

Gachhis gear up for date palm sap season

MOHSIN MILON, Benapole

Although winter has yet to begin, date palm sap collectors in Jashore have already started preparing their trees ahead of the season. As a light chill sets in during mornings and evenings, locals say it signals the arrival of winter.

In anticipation, the sap collectors – locally known as “gachhis” – are busy cleaning and trimming date palm trees. Their activity has brought a visible sense of urgency to the villages. As temperatures drop, the sweetness of the sap increases, bringing the promise of fresh date palm juice and the much-loved patali gur (molasses) at the beginning of winter.

For generations, Bangladeshi homemakers have used date palm juice and molasses to prepare traditional delicacies like pitha and payesh. The juice is not only consumed fresh but also boiled down to produce various types of molasses, including nolen gur and patali gur.



Ibrahim Laskar, from the Khajura area of Jashore, has been earning his livelihood by selling date palm juice and molasses for around 25 years. Passed down through generations, this age-old craft remains his family’s main source of income.

“With fewer trees and rising prices of daily essentials, it’s hard to support my family of five,” said Ibrahim. “We have to buy firewood to make molasses, which increases costs. If we had access to modern technology, things would be easier.”

Another sap collector, Mizanur, said, “After collecting the sap, our wives boil it down to make molasses – a very labour-intensive process. But the profits are too small. A knife now costs Tk 600, while a pot that once sold for Tk 30–40 now sells for Tk 50–60. If the price of molasses doesn’t increase, we’ll face big losses this year.”

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), there are about 1.64 million date palm trees in Jashore, of which 3,49,000 are tapped for sap extraction. Each season, these trees yield approximately 52.4 million litres of sap, producing around 52,500 tonnes of molasses worth over Tk 100 crore. Currently, around 13,200 sap collectors are active across eight upazilas in the district.

Contacted, Shamimur Rahman, sub-assistant agriculture officer of Jashore Sadar, said under a government project, they have distributed sap collection pots and knives among the collectors.

“If we can provide them with modern stoves, climbing equipment, and training on improved techniques, this heritage can be further enriched.”



PHOTO: STAR

Erosion leaves over 200 families homeless

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

As floodwaters recede in the northern districts of Rangpur, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, and Nilphamari, erosion has intensified along the banks of the Teesta, Dharla, Brahmaputra, and Dudhkumar rivers, with at least 60 points now severely affected.

Farmlands, homesteads, orchards, and other structures are being devoured by the rivers, leaving many riverside families homeless. Fearing further collapse, some residents have dismantled their homes and moved to safer places.

According to sources at the district administration and the District Relief and Rehabilitation Office, river erosion along 60 points of the Teesta, Dharla, Dudhkumar, and Brahmaputra rivers between October 7 and 11 has rendered 230 families homeless.

Of them, 160 families lost their homes in Kurigram, 40 in Lalmonirhat, 20 in Rangpur, and 10 in Nilphamari. Farmlands and homesteads in these areas have been swallowed by the rivers.

Erosion has worsened in Kurigram’s Sadar, Nageshwari,

Rajarhat, and Ulipur upazilas; Lalmonirhat’s Sadar, Aditmari, and Hatibandha upazilas; Rangpur’s Gangachara and Kaunia upazilas; and Nilphamari’s Dimla upazila.

Meher Jamal, a resident of Baniapara village in Kurigram Sadar, said, “Over the past few years,

Engineer Rakibul Hasan said, “After the floods, several spots have started eroding. Controlling the erosion at Jatrapur requires a large quantity of geo-bags, but there are fund shortages.”

“We are dumping sand-filled geo-bags at some vulnerable points



I lost seven bighas of land to the river. I was living on just ten decimals of homestead land – and that too went into the river on Wednesday morning. I somehow managed to move my belongings to safety.”

Villagers, Mohosena Begum and Mominul Islam echoed him.

Kurigram WDB Executive

and have sent a letter to higher authorities requesting urgent allocation,” he said.

Kurigram Deputy Commissioner Sifat Mehnaz said, “The affected families are being given the government’s emergency relief assistance, and they will be rehabilitated.”

Put women, youth at centre of climate action

FROM PAGE 3

communities themselves,” she added.

Dilruba Haider, programme specialist at UN Women, said Bangladesh needs to strengthen coordination and data-driven action to make climate policies effective. “Progress has been slow, but we cannot afford to stop,” she said.

“The involvement of 25 ministries in climate work is not fragmentation – it’s progress, because climate change, gender, and disaster risk reduction are crosscutting issues that demand an all-of-government and all-of-society approach. What we need is stronger coordination to prevent duplication and ensure impact.”

“Equally vital is collecting disaggregated data to set clear targets. But without shifting deep-rooted social norms towards gender equality, no policy can bring lasting change,” she said.

Dr Tania Haque, professor of Dhaka University’s Women and Gender Studies department, said, “To bring a real change, we must bridge knowledge gaps between weather and climate and address the intersectional failures in research and policy.”

“Heat stress affects women differently based on class, occupation, or physical condition. These inequalities reduce productivity and harm national growth. We must shift from a victim-

oriented to a rights-based approach, value indigenous knowledge, ensure inclusive data systems, and engage youth as active participants, not passive recipients,” she said.

Sohanur Rahman, executive coordinator of YouthNet Global, said, “I come from the grassroots – my activism began a decade ago in Barishal. We’ve long spoken of meaningful participation and equality, yet real gender mainstreaming still lags. Women, youth, and people with disabilities remain excluded from adaptation and mitigation decisions.”

“Diversity in gender and identity must be represented, not just discussed. We

need to move from gender-sensitive to gender-transformative approaches that include men and farmers too. Most importantly, Bangladesh still lacks a youth ministry or budget for climate action. Without structural reform, youth remain sidelined. It’s time to ensure real inclusion, resources, and leadership for women and young people in climate policy.”

AKM Sohail, additional secretary and chief of the UN Wing at the Economic Relations Division, said no government can achieve true climate resilience without inclusive and coordinated action.

“Bangladesh has made remarkable progress – developing policies, identifying 113 intersections, and outlining more than 7,000 activities under its climate framework,” he said.

“However, the lack of clear budgeting continues to create major funding gaps, hindering engagement with global partners. We must build stronger financial systems, ensure credible data, and embed gender- and youth-focused mechanisms in all climate financing,” he added.

Nafisa Chowdhury, resilient infrastructure specialist at C3ER, delivered the keynote presentation.

Among others, Farah Anzum, country lead of the Global Strategic Communications Council (GSCC); M Zakir Hossain Khan, chief executive of Change Initiatives; Banasree Niojee Mitra, programme director of Manusher Jonno Foundation; Kamal Ahmed, consultant editor of The Daily Star; and other climate and gender activists also attended the event.

Dhrubo wants

FROM PAGE 3

and put students’ academic careers and even lives at risk. There’s a fear that such incidents could happen again, which is why we are determined to resist it.”

He stressed the need for a long-term framework to build a safe campus. “I want to introduce a ‘Campus Charter’ involving all stakeholders – students, teachers, and staff. Whenever the administration fails or acts irresponsibly, this charter will function as a guiding law for everyone.”

Dhrubo said, “Our plan is clear and multi-dimensional. We will include the Cucus elections in CU’s academic calendar, ensure that elected representatives can participate in the Senate, and prepare a roadmap to address issues of food, accommodation, and transportation.”

“Since 2019, I have been actively involved in movements and struggles at CU. During the July movement, I played the role of a co-coordinator, and afterwards I continued the fight by standing with the people, free from greed or temptation. I think my organisational ability to coordinate work at the grassroots level makes me capable of representing the students,” he said.

Dhrubo also called for printing ballot papers in Braille for visually impaired students.

Srabon vows a women-friendly

FROM PAGE 3

cottages or buildings to accommodate students. For the long term, we can utilise abandoned buildings and unused land on campus to create housing facilities. I will initiate steps toward that,” she added.

Improving the transport system would also be one of her priorities, alongside solving other basic issues such as medical services, medicine supply, and food quality.

“There is no separate day-care centre for female

students with children. The one that exists for teachers is also used by students, but it is not very effective. As a result, many female students with children struggle to continue their studies. Their rights must be ensured – so I plan to set up day-care centres in every faculty,” she said.

She also pledged to ensure prayer spaces, sanitation and menstrual hygiene facilities, access to medical services, and strengthened campus security for female students.

“We will form an effective anti-sexual harassment cell and ensure a safe, supportive campus environment for women,” she said.

“We kept our manifesto realistic – all promises are achievable,” she said.

Regarding the election, she called for uninterrupted vote counting with live broadcast to ensure transparency.

“I believe the students will choose the most deserving candidate through a free, fair election,” she added.

ভিকারুননিসা নূন স্কুল এন্ড কলেজ

১/এ, নিউ বেইলী রোড, ঢাকা-১০০০

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ভিকারুননিসা নূন স্কুল এবং কলেজের বিভিন্ন কম্পিউটার ল্যাব, এবং অফিসের জন্য ৫০টি কম্পিউটার ও ৩০টি ইউপিএস সরবরাহ কাজের জন্য সীল মোহরকৃত বামে অর্থাৎ ওয়ান সেটজ টু এনডেলোপ পদ্ধতিতে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

১	দরপত্রের স্মারক নং	ভি.এন.এস/ ২০২৫ / ১৮৫
২	কাজের বিবরণ	স্কুল এন্ড কলেজের জন্য ৫০(পঞ্চাশ)টি ডেস্কটপ কম্পিউটার ও ৩০টি UPS সরবরাহ কাজ
৩	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়কারীর নাম ও ঠিকানা	অধ্যক্ষ, ভারপ্রাপ্ত ভিকারুননিসা নূন স্কুল এন্ড কলেজ ১/এ, নিউ বেইলী রোড, ঢাকা-১০০০
৪	দরপত্র জমা দেওয়ার এবং খোলার স্থান	ভিকারুননিসা নূন স্কুল এন্ড কলেজ ১/এ, নিউ বেইলী রোড, ঢাকা-১০০০
৫	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের তারিখ ও সময়	১৪/১০/২০২৫খ্রি. মঙ্গলবার হতে। অফিস চলাকালীন সময়।
৬	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৮/১০/২০২৫খ্রি., মঙ্গলবার বিকাল ৪-০০ টা পর্যন্ত।
৭	দরপত্র জমা দেয়ার শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৯/১০/২০২৫খ্রি. বুধবার বেলা ১২-০০ টা পর্যন্ত।
৮	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	২৯/১০/২০২৫খ্রি., বুধবার বেলা ১২-৩০ টা।
৯	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য প্রতিটি	১,০০০/- টাকা (অফেরত যোগ্য)
১০	দরপত্র জামানত (অর্নেট মানি)	উদ্ধৃত টেন্ডার মূল্যের ৩% (ফেরত যোগ্য)

দরপত্রের বিস্তারিত বিবরণ সিডিউলে পাওয়া যাবে। সিডিউল ক্রয়ের জন্য দরদাতাকে দরদাতার নিজস্ব প্যাডে অধ্যক্ষ(ভারপ্রাপ্ত), ভিকারুননিসা নূন স্কুল এন্ড কলেজ বরাবর লিখিত আবেদন করতে হবে। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন প্রকার কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করেন।

অধ্যক্ষ, ভারপ্রাপ্ত
ভিকারুননিসা নূন স্কুল এন্ড কলেজ

PRAYER TIMING

OCTOBER 13

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-45	12-45	4-15	5-45	7-15
JAMAAT 5-20	1-15	4-30	5-50	7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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