

Teesta bridge to be ready by June 30

Minister promises while visiting site

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Communications Minister Obaidul Quader has said the Teesta bridge will be opened to traffic in July this year.

"Construction work of the road bridge over the Teesta River will be completed by June 30 this year and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the bridge in July," the minister said while visiting the bridge in Kaunia upazila of Rangpur yesterday morning.

He ordered the construction firms and the high officials of the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) to complete the works within the deadline.

Talking to the journalists, the minister said June 30 is the cut-off date for finishing construction work. No further delay in construction of the bridge will be tolerated.

State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Motahar Hossain, Lalmonirhat District Administrator advocate Matiar Rahman, and high officials of the Roads and

Highways Department accompanied the communications minister during his visit.

Construction work of the 750-metre-long bridge began on September 7 in 2006 with an estimated cost of Tk 87 crore. It was scheduled to be completed by September 6, 2009.

Two construction firms--Amin-Delim (Bangladesh) and ASCO (India) are constructing the Teesta bridge in a joint venture. Bangladesh government provided 85 per cent of the fund while the rest was given by the Kuwaiti government.

Mujibur Rahman Mollah, RHD Executive Engineer of Teesta bridge Project, said 90 per cent work of the bridge has been completed and the construction firms will complete the rest 10 per cent by June this year.

"With the opening of the bridge, a long-cherished dream of about 45 lakh people of Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts will come true," said Lalmonirhat District Council Administrator advocate Motiar Rahman.



PHOTO: STAR

The construction work of Teesta bridge in Kaunia upazila under Rangpur district is heading towards completion as the bridge across the Teesta River is scheduled to be opened for traffic in July this year.

Four confined by brickfield owners in Satkhira rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Police on Friday rescued four labourers who were allegedly confined to a house at village Braja Baksa in Kalaroa upazila.

They were locked allegedly for the last three days by brickfield owners in a room of a house owned by Syed Ali Gharami as they demanded their 'just' wages.

Police, however, could not arrest Abdul Haque and Hafizur Rahman, owners of Helatala Hawa Brickfield in Kalaroa upazila.

The rescued labourers are Abul Hossain, 40, son of Monsur Rahman, Akhtaruzzaman, 25, son of Golam Kha, Nuruzzaman, 25, son of Nur Islam and Hafizur Rahman, 22, son of Kawsar Ali of village Dumuria in Shyamnagar upazila.

The victims said, Ansar Ali and Ruhul Quddus, labour leaders at the brickfield collected them from Dumuria village with a promise to give them Tk 300 each per day.

They started to work at

the brickfield. But after a few days, the labour leaders left the brickfield as the owners refused to pay the promised wages.

After a few days, the four labourers demanded Tk 300 for each day's work and locked in a quarrel with the owners of the brickfield. Over the issue, the owners locked them forcibly in a small room at village Braja Baksa on February 15.

Acting on a tip-off, police rescued the victims from the

house by breaking open the lock at about 5pm on Friday.

Victim Abul Hossain alleged that they were beaten up regularly and given little food and drinking water.

A case was filed with Kalaroa police station accusing four people including the two owners of the brickfield.

Contacted, officer in-charge (OC) of Kalaroa PS Subhas Biswas said they were trying to arrest the culprits.



PHOTO: STAR

Police rescued four brick kiln labourers from captivity at a house of Braja Baksa village in Kalaroa upazila under Satkhira district on Friday.

25 injured as BCL, JCD clash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Activists of Chhatra League (BCL) and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) yesterday clashed at Brindaban Government College in Habiganj district, leaving at least 25 people injured.

At least 10 JCD activists were held from the campus during the clash. Police fired ten rubber bullets to bring the situation under control.

Campus sources said the college unit of a youth organisation was due to hold a conference and reunion at Zilla Parishad Auditorium adjacent to the college at 11:00am in the morning.

College units of BCL and JCD were trying to establish their control on the programme for the last few days.

The BCL and JCD groups took out separate processions from the campus at 10:00am yesterday. When they reached Zilla Parishad premises, the two processions came face to face and locked in a series of clashes which continued till 12 noon.

The unruly activists entered about a dozen classrooms and dragged general students and teachers out of the classrooms. They also ransacked books and documents and damaged furniture.

A group stormed into Room No 103 and caught Management Department teacher Partha Protim Das when he was conducting his class. They mercilessly beat up the teacher, leaving him injured, reports UNB.

They also assaulted several students of the department as they tried to rescue the teacher.

BCL activists Shah Jalal Uddin Jewel and Himel were admitted to the Habiganj Sadar Hospital with stab injuries while the others took first aid.

Class boycott to protest principal's 'corruption'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Academic activities at Salimpur Haji Nasir Uddin College in Kalaroa upazila are being hampered as the teachers and students of the institution have been boycotting classes since February 9.

Alleging corruption, the students locked the principal's office room and classrooms on the day and started boycott of classes.

They also assaulted the principal and vice-principal of the college on February 9 and February 11 on the college campus.

The students were demanding removal of the principal, on charge of corruption and embezzlement of money collected from the students as coaching fees, sources said.

Principal Abdul Momin collected over Tk 48,000 from HSC examinees as coaching fees and misappropriated the amount, said an agitating student.

As the students and teachers demanded the fees back, the principal threatened them of 'dire consequences' on several occasions, he said.

The students and teachers yesterday threatened to launch tougher agitation programme if their demand is not met immediately.

Contacted, principal Abdul Momin refuted the allegation of corruption against him. "Some outsiders and teachers assaulted me, locked my room and instigated class boycott only to malign me", he said.

Contacted, Kalaroa Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) ANM Tariqul Islam admitted that the academic activities at the college are being seriously hampered due to the agitation.

Spot named after language hero now 3-wheeler stand

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

The Language Movement heroes in Pabna district are yet to get any state recognition for their glorious role while 'Mahabub Ahmed Khan Smrity Mancha', the lone establishment after the name of a language hero on Ishwardi rail station premises, is being used as a stand for auto tempos (motorised three-wheelers).

"After my father's death in 1987, the Ishwardi municipality authority set up 'Mahabub Ahmed Khan Smrity Mancha' in Ishwardi rail station area in 1988. But auto tempo men have kept the stage occupied for years," said JM Khan, elder son of Mahabub Ahmed Khan.

Asked about the matter, Ishwardi municipality Mayor Mokhesur Rahman Bablu said, "We are trying to shift the stand from the stage but this is not possible right now because there is no other alternative place. We will repair the stage soon."

Asked how programmes are held while the stage is under occupation of three-wheeler owners, president of Ishwardi Tempo Owners Association Md Anwar Hossain said, "When municipality authorities give notice to our organisation we request our drivers to leave the stage for the programme."

"This is unfortunate that the young generation are yet to know the name of Mahabub Ahmed Khan although his contribution to Language Movement has been depicted in several books. It is our duty to keep his memory as well as that of other heroes in the area alive," said freedom fighter Fazlur Rahman Fantu, also a cultural organiser in Ishwardi upazila.

Taking a leading role in the language movement in 1948, Mahabub Ahmed Khan was imprisoned for four years till 1952.

In protest against the then Pakistan parliament's refusal to recognise Bangla as one of the state languages, a protest meeting chaired by the then Muslim



PHOTO: STAR

INSOLENCE UNFORGIVABLE! Mahabub Ahmed Khan Smrity Mancha, the lone set-up in memory of a language hero in Ishwardi rail station area under Pabna district, is being used as a stand for three-wheelers for years.

League leader Dewan Lutfar Rahman was held on Pabna town hall premise on February 27 in 1948.

'R a s h t r a - B h a s h a Sangram Parishad, Pabna'

cession from Pabna Edward College.

Then police charged batons and arrested the joint secretary of Sangram Parishad Aminul Islam



Language heroes, top from left: Aminul Islam Badsha, Rawshan Jan Chowdhury, Ranesh Maitra and bottom from left: Goura Chandra Sarkar, Lutfar Rahman, Mahabub Ahmed Khan,

headed by him was formed at the meeting.

Late Aminul Islam Badsha (former central leader of Gonotontri Party) and Mahabubur Rahman were selected as joint convener of the parishad while Mahabub Ahmed Khan was the vice president.

Violating Section 144 imposed by the district administration students as well as cross sections of people observed hartal and brought out a protest pro-

Badsha along with 40 people from the procession.

Several hartals, processions and protest meetings were observed in March 1948, strengthening the language movement in Pabna. On March 10, police arrested five more leaders including Mahabub Ahmed Khan. Most of them were kept in jail till 1952. But the movement continued.

"Protesting the killing of

a few participants of Language Movement in Dhaka in police firing on February 21 in 1952, we called hartal on February 22 in Pabna," said columnist Ranesh Maitra, also a participant of the Language Movement.

"Language veterans Kamal Lohani, Shajahan Mahamud, Abdul Momin Talukdar, Joynul Abedin, Anwarul Haque along with some other veterans organised the protest procession from Pabna Edward College when the police intercepted and arrested 8/10 activists.

"It is a matter of sorrow that most of the language veterans of Pabna passed away without getting any recognition from the state. We urge the government to give state recognition to the heroic sons of Language Movement," the language veteran said.

"My brother Aminul Islam Badsha died without getting state recognition although he borrowed imprisonment from 1948 to 1952 for participating in the Language Movement. We, the members of the families of language veterans, have taken initiative to organise a reception to the language heroes of Pabna," said Md Robiul Islam Robi, brother of late Aminul Islam Badsha.




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