

Local youths on mission to protect environment

MINTU DESHWARA

A group of youths, all wearing blue t-shirts. Some of them were seen picking up empty packets of chips, while others were collecting polythene and empty water bottles.

Meanwhile, a cluster was seen sweeping the area. Another was collecting the trash and helping others pile them up.

Such was the scene when this correspondent visited Madhabkunda waterfall area in Moulvibazar's Barlekha. Upon further enquiry, it was known that a group of young volunteers took it upon themselves to keep the tourist spot and place of scenic beauty clean, by offering their manual labour.

Later, they also put up a waste bin on the spot. These youths are members of Barlekha Kathalatli Samaj Kalyan Parishad, a voluntary organisation.

Members of the organisation started cleaning the area spanning one kilometre in and around Madhabkunda tourist spot main gate on Tuesday. Public representatives and local traders joined them in their endeavour, which was appreciated by the locals.

The volunteers said tourists from different parts of the country visit Madhabkunda every year. They bring polythene, chips packets and water bottles with them and trash the area while leaving.

This not only damages the environment but also harms the scenic beauty. "We noticed this during a recent visit to the area," said Delwar Hossain Chowdhury, chair of Kathalatli Samaj Kalyan Parishad.

"That's when the idea of the campaign came to my mind, which I shared with the members of the organisation," he added.

In no time, the volunteers got down to their mission. Upazila Parishad Vice Chairman Taj Uddin, Dakshinbhag North UP Chairman Enam Uddin and local traders joined them in the campaign.



Youths working under voluntary organisation Barlekha Kathalatli Samaj Kalyan Parishad have been cleaning Madhabkunda waterfall area in Moulvibazar's Barlekha. Many were seen picking up water bottles, while others were piling up garbage to dispose them. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR



Country's farming system is mechanised now: minister

UNB, Dhaka

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Md Shahab Uddin yesterday said that Bangabandhu wanted to make our cultivation system modern and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is implementing Bangabandhu's plan.

"Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman went to China and Japan and saw mechanised farming there. After returning home, he asked to make our country self-sufficient in food... Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has materialised Bangabandhu's plan today," he said.

“ Farmers no longer cultivate with cows. They grow plants and ready the land in a mechanical way.

He made the remarks while speaking as the chief guest at a programme of agricultural machinery distribution among farmers at subsidised prices organised by the Department of Agricultural Extension Barlekha upazila of Moulvibazar district.

The environment minister said, "Farmers no longer cultivate with cows. They grow plants and ready the land in a mechanical way."

The government is distributing agricultural machinery to the farmers at subsidised prices to make the country self-sufficient in food, he added.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Sunjit Kumar Chanda presided over the function. Among others, Upazila Parishad Chairman Soyeab Ahmed, Upazila Agriculture Officer Monowar Hossain and Upazila Krishak League President Abdul Latif were present on the occasion.

Boy dies in Sylhet road accident

UNB, Sylhet

A teenage boy was killed and two others were injured in a road accident involving a truck and a motorbike in Sylhet's Jalalabad area yesterday, police said.

The deceased was identified as

Rajib, 14, son of Shamsul Hoque of Tukerbazar area under Jalalabad Police Station in the city. The injured are Faisal Ahmed, 25, and Muhibur Rahman, 35.

Md Khaled Mamun, inspector (investigation) of Jalalabad Police Station, said the accident occurred around noon when the speeding

truck rammed into the bike driven by Muhibur on Kumargaon road, leaving the trio critically injured.

They were rushed to Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital where physicians declared Rajib dead, he said, adding that the rest were being treated.

AL confident for victory, rivals worried

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never had a chance for vying in any polls," he said. "I am grateful to my leader Prime Minister and AL President Sheikh Hasina for giving me the party nomination."

AL sources said Noman has been given the reward for his dedication to the party.

Noman said he is confident for his victory. "All the leaders and activists of the party are united and have been working for me," he said. "I am going door to door and getting positive response..."

Noman's rival candidates are also confident for victory if, what they said, the by-election is held in a free

and fair manner.

"The polls must be held in a transparent way," said SM Farid Uddin, who is vying with electoral symbol "chair".

"Wherever I go for campaigning, I am getting a huge positive response from the voters," he said. "The voters are eagerly waiting for casting their votes and it is now the duty of EC to assure them of holding fair polls."

Echoing the same, Sehab Uddin Mohammad Abdus Samad, who is vying with electoral symbol "candle", said voters are enthusiastic for casting their votes but they are "afraid" whether they can do so.

"I expect the EC would create an

atmosphere in the area so that voters would be encouraged to come to polling centres," he said.

"We proposed to the EC for setting up CCTV in every polling booth, but the EC rejected it saying that it is very expensive and they did not have the budget for it," he said.

Contacted, Chattogram District Election Officer Jahangir Hossain said the polls will be held through electronic voting machine.

About installing CCTV, he said they did not get any such instruction from EC.

He said almost all preparations have been taken to hold the polls peacefully.

Helpful initiative falling apart

FROM PAGE 3

no product. She tried again but faced the same situation. "Every time I use these machines, they fail. I've lost the money every time as well, so I stopped using them," said the second-year student of English.

This correspondent polled 42 DU students, who expressed similar problems, including money waste, technical faults, excessive waiting times, and low-quality napkins.

Munira, a residential student at Ruqayyah Hall, said they had to rely on vending machines in the event of an emergency late at night because most stores remain closed at that time, but they run into unwanted problems because the machines barely work.

A few students from the same hall remarked that the facility varies in usefulness depending on the old and new buildings and dormitories; for example, the newly completed 7th

March building has a fully functional machine.

Besides, each machine is meant to have two towels and two trash cans. The students were assured that they would always receive

installation of a digital money-transfer system in case of emergencies.

Hasin Jahan, country director of WaterAid Bangladesh said, "Students spend a lot of time in

Each machine is meant to have two towels and two trash cans. The students were assured that they would always receive support from a female aide while purchasing a pad. Unfortunately, none of these services have been made available yet. Female students are demanding continuous supervision of the process to make it more efficient. They also recommend the installation of a digital money-transfer system in case of emergencies.

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member of the DU senate, suggested the need for campaigns to teach the students about the usage of the machines and speaking out when faced with problems.

"If a student complains about any malfunction, the service providers will give her an extra sanitary pad without any question," she claimed.

However, all is not bad. Each pad costs Tk 10 from the DU machines, which is less than what is charged at pharmacies. The machines are re-filled in time by ACI group every week.

Prof Tania Haque of women and gender studies said the initiative to install sanitary pads will advance the concept of healthy sanitation for women.

She urged the university authority to take central steps to install sanitary pad vending machines not only for students but also for female staff and faculty members.



Members of Rapid Action Battalion conducted special mobile courts to check fitness and licence of vehicles in various places, including Motijheel, Shajahanpur and Kamalapur in Dhaka, yesterday. This photo was taken in Motijheel.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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