



The Bangabhasha Lekhok Jadughar in Uttar Baravita, Kurigram, displays biographies and memorabilia of over 200 late poets and writers, alongside rare books and publications. Established by teacher and lyricist Touhid-ul Islam, the museum celebrates Bangla literature and culture, inspiring young generations to connect with their heritage. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

'BANGABHASHA LEKHOK JADUGHAR'

A teacher's mission to protect literary heritage

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

In the quiet village of Uttar Baravita in Kurigram's Phulbari upazila, a unique tribute to Bangla literature stands as a testament to one man's dedication.

Built on 10 decimals of land, the "Bangabhasha Lekhok Jadughar," a museum preserving Bangla language and literature, showcases a treasure trove of rare books, biographies, and letters from celebrated writers and poets.

Opened in December 2023, this museum is only the second "Writer's Museum" in Bangladesh, following the Bangla Academy's Bardhaman House established in 2011.

Touhid-ul Islam, a 57-year-old teacher at Lalmonirhat Government Girls' High School and an accomplished lyricist, built this museum from a deep sense of responsibility to his culture.

Known for his Bhawaiya and modern song compositions aired on Bangladesh Betar and BTV, Touhid's devotion to Bangla heritage shines in his life's work.

With five galleries, the museum displays photographs and biographies of over 200

late poets and writers, alongside defunct Bangla newspapers and magazines that highlight the region's rich literary history.

Touhid said he began the project with Tk 2 lakh from the "IPDC-Prothom Alo Best Teacher Award" he received in 2022, supplementing the funds with his own earnings.



He also established a library on two decimals of land, boasting 6,000 books, and the Syed Shamsul Haque Cultural Club in 2021.

"I had to sell some of my land to support my vision, leaving me with just two bighas of farmland," he said.

His wife Begum Amina Sultana said, "Initially, we found his efforts unusual, but seeing the response and admiration he got from people, we now admire his commitment."

Their son Anupam Saikat Apu, a Dhaka University student, and college-goer daughter Nilanjana Saikat Nila echoed her.

giving chocolates to children who came to borrow books.

Students, teachers, and curious visitors from across the region come to explore the museum's collections and learn about the lives of poets and writers who helped shape Bangla literature.

"This museum has immense historical value," said local journalist Mahfuzar Rahman, noting that it offers people in the village a unique opportunity to connect with their heritage.

Touhid said, "I hope to preserve these collections in a more secure, concrete structure, as the current tin-shed building leaves the artefacts vulnerable."

"I do hope the government will support me to safeguard this cultural repository, but, if needed, I'm prepared to continue investing my own savings, including my retirement funds, to maintain the museum."

"My collection is inspiring this generation to thirst for knowledge," Touhid says, "and I believe it will guide future generations in understanding our historical heritage. The museum, library, and cultural club are my contributions to nation-building, and in that, I find my ultimate peace."

They said their father's work will remain as a contribution that will live on beyond their lifetime.

During a recent visit, this correspondent saw that locals of various age groups visit the library. He also saw Touhid encouraging young readers by

ROAD ACCIDENT

20-year-old student dies from injuries

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A female college student, who had sustained critical injuries in a road accident in Jashore, died yesterday morning while undergoing treatment in a private hospital in Dhaka.

The deceased, Sumaiya Akhter Rimi, 20, was a resident of Makmatala Khanpur village under Manirampur upazila, and a first-year student of the Social Sciences department at Manirampur Government College.

Rimi was critically injured in an accident on November 17 when a truck hit a motorcycle coming from the opposite direction on Rajarhat Chuknagar regional highway.

One person also died in the incident.

Rimi was initially admitted to Jashore General Hospital, and later taken to the National Institute of Neurosciences and Hospital in Dhaka. However, due to unavailability of ICU bed, she was shifted to a private hospital in the capital, where she passed away at 9:30am yesterday, said Rakib Uddin, a doctor of the hospital.

Abdur Razzak, officer-in-charge of Jashore Kowali Police Station, confirmed the matter.

decision to cancel the event drew the attention of the government high-ups.

"After the news was published in The Daily Star and different other media outlets, the matter came to the attention of the government. The Chief Adviser's Office contacted us and assured full cooperation in celebrating the festival," he added.

On November 19, The Daily Star ran a report titled "Financial hardship forces Khasis to scrap key festival".

The report, quoting a Khasi community leader, said the people of the community couldn't raise enough funds to organise the programme due to economic challenges.

The programme typically costs

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Khasi people now will hold 'Seng Kut Snem'

The community says the festival back on track thanks to govt support



MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Days after deciding to scrap a key festival over financial hardships, the indigenous Khasi community in the greater Sylhet region yesterday said they will be celebrating their New Year celebration as usual, thanks to the government's promise of full support.

Philah Pothimi, general secretary of the Khasi Social Council, said "Seng Kut Snem", a festival to welcome the New Year as per their calendar, will be held on November 23 with day-long festivities like the previous years.

Now the event will be organised in collaboration with the Chief Adviser's Office, he said, adding the news reports, including that of The Daily Star, on the



Child drowns in pond in Jashore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A 19-month-old child drowned in a pond in Abhaynagar upazila of Jashore yesterday morning.

The deceased, Tabassum, was the daughter of Taher Sheikh of Abhaynagar village, said police.

According to family sources, Tabassum's mother, Riba Akhtar, had left her in her father's care while she went to a neighbouring house.

While playing near the house, the child fell into a nearby pond as her father lost sight of her.

Upon returning home, Riba began searching for her daughter and later found Tabassum's body near the bank of the pond.

Emadul Karim, officer-in-charge of Abhaynagar Police Station, said police have recovered the body and filed an accidental death case in connection with the incident.

RAILWAY SECTOR AL govt misused public money

Says Adviser Fouzul Kabir

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

The AL government misused public money in the name of developing the railway sector in the country during its 15-year rule, said Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan, adviser to the Ministry of Railways of the interim government.

The adviser made these comments while he was visiting the Central Locomotive Workshop (Keloka) in Parbatipur upazila of Dinaipur yesterday.

After arriving at Saidpur Airport, the adviser went to Keloka at around 11:00am by road.

Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan criticised the previous AL government for the billions of taka that was squandered without focusing on improving passenger services or facilities.

"The previous government expanded the network everywhere without any proper studies, but the quality of services and passenger benefits were largely ignored," he said.

He accused the past AL government of building extravagant railway stations in places like Gopalganj, allegedly to appease the then ministers and MPs, even where such infrastructure was not needed.

Additionally, he cited the Karnaphuli Tunnel, constructed at a cost of Tk 10,000 crore, as an example of ineffective planning, claiming that it currently sees little to no vehicular use.

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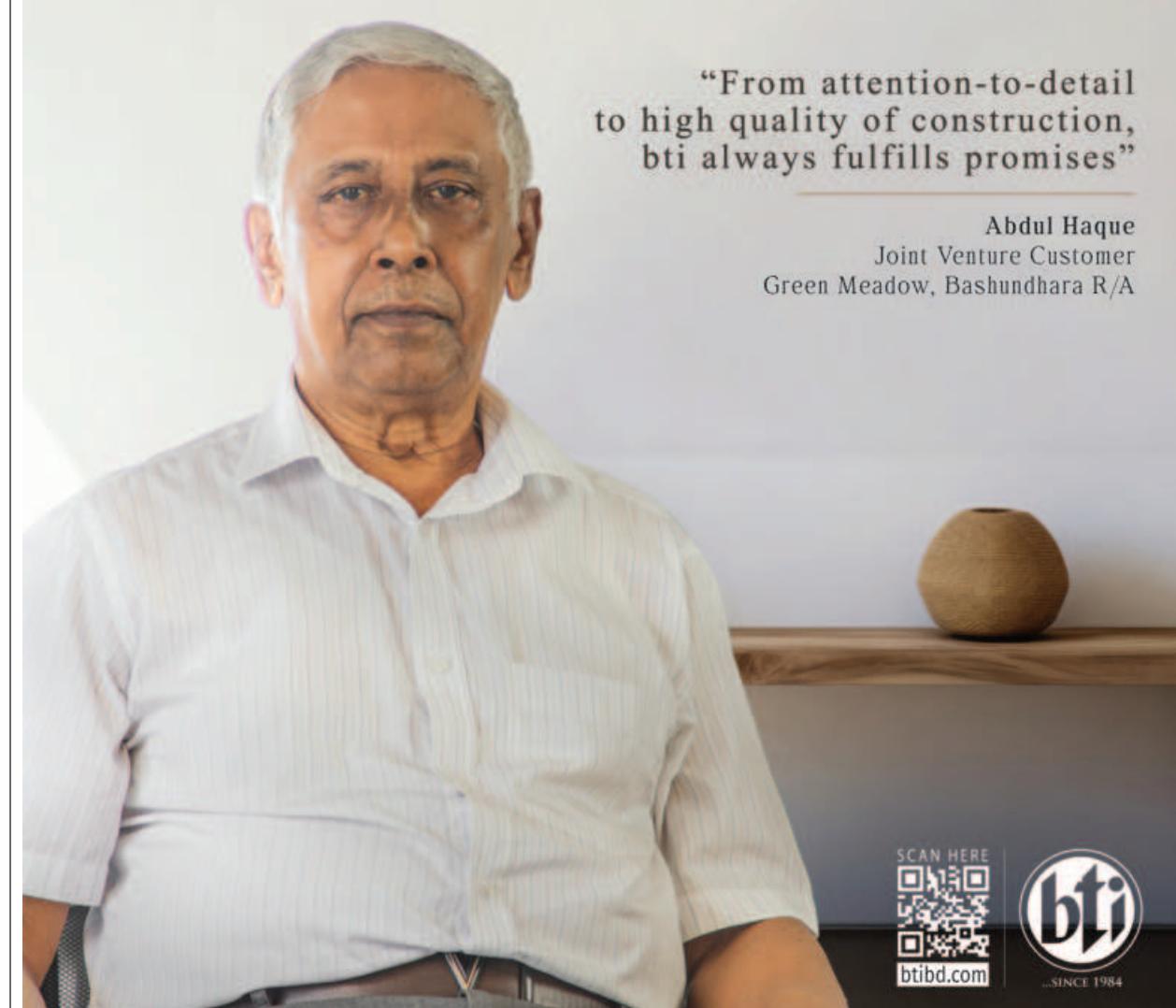


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