

Tk 88cr flood control dam constructed in Sirajganj

A long cherished demand of 18 lakh people of four upazilas fulfilled

GOLAM MOSTAFA JIBON,
Sirajganj

A long cherished demand of 18 lakh people of four upazilas was fulfilled following completion of a 300-metre long road cum flood control embankment on the western bank of the Fulzor, a tributary

of the Jamuna in Raiganj upazila recently.

Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) built it at a cost of Tk 88 crore funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The embankment stretching from Nalka to Bokultola estab-

lished direct road communication in four upazilas of Sirajganj Sadar, Kamarkhand, Ullapara and Raiganj.

People of the aforesaid upazilas had been demanding for its construction to protect arable lands and various establishments from the onslaught of river ero-

sion.

They had been suffering from the onslaught of river erosion for the last 35 years. Road communication in the upazila headquarters could not be established for long due to absence of a road.

However, responding to the demand of people, the government undertook the project and built the embankment.

On completion of the project, LGED additional chief engineer Akanda Habibul Alam visited the site and expressed his satisfaction.

Sirajganj LGED executive engineer Q M Khurshid Hasan accompanied him during the visit.

Earlier, ADB country director Hua Du and LGRD secretary S M Zahurul Islam visited the construction site.

It is expected that the aforementioned four upazilas would be developed in various fields in near future and fortune would favour lakhs of people in the areas due to the embankment cum road.



PHOTO: STAR

LGED additional chief engineer Akanda Habibul Alam visiting the newly built road cum flood control embankment on the western bank of the Fulzor, a tributary of the Jamuna in Raiganj upazila in Sirajganj yesterday.

Internet service launched at Kutubdia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Internet service would be provided to students and rural youths in the remote island of Kutubdia following opening of Grameen Gayn Kendra, a home of knowledge.

With the opening of the coastal knowledge home at Kutubdia Model High School on Tuesday, Coast Trust has opened the door of knowledge to the new generation in the remote island.

Coast Trust executive director (ED) Rezaul Chowdhury inaugurated the home.

The home will provide an opportunity to students and rural youths to operate Laptop and computer in the island where electricity is yet to reach.

Internet service will be provided by generating electricity through proper utilisation of solar energy.

With the introduction of Internet service, rural youths and students will come under the fold of information technology and move forward along with the urban youths.

Presided over by Prof Delwar Hossain, the function was addressed by Kutubdia Model High School Headmaster Nasir Uddin Kutubi, Unicef project officer Syedul Huq Milky, The Daily Star journalist Muazzem Hossain Shakil, A F M Nurul Alam and others.

Record number of tourists flock to Rangamati

SHANTIMOY CHAKM, Rangamati

A record number of tourists have thronged here to enjoy the beauty of the hill town during the Eid holidays.

Tourists from Dhaka, Chittagong and other parts of the country started flocking here since the first day of the week-long Eid vacation.

At least 12,000 tourists arrived here everyday during the last couple of days, sources in Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) said. They booked different residential hotels, motels and guest houses resulting in brisk business by their owners.

During a visit to two private tourist spots, Peda-Ting-Ting and Tuk-Tuk-Eco-Village this correspondent found a large number of visitors and tourists roaming there.

On contact, BPC manager Sunirmol Talukder said to this correspondent that all of their motels having a capacity of 62 people each are booked by tourists.

'I have never seen such onrush of tourists in my lifetime,' he said, adding we have earned a lot of money during the last six days (January 1-6). We earned about Tk 3 lakh in the last five days from January 1 to 5, he said. I am optimistic that we shall be able to earn over Tk 2 lakh in the coming three days, Sunirmol said further.

However, Yasifuzzaman, a tourist who came here with his family from Mohammadpur, Dhaka, expressed disappointment saying BPC did not build any recreation centre for the tourists. But he

praised the panoramic beauty of Rangamati.

Another tourist, Salma Rahman who came here with her husband, five-year-old son and other family members from Gulshan, Dhaka, expressed her satisfaction over the arrangements. She said that everything is all right. But she expressed her unhappiness due to the two-day countryside blockade programme called by Awami League led grand alliance on January 7-8. The blockade compels her to return to Dhaka

sooner, she said.

BPC leaseholder Mosu said we could not satisfy the tourists for not being able to provide sufficient boats to them. At present, there are only 60 tourist boats, he said. We have taken double the rent of boats from tourists, he said further.

Goutam Dewan, owner of Peda-Ting-Ting, a private tourist spot, said we incurred losses during the last one month due to lack of tourists. But now the situation has reversed and we earned a good

Grand alliance demonstrates in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Hundreds of Awami League (AL) led grand alliance leaders and activists here yesterday brought out a broomstick procession demanding realisation of their various demands.

The demands included resignation of President Iajuddin from the post of chief advisor, preparation of correct voter list, reconstitution of Election Commission (EC) and rescheduling the election.

Later, a rally was held at Katia Bazar intersection in the town with AL leader Nazrul Islam in the chair.

Among others, Golam Reza, Advocate Abdur Rahim, Ashrafuzzaman Ashu and Salah Uddin of JP and Sheikh Abu Nasim Moina addressed.

'Realise 4-pt demand of UPDF'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The United People's Democratic Front (UPDF), a regional political party here, has put forward its 4-point demand for holding a free, fair and neutral election.

UPDF put forward the demand at a press conference held at its election office at Sanirbarbazar in the hill town on Thursday.

The demands included resignation of Iajuddin from the post of chief advisor, handing over power to a neutral caretaker government, reconstruction of Election Commission and preparation of a correct voter list.



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League led grand alliance leaders and activists demonstrating in Barisal city as part of their countrywide programme yesterday.

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Saying goodbye to poverty

Dhaka Ahsania Mission opens up new possibilities for distressed rural women in Jhenidah

STAR NATIONAL DESK

'These are my dreams, my future, Majeda Khatun of Surjodia village of Nartima union in Moheshpur upazila, Jhenidah, happily points to the flock of chickens frolicking in her poultry farm.

'Being wife of a poor mason, Rafiqul Islam, I led a miserable life and was compelled to take up a minor job at a poultry farm of a neighbour to feed poultry birds. But nothing brought any financial relief. I was a dirt poor as before.'

'Then I enrolled myself as a member of Jege Uthi Mohilu Dal of Moheshpur Gano Kendra, a people's centre, founded by Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM). From then on fortune began turning in my favour.' That's how Majeda explains her transformation, from a distressed woman to an entrepreneur who owns a poultry farm.

'While serving at the neighbour's poultry farm, I took a determination to build a farm of my own. As I was desperate for money, I applied for loan under the Institution Building and Income Generation (IBI) programme of DAM. As soon as I

got loan amounting to Tk 5,000, I was imparted skill development training by DAM workers to improve my standard of living' she says.

Later, she invested the money in banana cultivation and earned a net profit of Tk 8,000 from it. Utilising the profit and fresh loan, she set up a poultry farm with 100

chickens. After 34 days, she sold the chickens and earned Tk 7,000 profit.

But she faced obstacles from the wholesalers who failed to

supply chickens to her on time. But she found a faithful person in Maheshpur for supplying chickens and poultry feed at a time. She sold chickens and got a net profit of Tk 22,000 from it which helped her in repaying loan of her 'Samity'.

Again she took a new 'entrepreneur loan' amounting to Tk 15,000 from DAM for development of the farm.

'Economic prosperity brought me social recognition', says Majeda. 'Neighbours invite me to their houses on various occasions and take my advice on treatment of sick poultry birds,' she says.

Majeda built two separate houses and rented 10 'kathas' of land for Tk 14,000 to set up a bigger farm where she will employ two on three workers as her helpers.

'I am today what I vowed to be several years ago,' says Majeda. 'I did not give up and DAM provided me the support I needed.'

According to DAM Programme Division senior official Md Abdul Hye, the IBI programme was launched aiming at empowerment of women through uplift of disadvantaged and destitute women. We have gone a long way towards the goal, he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Majeda Khatun, a member of Moheshpur Gano Kendra founded by Dhaka Ahsania Mission takes care of chickens at her poultry farm at Surjodia village of Nartima union in Moheshpur upazila, Jhenidah.