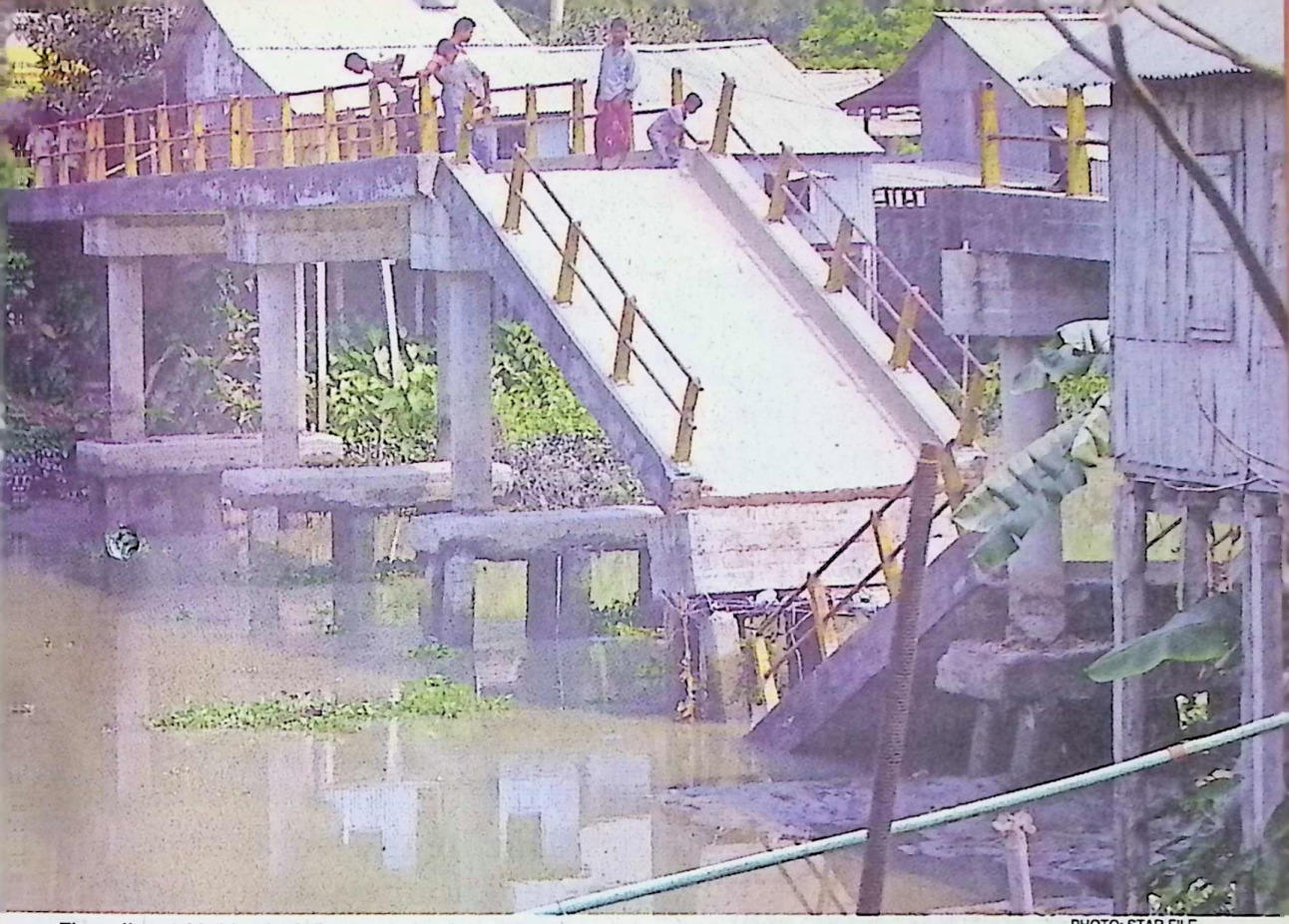


The collapsed bridge in Jobarpur, Barisal.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

Dangerous Rumours

I express my gratitude to Syed Bardul Ahsan for his article "The Moon, Old Women and Quislings" published last week. The writer has correctly pointed out the blasphemy in spreading such a rumour which led to unnecessary and untimely deaths. However, to my utter surprise, I find that our country's Islamists groups, that demand death for 'atheist bloggers' in our country did not raise the same amount of hue and cry for the acolytes of the collaborator. Was it not an assault on Islam? It also seems to me that a section of these people are abusing social media sites to spread such rumours. If the government is not capable of tackling the problem why do they not close down social media sites such as Facebook? They shut off YouTube when the insane movie 'Innocence of Muslims' was uploaded on the site. That incident did not become a threat to national interest like the rumours that are being spread, using Facebook, are. I am not against free speech but I believe that in a country where people are so gullible and intolerant that they come to the streets to act like a mob, burn and vandalise homes and temples of other religious communities just because someone has posted fake photographs or posts on the internet, such a country does not deserve to have free and unrestrained media.

Mubashir Islam
Segun Bagicha, Dhaka

Waiting to be Noticed

I am a foreigner who has been living in the area of Jobarpar, 4km from Agailjhara and about 12km from Gournadi in the Barisal District, for the past three years. Recently we woke up to discover a bridge had collapsed into the river. This small place, probably unknown to many in Bangladesh, is now without the only connecting bridge from one side of Jobarpar to the next. Children going to school, expectant mothers needing to visit the Church of Bangladesh clinic and local people going to and from other connecting towns for work have been really inconvenienced – never mind the safety aspect of a broken bridge lying in the river!

To cross from one road to the next, people will have to walk 2km either way as the foot bridge has just deteriorated over the past few years, never been repaired and is now unusable. 'What can we do?', 'Can someone help?', I am also asking the same questions. What can and will be done about this? I have seen how long it has taken to repair roads and build new bridges. How long will these poor people have to wait for someone to acknowledge their problem?

Pat Jamison
Jobarpar, Barisal