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Scouts Pledge to Save Forests

A hike through national forests spurs a student group to conserve protected areas



Photo: Nishorgo

“I have never seen nature so closely,” said Shima in Lawachara National Park. “I am amazed to see all of the wildlife. Now, I will tell my friends the need to conserve protected areas.”

Shima is a tenth grade student living in the northeastern division of Sylhet, Bangladesh. She is also a member of the Scouts, who, like their American counterparts, are actively involved in outdoor activities and learning to appreciate their natural surroundings.

Shima participated in a USAID-sponsored hiking program in which the Bangladesh Scouts trekked to three national parks in as many days to experience the natural beauty of the forest and learn about the importance of conservation. The Scouts also encountered landless men and women chopping down bamboo trees and discovered that these people had paid the local forest department staff to cut within the park. It became apparent that this happened on a regular basis.

While officially considered protected areas, national forests in Bangladesh are commonly encroached upon by local citizens and are havens for illegal logging activities.

After completing the hike, Shima and the Scouts pledged to spread the importance of natural resources and protected areas. By creating awareness, Shima hopes she can generate support among the general public and government officials to conserve Bangladesh's precious forests for other citizens to appreciate.

Telling Our Story

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