

Stop hill cutting in Lohagora: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered the government to stop cutting hills and extracting soil at Lohagora in Chattogram within seven days.

In response to a petition, the court asked the government to take legal action against those involved in these illegal activities.

The HC also issued a rule in this regard.

The bench of Justice Md Khasruzzaman and Justice KM Zahid Sarwar issued the order and rule following the petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh.

Advocate Manzill Murshid appeared for the petitioner while Deputy Attorney General Bepul Bagmar represented the state.



The country's first village supermarket, set up in Tipna village under Khulna's Dumuria upazila in 2015, is now largely unused due to a myriad of factors- including syndicates of brokers, traders, and middlemen.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Country's first village super market lying idle

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

To establish a direct connection between farmers and traders, the country's first village supermarket (VSM) was set up in Tipna village under Khulna's Dumuria upazila in 2015. However, the market currently remains idle.

The Netherlands-based Solidaridad Network Asia took the initiative to set up the VSM on 2.1 acres of land beside Khulna-Satkhira highway. It was completed in September 2018 for Tk 10.18 crore. The market spans over 86,000 square feet, with 30 auction centres. It also has sorting and grading space, washing facilities, and guided packing house, among others.

Aiming to ensure a fair price through their direct participation and develop a modern value supply chain in rural areas, the VSM authority had planned to accommodate over 1,500 producers.

Visiting the market recently, this correspondent found the place largely empty. The 20 fish and 10 vegetable auction centres were lying vacant on the ground floor, while ice mills, freezers, fish processing centres and depots were inactive.

A few dairy farmers and their representatives were seen selling milk in the south-east corner. On the second floor, a project office of an NGO was seen open, while a bank office was seen closed.

While the market was well received by local traders initially, the enthusiasm surrounding this initiative decayed gradually in the next three years, said Tuhin Sheikh of Tipna village. Although the market has all the facilities, stakeholders seldom visit the place for myriad reasons, including syndicates of brokers, traders, and middlemen.

"I used to sell fish and was benefited as there was no middleman. Meanwhile, I got the advantage of digital weighing

machine," said Nishkriti Mondal, who had to close business after the fish trading centre was shut down.

There is a syndicate of middlemen who loan money to cultivators in times of distress in exchange for a promise only to sell their produce at markets under their control. As traders cannot take more than the amount promised due to digital weighing machines, they avoid this market, said Mohsin Sheikh, a member of Kharnia union parishad.

"The market has all the facilities, including CCTV cameras and banks, that prevent traders from getting unethical opportunities. That's why they have set up a few other markets nearby and don't come here," said Md Iqbal Hossain, manager of the market project.

"An NGO runs the VSM. They should communicate with all stakeholders to solve the problem," said GM Mohiuddin, senior agriculture marketing officer of Khulna.

BNP MEN'S DEATH IN JAIL Writ seeks HC probe order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition was filed with the High Court yesterday seeking its order to form a committee with local and international human rights organisations to probe deaths of 13 BNP leaders and activists allegedly inside jails in the last six months.

BNP's Legal Affairs Secretary Barrister Kayser Kamal submitted the petition as a public interest litigation to the HC, also requesting the court to direct the government to give compensation to the families of "13 BNP men who died inside the prisons".

DU teacher accused

FROM PAGE 3 complaint alleging sexual harassment and psychological abuse against Prof Junaid with the proctor's office.

The complainant submitted another written complaint to the vice chancellor yesterday.

Earlier, a group of students of the department's 12th batch submitted a written complaint to the VC against the teacher accusing him of giving them poor marks intentionally.

Contacted, Junaid demanded a thorough investigation into the allegations and claimed that he has been a victim of media trial before any investigation could take place.

"I want the allegations to be investigated, there should be a fair investigation, a detailed analysis...I want a thorough investigation," Junaid told The Daily Star last night.

"But before any investigation takes place, the way I was held guilty and my picture was published in media -- I condemn that. Because no one has heard my version yet," he added.

After the allegation of sexual harassment was raised against the teacher, students of different batches started raising voices against him and declared to boycott classes. Over 200 students took position in the department corridor since yesterday morning.

Around 1:30pm, students brought out a protest march from in front of the Faculty of Social Sciences building that ended in front of the VC office.

Earlier, Prof Abul Mansur Ahmed, chairman of the journalism department, along with some teachers went to the VC's office.

Later, a student delegation entered the VC office and spoke to him.

Contacted, Abul Mansur said he has spoken to the teachers as well as students in this regard. "I also held a meeting with the vice chancellor where the university proctor was present," he said.

Contacted, VC ASM Maksud Kamal said they will hold a meeting with the university administration in this regard today and take a decision.

Ban single-use

FROM PAGE 5 action in this regard," said the minister, proposing a ban on single-use plastics.

"If we can make it possible, it will be an example for the country," he added.

Earlier, while speaking on his notice, Ferdous demanded a ban on single-use plastic products.

"If the usage of one-time plastic products cannot be stopped, it will be a challenge to protect the capital's environment," he said.

Govt must

FROM PAGE 3 Moazzam Hoque Chowdhury, secretary general of Jatri Kalyan Samity, said they compile data on road crashes and deaths based on second data (media report) due to a lack of capacity.

"Only 30 to 35 percent of accidents got media coverage. Bangladesh Road Transport Authority often questioned the numbers presented by non-government organisations, terming those 'exaggerations of fact'," he said.

The authority does not feel the necessity to assess the real number of road crashes and deaths through primary sources, and thus they do not possess the real picture and cannot take the necessary steps, he added.

PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 12

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:30	12:45	4:15	5:52	7:15
JAMAAT 6:05	1:15	4:30	5:56	7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

No economic zone on agri land Five die in lorry-autorickshaw

FROM PAGE 3

"The way agricultural lands and water bodies are being filled up by land grabbers is alarming. In many cases, the administration's indifference and collusion are hindering the preservation of agricultural land, as evidenced by the illegal filling of agricultural land in six mouzas by Unique Properties Development Limited in the name of the 'Sonargaon Economic Zone'," the letter said.

The six mouzas of Pirojpur union in Sonargaon upazila of Narayanganj district are low lying lands included in the government's IRR1 scheme, reads the letter.

A private housing company named Unique Properties Development Limited undertook a housing project named "Sonargaon Resort City" in 2011 by filling up these agricultural lands, the letter said, adding that the company grabbed 2,350 bighas of land for the implementation of its project and commenced filling the soil, and locals were threatened and coerced into selling their land in some cases.

The local administration, Department of Environment, and Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority

have accused and fined the Managing Director of Unique Property Development Limited and the Managing Director of Sonargaon Economic Zone at different times for illegal landfilling, the letter stated.

The other signatories to the letter are the Association for Land Reform and Development's Executive Editor Shamsul Huda, Ain o Salish Kendra's Executive Director Faruq Faisal, Nagorik Uddyog's Chief Executive Zakir Hossain, BLAST's legal advisor SM Rezaul Karim, writer Pavel Partha, and Green Voice's Central Coordinator Alamgir Kabir.

FROM PAGE 3 reports from our correspondents. In Dhaka, two motorcyclists were killed after being hit by an oncoming lorry in Dhamrai upazila yesterday.

The accident took place on the Dhaka-Aricha highway at Bathuli in the upazila around 2:00pm, said police.

Md Ziaur Rahman, 40, and Janib Ali, 50, residents of Jaipura village in Dhamrai, died on the spot, said Gola Highway Police Station SI Shah Alam.

In Thakurgaon, a motorcyclist was killed as

a truck hit him from the opposite direction in Sadar upazila on Saturday night.

The accident occurred on Thakurgaon-Panchagarh highway at Telipara village, said police.

Saher Ali, 70, from Madarganj village in the upazila died on the spot, said Boda Highway Police Station Officer-in-Charge Shariful Islam. The truck driver fled from the scene soon after the accident.

In Chattogram, at least five persons were injured in a five-vehicle pileup inside Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Tunnel in

Patenga yesterday. Following the incident, the tunnel's panel board got damaged, said the authorities.

The tunnel Deputy Project Director Abul Kalam Azad said, "After the accident we seized the damaged vehicles..."

A car from Patenga point hit a microbus from behind, and minutes after two more cars and a microbus from the same direction crashed into each other, said Tanveer Rifa, an assistant engineer (toll and traffic), Bangabandhu tunnel.

The injured were taken to a local hospital.

19 institutions

FROM PAGE 3

"But we're also paying the holding tax. We deposited Tk 25 lakh three months ago. We paid Tk 9 lakh this month. From now on, we hope to pay Tk 9-10 lakh every month," he said.

Contacted, Ariful Haque, chief revenue officer of DSCC, said, "Government-run institutions are among our biggest defaulters. We have sent letters and also contacted them directly, but these institutions are not paying the holding tax."

"We will continue to send them letters and put pressure on them to pay the due amount," he added.

Security beefed up

FROM PAGE 5

power cables and transformers went missing.

The airport has three layers of security, comprising around 500 security officials, including Immigration Police, Armed Police Battalion, and Ansar members discharging duties round the clock.

A watch tower has been installed at a cost of Tk 1.5 lakh at the airport runway area near the Boat Club. Also, a special security patrol has been arranged to avoid further incidents of theft, said the sources.

"We have ensured several features now to tighten security at the airport. Our operational works were unaffected despite the thefts. The spots from where the transformers were stolen, were occupied by jungle and bushes. We cleared the area and installed a 24-hour watchtower for security personnel," said Group Captain Taslim Ahamed, director of the airport.

"We have also arranged for security patrols by Ansar men across the airport area, every three

hours," he added.

"The airport is a secured area and without any involvement of security person's, it was not possible to steal electrical items several times," said a police official of Patenga Police Station, wishing anonymity.

"During the regular collaboration meeting, we discussed the issues, but the airport security officials are indifferent in this regard. The stolen items cannot be used anywhere else except at the airport. Even the airport authorities don't want to file any complaint with the police station to cover up the incidents," he added.

However, Taslim said, "We have already informed the law enforcers so that they can help us find the criminals."

He reiterated zero-tolerance against any kind of irregularities.

OC Kabirul Islam of Patenga Police Station, said, "We are ready to help the airport authorities if they seek any assistance. They informed us about a theft a few days ago and we are investigating it."

Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of The Director
Chittagong Medical College Hospital
www.cmch.gov.bd

Memo No: CMCH/Re-Tender/2023-24/MSR& Non-MSR(Diet)/ 1680 Date: 11-02-2024.

Invitation for e-GP Tender (Re-Tender)

This is an online tender, where only e-tenders will accepted in e-GP portal and no offline/ hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, please register on e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd). For more details, please contact support desk contact numbers. e-Tender are invited in e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Brigadier General Md. Shamim Ahsan, Director, Chittagong Medical College Hospital, Chattogram for the Procurement of:

SL. No.	Tender Id	Name of Goods	Tender/ Proposal Last Selling Date & Time	Tender/ Proposal Closing & Opening Date & Time	Tender/ Proposal Opening Date & Time
1	948281	Procurement of Machine Readable Reagent-Systemx for the fiscal year 2023-24	25-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00
2	948282	Procurement of Machine Readable Reagent-Nihon Kodon, FUS-2000 & Others for the fiscal year 2023-24	25-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00
3	948274	Procurement of Machine Readable Reagent- Autobio 2000 Plus for the fiscal year 2023-24	25-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00
4	948283	Procurement of Machine Readable Reagent-Hematology 5-part Diff. PKL PPC for the fiscal year 2023-24	25-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00
5	948286	Procurement of Machine Readable Reagent-AUTO Hematology, BioC-8K, Biochem FC 20, Electrolyte Analyzer & Lumirayb- G30 for the fiscal year 2023-24	25-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00
6	948287	Procurement of Machine Readable Reagent-ERBA XL-200 & LF Reader Plus (Seickey), ATR-300 for the fiscal year 2023-24	25-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00
7	948280	Procurement of Machine Readable Reagent- Electrolyte Analyzer CBS-300 & zencen for the fiscal year 2023-24	25-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00
8	948288	Procurement of Machine Readable Reagent-Minicap for the fiscal year 2023-24	25-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00
9	948273	Procurement of Diet Goods (Dressed Fish etc) for the fiscal year 2023-24	25-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00	26-Feb-2024 14:00

For pursuer e-Tender details can be downloaded on e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd). e-tender will be accepted only as stated in above list, accepted tenders will be opened online as

(Brigadier General Md. Shamim Ahsan)
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কর্ণার বাণিজ্যিক প্লট বিক্রয়

বসুন্ধরা বারিধারায় পি-এক্সটেনশন ব্লকে ৬০ ফুট ও ২৫ ফুট রাস্তার কর্ণার ২০ কাঠার বাণিজ্যিক প্লট এবং আবাসিক প্লট বিক্রয় হইবে। প্লটগুলো রেজিস্ট্রেশন, মিউনিসিপাল ও বাউন্ডারী সম্পন্ন করা আছে। যোগাযোগ: ০১৯১২৪৪৬৮৭, ই-মেইল: realproperties0@gmail.com

Commercial Space for Rent

A 7,000 square feet floor on the 5th floor of Prashad Trade Center of Kemal Ataturk Avenue next to Banani Post Office will be rented for Corporate office, Bank, Commercial space from 1st May, 2024. Facilities: Lift, Electricity, Generator, Gas, Water & Car Parking. Contact: Plot# 06, Block # C, Kemal Ataturk Avenue, 5th Floor, Banani, Dhaka. 01712602772, 01713002966

actionaid Tender Notice

ActionAid Bangladesh invites sealed quotations from qualified vendor/supplier for purchase of Seed and Non-Seed materials at Rohingya Refugee Camp at Ukhiya and Teknaf. The details are as follows-

SL#	Name of Items	Quantity
1	Seed & Non-Seed Materials (Green Skills Development Project)	1 Job

The Tender Schedule will be available for collect at ActionAid Cox's Bazar Office (House No-752, Ward- 11, Jhawtola, Masjid Road, Cox's Bazar- 4700) from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm during office hour of 12-17 February 2024 (Working Day). Alternatively, interested suppliers/vendors can obtain the schedule from the following website.

Website
Seed & Non-Seed Materials (Green Skills Development Project) https://actionaidbd.org/tender-notice

Quotation needs to be submitted in sealed envelope on or before 18th February 2024 by 11:00 AM at above locations. The authority of ActionAid Bangladesh reserves the right to accept or reject any or all quotations without assigning any reason whatsoever.