

CASES AGAINST MAYORS Staffers refrain from work in protest

People in Cox's Bazar, Moheshkhali suffer

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

People suffered after staffers of Cox's Bazar and Moheshkhali municipalities observed work abstention for eight hours yesterday as mayors of the two municipalities were made accused in criminal cases.

All sorts of services, including issuance of birth, death and citizenship certificates and removal of waste, remained halted during the protest, said Kamrul Islam Kajol, owner of a commercial building housing different shops in Cox's Bazar municipality area.

On Sunday, a case was filed against Cox's Bazar municipality Mayor Mujibur Rahman on charge of directing criminals to shoot Monaf Sikder, a local Chhatra League leader, on October 27.

The municipal staffers went on the work abstention from 6:00am yesterday, demanding withdrawal of the case. They blocked the town's main thoroughfare in front of the municipality building.

Around 2:30pm, they withdrew the work abstention following request of administrative officials and senior political leaders.

Sources at the municipality said the staffers observed the work abstention following the mayor's instructions, though he denied it.

"We always emphasis on providing people with services," Mujibur told The Daily Star yesterday.

Meanwhile, a similar programme was observed in Moheshkhali municipality as a case was lodged against municipal Mayor Maksud Miah with Moheshkhali Police Station on October 25 over occupying and looting a shrimp enclosure.



A farmer tends to a summer tomato plant at her farm in Teliaparabazar area under Madhabpur upazila of Habiganj.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

HYBRID SUMMER TOMATO Sylhet banking on new cash crop

MINTU DESHWARA, back from Habiganj

Growers of different summer varieties of tomato, especially the one named Raja, are making more or less 200 percent profit this season in Sylhet region.

The prospect of lucrative profits is shining ray of new hope on Sylhet's agricultural communities as many of the community members alleviated poverty by cultivating the early varieties of the produce.

These new varieties of tomato, which is conventionally produced in the winter season, are also helping diversify agriculture and thus strengthen the local economy through generation of new jobs.

While speaking with this correspondent, Azizul Islam, Abdul Karim, Altaf Hossain and Sekendar Ali – all from Madhabpur upazila in Habiganj, said they all became self-reliant by cultivating tomato.

Around Tk 3 lakh worth of Raja variety of tomato can be produced on one bigha of land after spending around Tk 1 lakh on its cultivation, said Abbas Uddin, a successful grower

of the crop, from Notunbazar village in Madhabpur upazila of Habiganj.

"I cultivated Raja tomato on one bigha of land and this month I sold around 200 kilograms of the produce for Tk 80 to 100 per kg. The harvesting will continue for another month."

Sarwar Hossain, another tomato farmer in the same upazila, cultivated its early variety on one bigha of land. He said he reaped a harvest of 300 kg so far and was able to sell each kg at Tk 70 to 80.

The region is seeing a remarkable increase in net acreage of tomato farming and the trend is drawing in more investments, said Kazi Lutful Bari, deputy director of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Moulvibazar.

The usual harvesting time of the early tomato variety is between August and September, but in order to capitalise on higher prices, driven by higher demands at markets across the country, many of the growers are harvesting it a bit earlier, he also said.

Abdul Momin, agriculture officer

in Kulaura upazila of Moulvibazar, said the hybrid summer tomato, which requires less irrigation, was proven profitable during its trial cultivation last year, leading to the increase in its commercial farming in the area.

The DAE has been arranging various motivational and training programmes in the entire Sylhet division, as the cultivation of tomato, which is rich in vitamins, can yield success for geographical reasons, said DAE's Sylhet Division Deputy Director Kazi Mojibur Rahman.

He also said that they set a target of producing 3,14,955 tonnes of tomato from 9,949 hectares of land in the region this season, as opposed to 2,92,032 tonnes from 9,204 hectares last year.

Prof Mohammad Ashraful Islam, chairman of Agricultural Extension Education at Sylhet Agricultural University, said hybrid summer tomato can tolerate high temperatures while its size, taste and flavour are similar to those of the winter varieties.

Pulse farming gains popularity in Jashore

Around 405 hectares land have been brought under mung and mashkalai cultivation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Black gram (mashkalai daal) cultivation has become very popular among farmers in Chaugachha upazila of Jashore district and they are expecting a bumper yield of the crop this season.

This year more land has been brought under black gram cultivation in the upazila compared to the previous year, Chaugachha Upazila Agriculture Office sources said. Black gram has been cultivated in around 200 hectares of land in the upazila this year, the sources said.

Despite a bumper yield due to favourable weather, farmers are worried over the fair price of their produce. Farmers alleged that the price of their produce goes down during the harvesting period. Some wholesalers buy the crop at a low price from the farmers and later hike the price reducing the farmers' profit margin, they claimed.

Kadamtala, Mashila, Madhabpur, Kharincha, Andarkota, Hazrakhana and Tengurpur villages of the upazila have been extensively brought under the cultivation of black gram.

Jahangir Alam, a farmer of Kadamtala area said that it is a very profitable crop as it does not require much labour, fertilizers, irrigation and pesticides like other crops.

Farmers Rahmat Ali, Ayub Hossain, Monirul Islam, Haider Ali, Amir Hossain, Suna Mandal and many others have cultivated black gram this year in the upazila.

Apart from the black gram, mung bean (Vigna radiata), alternatively known as the green gram, has been cultivated in 205 hectares of land in the upazila this year.

According to sources, the origin of mung bean is in South Asia and Southeast Asia. The crop is widely cultivated in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, China and Korea.

Abdul Mannan, a veteran physician, said that both black gram and mung bean contain a high amount of fibre, potassium and magnesium which are effective in lowering blood pressure. Due to the presence of fibre and resistant starch, they help our metabolic system.

About 20.4 grams of fibre is found in 202 grams of these pulses, he added.

Upazila Agriculture Officer Samaren Biswas said, mung daal and black gram, also known as mashkalai daal in Bangla, are two must-have varieties of pulses for Bangladeshi families.

"We have been cooperating and imparting training to the farmers for the cultivation of the crops," he said.



A farmer attends to his black gram (mashkalai) cultivation in Chaugachha upazila of Jashore.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

NEWS

PBI to probe case

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On Sunday, the magistrate directed the PBI to investigate the case and submit a report before the court by December 1.

In the case statement, the complainant said he watched the performance by Meghdol on YouTube on October 26 and alleged the performance has "hurt religious sentiment".

On October 22, students of Dhaka University organised the on-campus "Concert against Violence", protesting the recent communal attacks on the Hindu community. The concert was organised in front of sculpture the Raju Memorial Sculpture at Dhaka University's TSC, reads the statement.

Meghdol, along with a number of other bands and solo artistes, performed in the concert.

The song "Om" was released by Meghdol in its debut album "Droher Montre Bhalobasha" in 2004.

Following the filing of the case, different artistes and media personalities expressed solidarity with Meghdol by posting comments with the hashtag "Meghdoler pashe darao (stand by Meghdol)" and uploading the band's popular songs on social media.

Reputed filmmaker Amitabh Reza, in a post on his verified Facebook page, urged everyone to stand by Meghdol.

Earlier, Imrul Hasan on February 2 last year filed a case against Baul singer Rita Dewan under the Digital Security Act for making "derogatory comments" about religion and "hurting people's sentiments" through her songs.

The trial of the case is now pending at Dhaka Cyber Tribunal.

No member of the band could be reached for comments till the filing of the report around 9:00pm yesterday.

UN visit begins

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The government has planned relocating one lakh Rohingyas to Bhasan Char, but could so far relocate only 18,000 plus Rohingyas since December last year. It plans to relocate over 80,000 more in the next four months.

Since the relocation began late last year, local NGOs and the government have been providing humanitarian assistance to the Rohingyas in Bhasan Char, and the government had been seeking global support.

"Now that the MoU has been signed, different UN agencies -- UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF and IOM -- will be needing to assess what they need to do. Then, they will begin their operations on the ground," said Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) Shah Rezwan Hayat.

On the UN mission's visit, Commodore M Rashed Sattar, director of Ashrayan-3 Project (Bhasan Char), said the UN agencies will also assess the needs of their own, including accommodation, security, transport, food, internet etc, as they will be starting operations soon.

They will also see on the ground the activities already being conducted by the local NGOs.

"Based on their needs assessment, they will begin their operations. We are expecting the UN to start operations at the soonest," Rashed said.

Scientists uncover

FROM PAGE 12

aspects of a given backdrop, helping them evade intrepid predators like leopards, tigers and dholes (Asiatic wild dogs).

"The black fur blends into dark shades and tree trunks, whereas white fur matches foliage and snow when present, and intermediate pelage tones match rocks and ground," the team wrote.

The patchiness of their fur's colouring also appears to confuse perceptions of their outline, making their exact shape more difficult for would-be antagonists to determine and perhaps discouraging an attack.

2 arrested in DSA case

FROM PAGE 12

Atiqur Rahman filed the case with Kotwali Model Police Station against the two and several unknown people."

The two arrestees gave confessional statements before the Chief Judicial

Alternative explanations previously proposed for pandas' unique colouration have included intraspecific signalling, heat management and aposematism (detering rivals) but it appears background matching for survival is the likeliest answer.

The team's findings were based on examining photographs of 15 different pandas taken between 2007 and 2014 in Sichuan, Shaanxi and Gansu provinces in the humid and remote wilds of south central China, which were analysed against the forest, rocks and rivers that comprise the fragmented background of those locations.

Magistrate in yesterday afternoon, said Khan Mohammad Rezwan, superintendent of Cumilla Criminal Investigation Department.

The Cumilla Times released a video clip of the incident that led to communal attacks in the area, claimed law enforcers.

3 handed 10 years in jail

FROM PAGE 12

"Saha had maligned the Prophet (PBUH)", an angry mob vandalised at least 26 houses, including Saha's, and a temple of the Hindu community of Bangram village in Pabna on November 2, 2013.

The following day, Sub-Inspector Abdul Halim filed a case under 57 section of ICT Act 2006 with Atakula Police Station in this connection. Later, an investigation officer submitted a charge sheet against 10 people.

Ehsan and Islam gave confessional statements in the case while 15 witnesses

testified against them before the court.

The seven other accused were acquitted. The judgment, which is a first-of-its-kind, comes in the backdrop of recent incidents of communal violence in the country, said Ismat Ara, public prosecutor of the court.

Ehsan and Islam were present in the courtroom when the verdict was announced by tribunal judge Ziaur Rahman. Khokon is a fugitive.

The judge also fined the three Tk 1 lakh each; failure to pay the fine would lead to three more months in prison.

Singapore may see 2,000 Covid-19 deaths each year: minister

REUTERS, Singapore

Singapore could see as many 2,000 Covid-19 deaths annually over time, mainly among the elderly, but it was focused on avoiding excess mortality, a minister said yesterday, as the country battles its biggest surge in infections.

At 0.2% Singapore's Covid-19 case fatality rate is similar to the rate of deaths from pneumonia before the pandemic struck, said Janil Puthuchery, a senior minister of state in parliament.

It is also lower than other countries where cases surged before vaccination, he said.

"But it does mean that over time, the

absolute number of deaths from Covid-19 will rise despite the best possible medical care," he said. "We could have perhaps 2,000 deaths per year from Covid-19."

The minister did not specify for how many years that estimate might apply. Singapore had 4,000 deaths per year due to influenza and other respiratory diseases pre-pandemic, he said.

More than 80% of Singapore's 5.45 million population has been fully vaccinated and almost all its cases are asymptomatic or mild. About 95% of those who died in the last six months were older than 60 years and 72% of those who died were not fully vaccinated.

Yahya agreed to pullback

FROM PAGE 12

Kaimpur of Cumilla district. During this action, 2 enemy soldiers were killed and four injured.

Mukti Bahini today attacked occupation troops in Tunirhat of Dinajpur district and inflicted 10 casualties on the enemy.

In the Rangpur-Dinajpur-Rajshahi sector, Mukti Bahini today ambushed a mixed Pak patrol near Shyampur and killed two occupation soldiers and one irregular on November 2. The same day, freedom fighters ambushed another mixed Pak patrol near Akilpur and killed seven irregulars.

PAKISTANIS IN INDIA BEAT BANGALEE AIDES

West Pakistani employees of Pakistan's diplomatic mission in New Delhi beat Bangalee employees with sticks and iron bars today as they were trying to leave the mission and join the Bangladesh

independence movement.



Forty three Bangalee men, women and children got out. Some of the women and children were manhandled, the New York Times reported, but the men received the worst beatings. Several were treated at hospitals and discharged, but one badly beaten man was hospitalised.

Wali-ur Rahman, second secretary of the Pakistani embassy in Berne, announced today that he had resigned because of the events in East Pakistan and was seeking asylum in Switzerland.

PAKISTAN BANS TWO PRO-BANGLA BOOKS

The Pakistan government proscribed two pro-Bangladesh books -- "Bangladesh Ki Sachhi Kahani" and "The Truth". The books were published in Lahore recently.

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২। নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তাবলী মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের ক্ষেত্রে আবশ্যিকভাবে অনুসরণ করতে হবেঃ (১) করোনো পরিস্থিতিতে স্বাস্থ্য বিধি প্রতিপালনপূর্বক মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে হবে; (২) মৌখিক পরীক্ষার জন্য নতুন করে প্রবেশপত্র ইস্যু করা হবেনা। লিখিত পরীক্ষার জন্য অনলাইনে ইস্যুকৃত প্রবেশপত্রের মূলকপি মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় সাথে আনতে হবে; (৩) সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার সনদপত্র, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র/জন্মনিবন্ধন সনদ এ নাগরিকত্ব সনদ এর মূলকপি প্রদর্শন করতে হবে। প্রথম শ্রেণির পেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সভায়িত সকল সনদপত্রের এক সেট ফটোকপি এবং Online এ পূরণকৃত আবেদনপত্রের একটি প্রিন্ট কপি দাখিল করতে হবে; (৪) সরকারি/আধা-সরকারি/স্বায়ত্তশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানে কর্মরত প্রার্থীদেরকে নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত অনাপত্তি ছাড়পত্রের মূলকপি মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় জমা দিতে হবে; (৫) পরীক্ষার জন্য নির্ধারিত সময়ের ৩০ মিনিট পূর্বে উপস্থিত থাকতে হবে; (৬) পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য কোনো প্রকার টিএ/ডিএ প্রদান করা হবেনা।		
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