

Rangpur citizens observe 4-hour hunger strike

Formation of division, establishment of university, gas supply through pipeline demanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Rangpur Unnayan Parishad, a citizens' committee, yesterday observed a four-hour hunger strike programme at Rangpur Press Club demanding realisation of four-point charter of demand.

People of all walks of life irrespective of political affiliations took part in the hunger strike.

The demands included formation of a division comprising eight north-

ern districts, gas supply in greater Rangpur region through pipeline and establishment of an education board and a university in Rangpur.

A meeting was also held there. Mostafizur Rahman Mostafa presided the meeting.

Speakers blamed the government for neglecting the demands of the people of Rangpur region since liberation of the country.

Rangpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) president

Mostafa Azad Choudhury said medium and heavy industries can not be set at Uttara EPZ in Sayedpur due to lack of gas supply through pipeline.

He said although the RCCI urged the government several times to supply gas through pipe-line but the demand was ignored time and again.

Among others, Dr Ekramul Hoque Spwan, Mochaddeque

Hossen Bablu, Abdur Rouf Manik, Rashid Babu, Moyazzem Hossen, Shahadat Hossain, Advocate Hosneara Lufia, Farhad Hosen Ripon, Hasanul Hoque Nannu, Mozaffar Hossain Chad and Abul Kalam Choudhury addressed the meeting.

On conclusion of the hunger strike, Anisul Hoque Pearsa and Mosaddeque Hossain served juice to the strikers.

School girl 'tortured' by teacher in Nilphamari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

A student of Nilphamari Government Girls' High School has been hospitalised following torture by a teacher.

Asaria Jahan Mollika, a student of Class X (Section-B) was assaulted by the concerned Bangla grammar teacher on a lame excuse of being indifferent to study on Monday. She fell from grace of the teacher for failure to become his 'private' student. She was fainted after the torture although she urged the teacher to spare her as she was sick on the day.

Instead of shifting her to hospital, the teacher's close associates took her to the teachers' common room where her condition deteriorated. Being informed, Mollika's mother Tahsin Ara Tani, a Family Planning health visitor, rushed there and took her to the hospital in a critical condition.

She told this correspondent her daughter was fainted due to inhuman torture of the teacher.

When contacted, the school headmaster, Khalilur Rahman admitted the fact saying a teachers' meeting was convened to discuss the issue on Wednesday.

The State Minister for Education, ANM Ehsanul Haq Milon transferred four teachers elsewhere on charge of audacity two years ago. But they returned to the school after 11 months only.

Guardians alleged that the students have become hostage to the teachers.

Jamaat lawmaker 'misuses power'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

A Jamaat lawmaker in Jaldhaka has become president of a college governing committee by misusing his power, alleged founding president of the college.

Raquiubul Alam Choudhury, founding president of Jaldhaka Rabeya Choudhury Women's College, at a press conference held here on Monday said Jamaat lawmaker Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, elected from Nilphamari-3 constituency (Jaldhaka and part of Kishoreganj), became its governing body president misusing his power. He also alleged that the lawmaker had earned a lot of money by doing 'appointment trade'.

Victim of police torture seeks justice from PM

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A woman victim of police torture at a press conference held at Satkhira Press Club yesterday sought justice from the Prime Minister.

Durgapur Family Welfare Centre supervisor Rashida Khatun, also an inhabitant of Burakharati village in Assassuni upazila, sought justice while narrating her experience of inhuman torture inflicted on her by police recently.

In the press conference, she alleged that a PSI named Sonia tortured her recently at the office of Satkhira superintendent of police (SP) when she went there to know the fate of an application she had sent to the inspector general (IG) of police earlier. She also alleged that she had been denied right to treatment at the Sadar hospital.

She brought an allegation against the police officials saying they are threatening her to withdraw the case she filed accusing PSI Sonia with a Satkhira court. She informed that after a hearing, the court sent the case to magistrate Abu Jafar for a judicial inquiry.

Meanwhile, Asian Human Rights Commission in a statement condemned police repression and demanded a neutral investigation into the incident.

LACK OF MODERN THEATRE HALL Cultural activities decrease in Bogra

HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU, Bogra

Cultural activists here under the aegis of 'Amra Kajon Shilpi Goshthi' have been agitating for long for construction of a modern theatre hall in the district town.

They are also demanding repair of the age-old theatre hall, Titu Milonyaton (auditorium).

Once the auditorium, having a capacity to accommodate 1,000 audience, was the hub of cultural activities in the town. At least 16 cultural organisations used to stage drama or cultural activities here regularly six years ago. But now many of them have stopped their activities due to bad shape of the auditorium. Although they are paying rent regularly as lessee, but they are being deprived of required amenities.

At present, there is no water supply or toilet facility in the auditorium, said cultural activists. As there is no boundary wall around the auditorium, the cultural activists feels unsafe to perform in such an insecure atmosphere.

Moreover, the auditorium is now unable to meet the growing demand of audience.

It has been learnt from the Bogra Pourashabha Engineering Department that at least Tk 70 lakh is needed to repair and renovate the hall.

Earlier, the activists of local cultural organisations including Shammilito Sangskitik Jote formed

human chains and held meetings on several occasions demanding reconstruction of the hall and ensuring healthy cultural atmosphere in the town for the last two years.

Their demands included improvement of stage facilities in the town, repair of Titu auditorium and reduction in rent of the Bogra Zila School Auditorium. At present, the rent of Bogra Zila School Auditorium has been fixed at Tk 6,000 for one-day performance although it has no air conditioning system.

Roktিকা Khelaghar Ashsor president Amzad Hossain Mintu said they will be compelled to stop cultural activities if the rent of the Zila School Auditorium is not revised reasonably.

Ziaul Haque Babla, a prominent cultural organiser, said the cultural activities have decreased to a great extent due to lack of modern theater hall.

Meanwhile, the Bogra Pourashabha authorities issued an order to stop all types of cultural activities at Shahid Khakon Park a few months ago although it was open for all for staging cultural programmes and public meetings during last 35 years.

The open stage in Edward Park is not suitable for staging drama and cultural activities following bomb threats of banned organisations, drama performers and sources in local administration said.



PHOTO: STAR

Age-old Titu Auditorium was once the centre of cultural activities in Bogra town. Because of its present precarious condition all kinds of cultural activities were stopped for the last six years. Local cultural activists have been agitating for its reconstruction for the last two years.



PHOTO: STAR

A traffic jam caused immense sufferings to citizens yesterday in Bandar Bazaar, Sylhet. Traffic congestion is a regular feature in the city. In recent time, it has become more acute following creation of unauthorised stands at various strategic points of the city.

RISKY BRIDGES

Road journey becomes hazardous in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Journey by road has become risky in 11 upazilas of the district due to broken bridges in different roads.

Terrible accidents may occur any time on the bridges but the authorities concerned are less concerned to improve the situation. Panic gripped the passengers travelling by bus or different kinds of vehicles along the vulnerable bridges on different routes.

Sources in the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) here said seven bridges in different roads of the district are totally unfit for travelling while 73 other bridges are badly damaged.

The unfit bridges are Poulee Bridge on the Tangail-Madhupur Road, Kagmary Bridge on the Tangail-Aricha Road, Pakulla Bridge on the Dhaka-Tangail Highway, Fultala Bridge and Narandia Bridge, Singuria Bridge on the Tangail-

Bhuapur Road, and Nakasim Bridge on the Tangail-Basail Road.

The badly damaged bridges are Putijani Bridge bridges on the Tangail-Delduar Road, Silimpur Bridge on the Tangail-Aricha Road, Nallapara Bridge on the Tangail-Elasin Road and Tebaria Bridge on the Salmabad-Chouhalee Road.

The RHD sources said most of the risky and badly damaged bridges were constructed after the independence of the country.

Condition of the bridges have become pitiable as the authorities concerned have not taken steps to repair the bridges so far, they said.

Meanwhile, after inauguration of the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge, a large number of vehicles ply through the district. Besides, many buses on board a large number of passengers ply to Dhaka from the northern districts over the risky and damaged bridges.

Abul Hossain, a bus driver, said to this correspondent on Sunday he feels it insecure while driving bus along with a large number of passengers over the vulnerable bridges.

The authorities concerned should reconstruct the bridges immediately, otherwise, terrible accident may occur any time on the bridges, he said.

When contacted, the RHD officials admitted the fact saying, the department has been planning to reconstruct the vulnerable bridges in near future, they added.

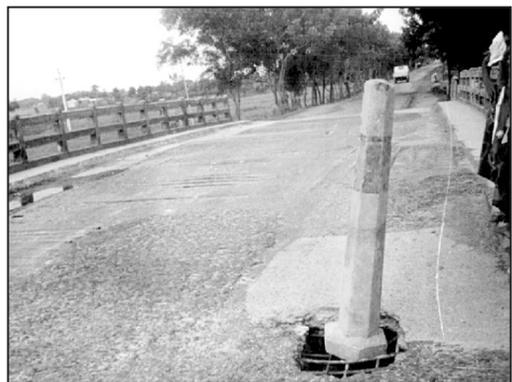


PHOTO: STAR

Pitiable condition of Naksim Bridge on the Tangail-Basail Road in Tangail. The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) declared the road unfit a decade ago, but no step was taken to reconstruct it till now.

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