল ফোরেশন কলেজ, হাউজ # ১৬/১৬/১, রোড # ৬, ধানমন্ডি, ঢাকা-১২০৫।	১৪১৭৬০-১৪৩৭২১	

২। পরীক্ষার হলে প্রবেশের পূর্বে প্রয়োজনীয় চেকিং কার্যক্রম সম্পন্ন করার জন্য পরীক্ষা শুরু করার কমপক্ষে ৩০ মিনিট পূর্বে পরীক্ষার্থীদেরকে পরীক্ষা কেন্দ্রে উপস্থিত হতে হবে। প্রবেশপত্র ব্যতিরেকে কোন প্রার্থীকে পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে দেয়া হবে না।

৩। পরীক্ষার হলে প্রবেশপত্রের একটি কপি ব্যতীত কোন ধরনের কাগজ, বই, মোবাইল ফোন, ক্যালকুলেটর, স্মার্টওয়াচ ও অন্যান্য ইলেকট্রনিক ডিভাইস নিয়ে প্রবেশ করা যাবে না।

৪। পরীক্ষার জন্য আগত প্রার্থীদেরকে স্বাস্থ্য মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক নির্দেশিত কোভিড-১৯ সংক্রান্ত স্বাস্থ্য বিধি মেনে চলতে হবে।

৫। পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য প্রার্থীদেরকে কোনরূপ টিএ/ডিএ দেয়া হবে না।

ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিংবা কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

(মোঃ গোলাম মোস্তফা)
মহাব্যবস্থাপক

ডিসিপিঃ ৪৮/২০২১-৩১৫৫
তারিখঃ ০৬/১০/২০২১
জিডি-১৭৯৭