

Faulty solid waste management in Rajshahi city

Dumping in open space poses health hazard to dwellers

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Over 40 percent solid wastes of Rajshahi city are dumped into drains, open spaces and water bodies, causing environmental pollution and health hazards.

Even the officially designated dumping ground remains open to pollute the air and water while liquid wastes collected from drains are often kept on streets to dry up as Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) lacks proper waste management logistics, said experts and sources in the RCC.

The city generates approximately 350 tonnes of solid waste every day while the amount increases to 400 tonnes during summer. Of the total, only 210 tonnes are collected and dumped into the open dumping ground at Nawdapara, said Sheikh Md Mamun, chief conservancy officer of RCC.

The remaining 140 tonnes of waste are dumped straight into drains, water bodies and open spaces, said waste management staff and researchers.

The matter came to light recently as the RCC started implementing projects to clean the city's major drains. The officials found the drains filled up and clogged due to rampant dumping of solid wastes over years.

Mamun, however, claimed that much of the city suburbs are agricultural land where the solid wastes are turned into compost and there

is no need to collect those wastes.

"Many residents have to dump solid wastes into drains and other spaces as the RCC has poor logistic support," said Dr Muhammed Alamgir, civil engineering faculty dean of Khulna University of Engineering and Technology.

Alamgir, who conducted a research on waste management in Rajshahi, said his research found that the RCC's open dumping ground at Nawdapara is unscientific and contributing to pollution.

RCC has 1,073 waste management manpower provided with eight tractors, 16 lorries, two hydraulic trucks and 182 rickshaw-vans to collect wastes from households.

A large number of sweepers, backed by a section of RCC officials, allegedly draw salaries without any work.

"The situation has improved since the corporation started night time waste collection last year and involved communities in the work," said RCC Chief Engineer Sirajum Munir.

"An initiative is underway to develop a properly engineered landfill at Nawdapara dumping ground. Once the landfill is developed, many waste related problems will be solved," he added.

Munir said the corporation is now compelled to collect liquid waste weeks after those are kept on open roads for drying as the corporation lacks proper equipment.



PHOTO: STAR

Influential people have continued construction of gorgeous buildings, encroaching on Hakor River in Benapole.

Pabna dealers stop taking delivery as farmers refuse to buy 'rotten' fertiliser

Large amount also getting damaged under open sky in Gaibandha

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Fertiliser dealers of Pabna district have decided not to take delivery of imported fertilisers from buffer godowns due to its 'poor quality' while thousands of tonnes of urea is rotting under the open sky on the premises of buffer godowns in Gaibandha district.

A meeting of Pabna District Fertiliser Dealers' Association on Monday afternoon decided that dealers will not take delivery of imported fertiliser from buffer godowns in this month as most of the earlier received 'damaged' fertilisers have remained unsold, reports our Pabna correspondent.

"Imported buffer fertilisers have lost quality. Kept under the open sky without proper maintenance, these fertilisers have turned into hard stuff and reduced in weight. The bags have become discoloured too. So, farmers

do not want to buy these fertilisers," said Abul Hossain Khan Mohon, secretary of District Fertiliser Dealers' Association, also director of Bangladesh Fertiliser Association.

The BCIC allotted 8640 tonnes of buffer fertilisers for 103 dealers of the district in January and the dealers took delivery of 7142 tonnes, DAE officials said.

For February, 9810 tonnes of fertilisers have been allotted but the dealers have not taken any delivery of fertiliser till February 9 although the highest amount of fertiliser is needed in February for boro cultivation, they said.

Several dealers said most of the fertiliser they took in January has remained unsold as farmers are waiting for locally produced 'superior quality' fertiliser.

"The dealers in the district took delivery of 7142 tonnes of buffer fertilisers but 75 percent of it is still unsold. The farmers prefer 'Jamuna

fertiliser' due to its superior quality," Md Idris Ali Biswas, president of Pabna District Fertiliser Dealers Association.

This year the BCIC has allotted only imported fertilisers in January and February whereas in earlier years 50 percent of the allotted fertilisers were country-made, fertiliser dealers' association leaders said.

They have demanded allotment of locally produced fertilisers instead of imported buffer fertiliser.

If the dealers do not take timely delivery of fertilisers in this peak season, boro cultivation may be hampered, said an official of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in the district.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports: Thousands of tonnes of urea fertiliser, kept under the open sky due to lack of accommodation in the buffer godowns in the district, see gradual decline in quality.

Of the yearly requirement of 65 thousand tonnes of urea fertiliser in Gaibandha, 37 thousand tonnes is needed for boro paddy farming from January to March and the BCIC authority has allocated 35 thousand 47 tonnes of fertiliser in this boro season, said DAE officials in the district.

The BCIC authority in this boro season allocated 35 thousand 47 tonnes of fertiliser in Gaibandha district.

As the buffer stock go-downs with four thousand-tonne capacity is too inadequate to accommodate the present stock, authorities have stockpiled huge fertiliser under the open sky on and around the go-down premises.

This season plantation of boro seedlings is being delayed as farmers could not work in the field due to prolonged cold spell and foggy weather.

2 murdered in Bagerhat

UNB, Bagerhat

A man was found dead on the bank of Taleshewar River in Kachua upazila of Bagerhat district yesterday.

Police said locals found the body of Jamal Uddin Hawlader, 35, of Baizur village under Sadar upazila in the morning and informed the police.

Police went to the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy. Police said criminals might have stabbed the man to death and left the body on the river bank.

In another incident, an old man was killed by his son at Manikgor village under Moreiganj upazila on Tuesday. The dead was identified as Motahar Kazi, 85, of the village.

Police said Motahar's son Badsha hit him with a sharp weapon following an altercation over trifling matter, resulting his death on the spot.

BSF hands over Bangladeshi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Bangladesh national, picked up by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) from Gowainghat border on Tuesday, was handed over to BDR following a flag meeting between the border guards of the two countries yesterday.

The Indian border guards picked up Idris Ali, 28, from near border pillar no 1266 while he was returning home from Koparbazar in Gowainghat upazila.

BSF handed over Idris to its Bangladesh counterpart soon after a company commander level flag meeting held at 3:00pm yesterday, said an official of 21 Rifles Battalion, Sylhet.



PHOTO: STAR

Students of Naldanga Bhushan Pilot High School in Kaliganj in Jhenidah attend classes amid fear as chunks of plaster often fall off the ceiling that has developed several cracks.

Decrepit school building risky for students, teachers

Study hampered as they are too panicked to give attention

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

Students and teachers of renowned Naldanga Bhushan Pilot High School at Kaliganj upazila town in Jhenidah district are under risk of accident as several cracks have developed on the roof of the worn-out building.

As many as 1507 students, who will take part in this year's SSC examinations (starting today) from the school centre, also remain vulnerable.

The present two-storied building of the 128-year-old school was built in 1963. It is now in a dilapidated condition as substandard materials were allegedly used during its construction.

Cracks have developed in the roof covering 18 classrooms, plasters have

fallen off at places and the exposed rods have rusted.

Established in 1882 at Naldanga Rajbari by zamindar Indu Bhushan Dev Roy, the institution was upgraded to a high school in 1882 under the initiative of his son Raja Bahadur Promoth Bhushan Dev Roy. The school was later shifted to Kaliganj town in Jhenidah.

Students and teachers remain in panic during classes as chunks of plaster often fall off the ceiling.

"A few days ago, I was hurt as a lump of plaster fell on my shoulder," said Rajib, a student of Class Nine of the school.

Another Class Nine student Emon was also injured in the same way.

Several students said they pass their class hours amid worry as the roof is in a bad condition.

The old building has become risky but no step has been taken to shift the classes to a safe place, said a few teachers.

"The roof was made without proper netting and the covering under the rods was inadequate. Consequently, the rods have rusted and the roof has become vulnerable to collapse any time," said civil engineer Jafrul Islam, a teacher of vocational training at Naldanga Bhushan Pilot High School.

School Headmaster Rezaul Haq said he has informed the chairman of managing committee of the matter.



Lipi Akter

Man beats pregnant wife dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A pregnant woman, seriously tortured by husband at Dhulandi village under Ghior upazila in Manikganj on Monday, succumbed to her injuries at a clinic in Savar on Tuesday night.

The victim, Lipi Akter, 22, daughter of Harej Dewan of D-Tarail village under Shivalaya upazila in the district, was pregnant for five months.

When Lipi was married to Babul Hossain, son of Sheikh Naimuddin of Dhulandi village under Ghior upazila in the district one and a half years ago, her family gave Tk 1.80 lakh to Babul as dowry, said the victim's family members.

Later Babul demanded a motorcycle and gold ornaments from Lipi's family and tortured her for failure to meet the demand, they said.

Babul Hossain mercilessly beat up Lipi Akter on Monday afternoon, leaving her injured.

She was taken to Manikganj Sadar Hospital at 10:00am on Tuesday.

In the afternoon, doctors referred her to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

As Lipi's condition deteriorated on the way, she was taken to Enam Clinic at Savar where she died at 8:00pm.

The victim's body bore several marks of torture, Ghior Police Station Officer-in-Charge Azizur Rahman said, adding that the body was sent to Manikganj Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

"Victim's father Harej Dewan filed a murder case against six people including Babul and we have arrested four of the accused," the OC said.

Youth shot dead in Gazipur

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Criminals shot dead a youth in Bhadra area under Pubail Union of Gazipur district yesterday.

Police recovered the body from Atuler Tek area and sent it to Gazipur Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Officer-in-Charge Abdur Rashid of Joydevpur Police Station said the victim was shot on the back of his head.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS

Homoeopath abducted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Criminals abducted a homoeopath in Alamdanga upazila of Chuadanga district on Tuesday night for ransom. Police quoted locals as saying that a gang of five entered the chamber of Dr Chandu at Madrasapara at around 8:30 pm and picked him up at gunpoint. The gang then phoned Chandu's family members and demanded Tk 4 lakh for his release. Being informed, Alamdanga police launched a drive but could not trace Chandu as of filing of this report at 5:00pm yesterday.

Thief killed in mob beating

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

An alleged thief was killed in mob beating in Kaharol upazila of Dinajpur early yesterday. The deceased was identified as Nurul Haque, 45, son of Kandu Muhammad of Ishanpur village under the upazila. Police said a gang of thieves entered the cowshed of Md Asadullah at Moheshpur village at around 12:30am. Sensing the presence of thieves, Asadullah cried for help. His neighbours rushed to the spot and caught Nurul Islam, one of the gang members while others managed to flee. Villagers beat up Nurul severely, resulting his death on the spot. On information, police went to the village, recovered the body and sent it to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Motorbike snatched from ASI

A CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Criminals attacked an assistant sub-inspector (ASI) of police and snatched his motorbike on Salampur-Abdulpur road at Barabaria village under Lalpur upazila of Natore on Tuesday night. Police said Assistant Sub-Inspector Parimol Chandra went to Barabaria village to investigate a case. When he was returning to a police camp at around 10:00pm, a gang of criminals intercepted him on the road. They hit the ASI with a sharp weapon and took away his motorbike. Later, a patrol police team rescued him and sent to Natore Hospital in a critical condition. A case was filed with Lalpur Police Station. Contacted, officer-in-charge of Lalpur Police Station said they are looking for the culprits.

Outlaw held with gun

A CORRESPONDENT, Meherpur

Rab personnel arrested an outlaw at Purba Malshadah village under Gangni upazila of the district on Tuesday night and recovered a revolver and two bullets from his possession. Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab-6 raided the village at around 8:30pm and arrested Hossain Ali, 26, at his house along with with the gun and bullets. Rab sources said Hossain Ali is an armed cadre of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist party (Lal Pataka). He was wanted in seven cases including two for murder, sources added.

12 hurt as villagers clash

UNB, Munshiganj

At least 12 people were injured in a clash between two groups of villagers over land dispute at Dulihata village in Tangibari upazila on Tuesday. Local said there was a longstanding dispute between Al Islam and Anwar Hossain over the ownership of a piece of land. On Tuesday, the supporters of Anwar Hossain beat up Al-Islam's man Nur Islam for harvesting crops from the disputed land. Following the incident, supporters of Al Islam and Anwar equipped with lethal weapons attacked each other, leaving 12 people from both sides injured. Critically injured Al Islam, 30, Alamin, 25, Nur Islam, 50, Nazma, 40, Anwar Hossain, 40, Based, 38, were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.



PHOTO: STAR

Rapid Action Battalion from Patuakhali arrests three youths with 196 bottles of phensidyl and two kg ganja at Barguna yesterday.