

Newly built bridge undergoes repair well before handover

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Most of the upper surface of a nearly completed bridge over the Buri Teesta River at Soillaghat in Dimla upazila under the district had to undergo repair as the contractor used low quality materials for the construction work, said officials.

The Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) in the district decided to construct the 171-metre-long and 5.12-metre-wide bridge over the Buri Teesta River at

a cost of Tk 4.14 crore to facilitate easier road communication between Dimla and Domar upazilas in the district.

After tender process, the work was given to contractor Jinal Abedin of Saidpur and local lawmaker Jafar Iqbal Siddiquee inaugurated it on April 12 of 2009.

The work was scheduled to be complete by June 30 last year but the contractor failed to meet the deadline and the work is still going on, albeit at the final stage.

However, the repair work is causing further delay in

the work.

During a visit to the site on March 18, this correspondent found that the wearing course (upper surface) in most part of the bridge was removed as the contractor allegedly used below standard materials in building the bridge surface. It was also found that a segment of the bridge that was repaired a week earlier was encircled with bamboo sticks.

Locals alleged that at first cracks on the bridge surface were found on three of the nine slabs of the bridge but

within two weeks serious cracks were found in all the nine slabs as the wearing course was broken up.

Consequently, the LGED directed the concerned contractor to remove the affected parts for quick repair.

Contacted on March 18, Shyamapada Ghosh, upazila engineer of Dimla, said, "After repair on three slabs one week ago, we found that wearing course of rest six slabs was in vulnerable condition. So, we directed the contractor to remove it from entire bridge

surface and repair it as per schedule."

When contacted, Executive Engineer of LGED in Nilphamari Abul Kalam Pramanik said, "The contractor concerned used low quality materials like pea gravels for making the wearing course. Our superintending engineer during a recent visit detected the irregularities and asked the contractor to follow the schedule by removing low quality material. So the contractor broke the wearing course. He is now repairing it with prescribed stone chips."

He said there were no cracks in the bridge.

"Damage of the wearing course indicates that there were mismanagement and irregularities in construction of the bridge. I have discussed the matter at upazila coordination committee meeting this month," Aftabuddin Ahmed, upazila chairman of Dimla, told this correspondent a few days ago.

Contacted, contractor of the bridge Jinal Abedin claimed that no crack developed on the bridge.

"There were mistakenly some 'pea gravels' (round stone) in the wearing course of the bridge. It is a minor mistake that can be overlooked. But higher LGED officials asked me to remove the wearing course and reconstruct it with stone chips. I am following their instruction although it will increase the construction cost," he said.



PHOTO: STAR

REPAIR NEEDED BEFORE HANDING OVER! The contractor is doing repair work at this bridge over Buri Teesta River at Soillaghat in Dimla upazila of Nilphamari district as the engineering department detected faults in most of the upper surface of the nearly complete bridge.

Farmers in 4 dists agitate for erratic power supply

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Hundreds of farmers besieged local power offices and blocked road in Natore, Dinajpur, Gaibandha and Garipur districts yesterday and the day before demanding uninterrupted power supply during the ongoing irri-boro season.

About 5-6 hundred farmers from different villages in Natore besieged the office of the Rural Electrification Board (REB) yesterday, demanding smooth supply of power for boro irrigation.

The farmers from Tazpur, Serkoil, Chaugram, Nimakadma, Domdoma and Boria villages of Singra upazila gathered in front of the REB office at Singra upazila headquarters at about 1:30pm chanting slogans for smooth supply of power, reports our correspondent.

At one stage, the security men closed the main gate of the office as the agitating farmers tried to get into the compound to meet the deputy general manager of Natore REB-1 to lodge their complaint.

The farmers expressed their grievances saying that they could not irrigate their irri-boro fields because of erratic power supply.

A number of others also complained that a section of REB men were demanding bribe for providing electricity to their villages.

DGM Khandakar Shamim Alam assured the farmers that he would soon seek more power from the higher authorities for ensuring adequate supply.

In Dinajpur, at least 600 farmers of Chirribandar upazila blocked Dinajpur-Bogra highway on Wednesday afternoon demanding smooth power supply during

the ongoing irri-boro season.

The roadblock left hundreds of vehicles for hours it started at around 4:30pm, reports our correspondent.

Sources said the farmers gathered in Uchitpur point of the highway and sat down on the street chanting slogans in favour of their demand.

In Gaibandha, hundreds people yesterday laid a siege to Bamondanga rail station and Sundarganj-Rangpur roads for three hours, demanding uninterrupted power supply, reports our correspondent.

It was organised jointly by Upazila Sech Moror Malik Samity and Bamonganga Bidut Grahak Samity.

The organisers said they were fed up with the power interruption that sometimes continued for fortnight causing serious setback to boro crop farming and trade at shops and small industries.

Agitated people halted hundreds of vehicles on Sundarganj-Rangpur road and detained Lalmonirhat Intercity express train, Padmarag express train and Dolanchampa express train at Bamoudanga station for several hours.

People of Sreepur upazila of Garipur besieged the office of Mymensingh PBS-2 at Mawna Chowrasta (intersection) on Wednesday morning demanding smooth power supply.

After a two-hour besiege from 11:15, DGM Abul Basher Azad sat with the local protesters, reports our correspondent.

After the meeting, he talked with the higher authorities and assured the people of improvement in power situation in the next seven days.



PHOTO: STAR

Locals block Lalmoni Express Train at Bamandanga rail station in Sundarganj upazila under Gaibandha district yesterday demanding uninterrupted power supply in the area for at least 18 hours a day.

KHULNA-JESSORE MILLS

Power suspension to badly affect production

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

A government decision to suspend power supply from 6:00pm to 10:00pm daily will badly affect production in the mills and factories, said mill authorities in Khulna-Jessore industrial belt.

An official order will be issued soon to comply with the government decision aiming at reducing 'load shedding' of electricity during the peak hour, sources at West Zone Power Distribution Company Limited (WZPDCL) said yesterday.

The suspension of power supply for four hours at a stretch during peak hour will hamper daily production of around 100 tonnes of jute goods worth over Tk one crore in eight state-owned jute mills of Khulna-Jessore industrial belt, said Md Rafiqul Islam Mian, liaison officer of Khulna Zonal Office of Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC).

About 20,000 night shift workers of the eight jute mills will also lose their jobs when this decision is implemented.

The power supply reduction will harm production of 25 tonnes of jute goods at Crescent Jute Mills, 20

tonnes at Platinum Jute Mills, 15 tonnes at Khalishpur Jute Mills, 12 tonnes at Star Jute Mills, six tonnes at Aleem Jute Mills, seven tonnes at Eastern Jute Mills, eight tonnes at Jessore Jute Industries and four tonnes at Carpeting Jute Mills, said the BJMC official.

Suspension of power supply for four hours during peak hour will also hit export of processed frozen shrimps worth Tk 200 crore, sources said.

"March to July every year is the peak season for collecting shrimps that is processed and kept in freezing plants for export. Suspension of power supply during the peak hour will affect amount and quality of processed shrimps as uninterrupted power supply is required for the purpose," said Humayun Kabir, director of Bangladesh Frozen Food Exporters' Association.

"In accordance with the government decision, I have already requested authorities of jute mills not to ask for power supply for four hours from 6:00pm to 10:00pm every day," said Abul Kalam Azad, managing director of WZPDCL.

TORTURE FOR DOWRY

Jubo League man held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira.

Police arrested Satkhira district Jubo League organising secretary Abdus Sattar on charge of torturing wife for dowry on Wednesday night.

Sattar, 35 son of Sakat Ali Gazi of village Debalaya in Shyamnagar upazila married Nasima Khatun of Jessore town about 10 years ago.

The accused allegedly used to torture Nasima as her father failed to give dowry as demanded by him. Later, he also drove her out

of the house.

In Lalmonirhat, a housewife was strangled yesterday allegedly by her husband for dowry after 4 months of their marriage at Horitukur village of Mohendronagar union in Sadar upazila, reports our correspondent.

Police arrested the accused Harunur Rashid, 28, while he was trying to flee from the home after the killing.

Victim Rozina Begum, 18, was daughter of late Abdur Razzak Sarker of Okrabari village of Harati union in Sadar upazila.

The Daily Star - রবি ENGLISH FAIR



PHOTO: STAR

Two students take part at an event during the English language fair held at Mohonpur Government High School in Rajshahi district yesterday.

Students of 5 more schools learn amid festivity

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Students of five schools in Rajshahi and Jamalpur districts took part in the English language fairs held under English in Schools programme, a joint initiative of The Daily Star and mobile operator Robi, yesterday.

Adcom Ltd is the creative and event partner of the fairs.

Over 400 students of Mohonpur Government High School and Keshor Hat High School in Mohonpur upazila under Rajshahi district yesterday took part in the English language fairs held at Mohonpur Government High School auditorium, reports our Rajshahi University correspondent.

Globally renowned movie The Lion King was screened, followed by quizzes on vocabulary, situation-based question answer, extempore speech and role play.

Students of the two schools took part in joyful interactions and watched the events based on the movie.

Thirteen students of Mohonpur Government High School and five students of Keshor Hat High School won different competitions.

Abdur Rashid, headmaster of Mohonpur Government High School, and Md Emdadul Haque, headmaster of Keshor Hat High School, jointly inaugurated the programme at

Mohonpur Government High School auditorium and later distributed prizes among the winners.

At the inaugural session, the teachers of the schools thanked The Daily Star and Robi for the programmes to promote English language learning among school students.

Meanwhile, over 200



students of Tanore Pilot High School joined a similar programme held at the school yesterday.

Md Ayub Ali, headmaster of the school, inaugurated the programme at around 11:00am.

Thirteen students won different events including quizzes on vocabulary, situation-based question answer, extempore speech and role play.

Our Jamalpur Correspondent adds: Hamida Banua, headmistress of Melandah Government Girls' High School, inaugurated English language fair held at the school yesterday.

About 150 students of the girls' school and Melandah Amir Uddin Pilot High

School in Melandah upazila under the district took part in the English language fair.

Globally renowned movie The Lion King was screened followed by quizzes on vocabulary, one-word questions, situation-based questions based on the movie, extempore speeches and role play.

Students of the two schools took part in joyful interactions and watched the events based on the movie.

Ten students took part in role play event while several others participated in the quizzes based on the movie.

Participants praised the role of English in Schools programme in helping the rural children to learn English with ease.

Aiming to promote English language learning among school students across the country, The Daily Star in cooperation with Robi undertook English in Schools programme in 2009.

Under the initiative, each of one thousand schools selected from 64 districts of the country receives three complimentary copies of The Daily Star five days a week.

The ongoing English language fairs at different schools are being held in coordination with the education ministry as part of the three-year-long programme.



PHOTO: STAR

Prize winner students of Melandah Government Girls' High School and Umiruddin Pilot High School at the English language fair held at the girls' school pose with their teachers yesterday.

আন্তর্জাতিক চিকিৎসক দিবস উপলক্ষে বিশেষ আলোচনা

স্বাস্থ্য ফার্মাসিউটিক্যালস্ স্বাস্থ্যকথা'য়

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চোখ রাখুন মাছরাঙ্গা টেলিভিশনে, আজ রাত ৯টায়

অনুষ্ঠান চলাকালে চিকিৎসাসেবা বিষয়ে আপনার কোনো পরামর্শ, জিজ্ঞাসা বা অভিযোগ থাকলে অথবা দিবসটি উপলক্ষে ডাক্তারদের শুভেচ্ছা জানাতে ফোন করুন ৮৭১৫৯৭৪-৬, ৮৭১৫৯৭৮ নম্বরে

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