

# Storks find friends and foes at Ashurhat

Poachers, hunters pose threat to Asian openbills in Jhenidah; locals step up to save the birds

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

Over the years, Ashurhat in Jhenidah's Shailakupa upazila has become a haven for the Shamuk Bhangra or Asian openbill storks.

Also known as Shyamkhol, the birds first took shelter in the village in 2007. Back then, they numbered in the double digits. Some 14 years in, there's now around 25,000 of the birds in the village.

Most of them reside on the big trees that neighbour the three water bodies of the village. By their very grace, they attract a huge number of visitors to Ashurhat.

People from neighbouring villages now call it "Pakhi Gram".

Somewhere along the line, the birds have become beloved to the locals. Like clockwork, they leave to seek food at dawn, and come back before dusk, and the villagers are only too glad to have them call it home.

But in spite of this loving relationship, the birds find themselves in a tight spot. As their numbers have increased, they have become a target for hunters -- some of them quite influential in the area. If anyone steps up and asks them to stop, the hunters start an altercation and quickly take charge of the situation, alleged locals.

In 2020, two village police personnel were deployed to watch the birds at night. But this was not nearly enough.

When the situation called for it, the villagers' affection for the birds shone through. Sensing alarm, locals took it upon themselves to guard the birds.

On Tuesday morning, villager



The storks have become such an omnipresent part of Ashurhat that people from neighbouring villages started calling it "Pakhi Gram".

PHOTO: STAR

Akmal Hossain identified himself as a bird lover to this correspondent. "There's no money involved, I do it out of love," he said.

But regardless of how hard they try, he said, the local influential still manage to hunt down the birds at night. Akmal said if the government doesn't do something fast, this bird sanctuary may soon cease to exist.

Rehana Khatun, a resident, said the local authority hung up two signboards calling for the safety of birds but that's not enough. She also said the deployed village police don't carry out their job well enough, which leaves the birds at the hunters' behest.

Contacted, Nityanandapur Union Parishad chairperson Faruk Hossain said he has informed the administration to take necessary steps to ensure the safety of the birds.

UNO Kanij Fatema Liza of Shailakupa upazila said she has visited Ashurhat recently and deployed the two aforementioned village police personnel. She also said she has advised locals to keep an eye out for the hunters while they figure out a solution.

She added that she has forwarded a letter to the ministry concerned for the acquisition of the bird sanctuary of Ashurhat village.

ABDUCTION OF JOURNALIST GOLAM SARWAR

## Ctg court rejects police report, orders PBI to re-investigate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Investigators looking into the case of Chattogram journalist Golam Sarwar's enforced disappearance last November had submitted a final report in May. On the report, they said had found no evidence of the abduction.

The report from Kotwali Police Station came despite the fact that the journalist was discovered in a canal -- bound, battered and traumatised -- three days after going missing.

On Sunday, a Chattogram court rejected the final report and asked the Chattogram Police Bureau of Investigation to re-investigate the case. Chattogram metropolitan

magistrate Mehnaz Rahman gave the order, after taking into cognisance Sarwar's objection regarding the police's final report.

Journalist Golam Sarwar had filed an abduction case with Kotwali Police Station on November 15, 2020, stating that he had been picked up by unidentified men who rendered him unconscious with chloroform. He said he was kept in a room beside a rail line and tortured every time a train went past.

He further said that his boss and wife were contacted by the abductors using his cellphone. The abductors had also provided a mobile financing number for them to transfer ransom

money to.

However, in the report, submitted by sub-inspector of Kotwali Police Station Dharmendu Das, the investigators denied finding any evidence.

On November 1 last year, Sarwar was found unconscious beside a canal at Sitakunda's Kumira, stripped down to his underwear and pleading incoherently for his life, saying he would not do news reports anymore.

The enforced disappearance took place days after Sarwar had published a report accusing the land minister's brother of land-grabbing. The minister's brother later filed a defamation case against Sarwar, suing him for Tk 100 crore.

## BARI launches central research review, planning workshop

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

The inaugural session of "Central Research Review and Planning Workshop-2021" of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) took place on Sunday at the institute.

Agriculture Minister Dr Muhammad Abdur Razzaque inaugurated the workshop as chief guest. BARI Director General Dr Md Nazirul Islam presented the keynote paper.

The workshop's technical session started yesterday and will continue till October 19.

## Reform anti-trafficking Act Demand owners of recruiting agencies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Owners of different recruiting agencies have urged the government to reform the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act-2012 to end "harassment" against them.

Forming a human chain in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club on Sunday, they said many recruiting agency owners and employees had been facing police harassment due to "misuse" of the anti-trafficking act.

They demanded the inclusion of a new clause in the existing act, citing if workers go abroad legally after obtaining clearance from the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training, these cases will remain out of the purview of the anti-trafficking act.

If allegations are raised by any worker against a recruiting agency, then action should be taken under the Overseas

Employment and Migrants Act-2013, they added.

"We send workers abroad after maintaining rules and regulations of both Bangladesh and the receiving countries by collecting demand letters from the foreign employers, where both governments are involved," said Abdul Barakat Bhuiyan, former vice president of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies.

Addressing the human chain, M Tipu Sultan, president of Recruiting Agency Oikya Parishad, said, "We will have no alternative but to stop sending workers abroad if such problems are not resolved by the end of this month."

Sultan also said that they will submit memorandum to different government offices, including the Prime Minister's Office, the home ministry and the law ministry, to press home their demands.

## Four posing as journalists arrested over fraud in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested four individuals posing as journalists in a case filed under the Digital Security Act for deceiving and blackmailing a freelancer in Chattogram.

The arrestees are: Abdur Razzak (38), Jakir Ahmed Jibon (29), Shamim Mia (37) and Al Imran (25). They claimed to be staffers of Crime Patrol BD, a YouTube-based news channel.

The case was filed with Kotwali Police Station early yesterday by Md Amirul Islam, a freelancer who works with Upwork, an online platform, police said.

Amirul, who earned around US\$ 3,000 from freelance work with Upwork in three months, was approached by a person in Facebook who offered him to exchange the dollars. After they came to an agreement, Amirul went to port city's Jail

Road area on Sunday evening to complete the transaction, Mominul Hasan, a sub-inspector of the police station, said citing the case statement.

After Amirul sent the dollars to the person's account through an online payment platform, the latter threatened the freelancer and left without paying him the exchange money.

As Amirul protested, four youths appeared on the scene and started recording video -- introducing themselves as crime journalists, the SI said.

Following this, Amirul dialed national helpline 999 to seek help from law enforcers and police went to the spot and arrested the four, the official also said.

After primary quizzing, they were found to be part of a fraud gang who blackmail people by posing as journalists, SI Mominul added.



Seems like it's open season for garbage dumping in Habiganj city. Right in front of the Habiganj Jalal Stadium, a pile of waste lines up almost two kilometres of road. As virtually everyone in the area -- from households and eateries, to even government offices -- keeps adding to the junk, the issue has become a cause for headache for the same people. However, despite repeated requests, the municipality is yet to do anything about it. This photo was taken on Friday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

## 'We must stop child marriage'

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bringing an end to the practise of child marriage is a must for the young generation to reach their full potential, speakers said at a discussion yesterday.

It was organised in Dhaka by Plan International Bangladesh, Children Affairs Journalists' Network, and Unilever Bangladesh marking International Day of the Girl Child.

Meher Afroz Chumki, chairperson, parliamentary standing committee on Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, was present at the event as chief guest.

Unilever Bangladesh CEO and MD Zaved Akhtar announced a special campaign, in collaboration with Plan International Bangladesh and Teach for Bangladesh, to develop self-esteem of 5 million adolescents by 2030.

## Decade-long conflict

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Shankhanidhi Lodge as antiquities under the Antiquities Act 1968.

In 2012, the court had also questioned why criminal action should not be taken against Ashraf, who is still occupying the property, for damaging the temple.

Following the HC's order last year, a group of Hindu devotees attempted to reinstate the temple's idols yesterday. They showed up at the spot with the idols, said a duty officer of Wari Police Station.

"The devotees were stopped by police, and a skirmish ensued," said Kajal Debnath, the Puja Uddhapan Parishad's adviser.

Taimur said the government's archaeology department is yet to take over the remnants of the lodge for restoration, and the place is

still being occupied by grabbers.

The lodge's original owners, the Saha Banik family, had fled the property in 1971.

"We want the temple to be handed over peacefully and the grabbers' eviction," said Debnath, adding that the temple was not in the list of mandaps arranged for Durga Puja.

In addition to the director-general of archaeology department, the deputy commissioner of Dhaka, chairperson of Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakha, commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police and others had been made respondents to the writ petition, and are therefore also responsible for the temple's preservation, he added.

Ashraf could not be contacted for comments.

## Mahbub Talukder

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"With his remarks, it seems that it's he, not the EC, who suffers from complicated mental diseases. Now he's the main problem of the EC," said Quader.

Mahbub Talukder on Sunday at his office told reporters that the Election Commission is now infected with some complex diseases and the state of democracy is now at a critical stage due to its side-effects.

Pointing at AL leaders, Quader urged them not to allow any controversial and evil-doers like identified terrors and drug peddlers, extortionists and land grabbers join the party.

The AL general secretary also asked leaders not to allow corrupt persons to strengthen their respective groups as they will not be there for the party during tough times.

## Teen takes charge

FROM PAGE 3

concerning politics, governance, diplomacy, business etc across the country throughout the month of October.

Among the other positions which have been and will be handed over to girls from different areas all over Bangladesh

are -- Rangpur: mayor of Rangpur City Corporation; Barisal: deputy inspector general of Police, Barisal Metropolitan Police; Chattogram: UP chairman in Rangamati, Teknaf, Cox's Bazar; Sylhet: deputy director, District Social Service Office.

## Govt syndicate

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"The price hike of essentials has made public life miserable, but the Awami League leaders are indulging in luxury," he alleged.

The BNP leader said the middle- and lower-income people are struggling to cope with the growing price hike of all commodities. "Maintaining families have now become unbearable for them, but the government is indifferent to their sufferings."

He also said the middlemen who are benefiting from the price hike are all involved with Awami League or its associate bodies. "The government has no surveillance in the market as its main focus is on indulging in plundering."

Rizvi alleged that the commerce and food ministers themselves are businessmen and they have a link with the syndicate that

is controlling the market and pushing up the prices of the essentials.

Although AL promised to give people per kg of rice at Tk 10, Rizvi said the rice price in Bangladesh is the highest in Asia now.

Alongside rice, the BNP leader said the prices of onions and edible oil are soaring, but the commerce minister, a big businessman of the country, remains silent over the matter.

Rizvi also said the price of hilsa is very high this year as the government sent the national fish to India depriving the people of the country.

Apart from commodity prices, he said the tariffs of gas, electricity and water have also been increased. "The price of LPG was raised yesterday (Sunday). A profiteering and hoarding syndicate of Awami League is behind the rise in LPG price."

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)



International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka invites proposals from interested Firm/Organization for "Designing, development and implementation of Online Reporting and Monitoring System of TTCs and IMTs of BMET". The bidding documents can be downloaded from the ILO Dhaka website under Procurement Notices at [https://www.ilo.org/dhaka/InformationResources/WCMS\\_822062/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/dhaka/InformationResources/WCMS_822062/lang--en/index.htm)

The deadline for submission of proposal RFP/ILO/MIG/2021/005 is Sunday, October 31, 2021, by 04:30 PM (BST time).

### Invitation to submit proposals for the following two (2) Request for Proposals (RFPs) issued by UNICEF Bangladesh

1) RFP No. LRPS-2021-9170672: Integration of Ventilation & Centralized Control System with the existing Air Conditioning System of UNICEF Country Office.

The deadline to submit the proposal is Monday, 08 November 2021; Time: 11:00 Hrs.

2) RFP No. LRPS-2021-9170673: Renovation of Different Upazila Health Complexes (1 DH & 7 UHC) in Cox's Bazar district under Health and Gender Support Project (HGSP) funded by World Bank phase-II (Lot 1-5).

The deadline to submit the proposal is Monday, 15 November 2021; Time: 11:00 Hrs.

UNICEF-Bangladesh is inviting interested companies with a strong track record and professional credibility of providing the above required services under one contract. To receive the detailed scope of work and procedure to submit the bid response, please email to [supplybangladesh@unicef.org](mailto:supplybangladesh@unicef.org)

For Pre-bid Meeting: Please see the schedule mentioned in the RFP.

Please note UNICEF does not charge any fee at any stage of the solicitation process.

[www.unicef.org/bd](http://www.unicef.org/bd)

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### BIRDEM GENERAL HOSPITAL

(An Enterprise of the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh)  
122, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1000.

#### Employment Notice

Applications are invited from the citizen of Bangladesh for the following post.

(1) Sr. Consultant (2) Consultant (3) Principal System Analyst/ Principal Programmer (4) Jr. Consultant (5) Resident Surgeon (6) Sr. Scientific Officer (7) Registrar For various departments.

Academic designations will be conferred to eligible persons.

Applications to be submitted in prescribed form, obtainable from Cash Counter # 15 & 22, BIRDEM on all working days (from 9-00 A.M. to 12-30 P.M.).

For details please visit BIRDEM & BADAS Website:

[www.birdembd.org](http://www.birdembd.org) & [www.dab-bd.org](http://www.dab-bd.org)

Last date of Application 31 October 2021.

D-135

Director General

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)



International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka invites proposals from interested Firm/Organization for "Development of Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) Learning Materials/Resource Packages and Audio-visual Learning Materials in Bangla for Bangladeshi migrant workers. The bidding documents can be downloaded from the ILO Dhaka website under Procurement Notices at

[https://www.ilo.org/dhaka/Aboutus/WCMS\\_821253/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/dhaka/Aboutus/WCMS_821253/lang--en/index.htm)

The deadline for submission of proposal RFP/ILO/MIG/2021/004 is Tuesday, October 26, 2021, by 04:30 PM (BST time).