



PHOTO: STAR

Awfully dilapidated building of Patuakhali registry office poses risk to staff as well as visitors, thanks to the indifference of the authorities concerned.

## PATUAKHALI REGISTRY OFFICE

# Dilapidated bldg poses risk to staff, visitors

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

Patuakhali registry office is running at a dilapidated building, posing life risk to around 200 staff as well as the people who came here to get their work done.

During a visit to the building on Monday, this correspondent found cracks at several places of the building. Chunks of plaster from roofs and walls were seen at quite a few places on the floor. Rods of the roof became visible and electric cables were hanging at many places.

Constructed in 1967-68 fiscal year, the building houses the district registry office on the first floor and Sadar upazila sub-registry office on the ground floor.

Several lakhs of land record books (locally called *balam boi*) preserved since 1901 are also vulnerable to damage by rainwater that easily enters the building through the walls, said Sultan Ahmed, record keeper of the office.

A total 106 employees including deed writers, searchers and copyists submitted a prayer to the district registrar on Monday to shift the office to a safe place.

Accident may occur any time as the building is in a very bad condition, said District Registrar Md Abed Hossain.

"We are working here amid risk as often chunks of plaster falls off. Rainwater seeps into

the dilapidated building, causing damage to valuable documents," said Sohrab Hossain, office assistant of Sadar upazila sub-registry office.

"We sent several letters to the higher authority concerned for reconstruction of the building but in vain," said Md Mizanur Rahman, sub-registrar for Patuakhali Sadar upazila.

The government earns around Tk 40 crore annual revenue from the office.

Over 100-metre-long road connecting the office is

also in a bad condition. Rainwater stands on the road, much to the sufferings to office staff and visitors.

When contacted, Kamruzzaman, executive engineer for Patuakhali Public Works Department, said, "We did repair works spending Tk 30 lakh since 1998 to keep the building usable for office. Now it has become too old and risky. We will send an estimate to the higher authorities soon to reconstruct the building."



PHOTO: STAR

A large crack at a pillar of Patuakhali registry office.

# Court's roof collapses, 2 school bldgs sealed off

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The roof of Paikgachha upazila magistrate court in Khulna collapsed yesterday.

Sources at the court said, a portion of the roof of stenographer Sarwar Rahman's room collapsed at about 7:00am, reports UNB.

However, there was no casualty in the incident as the room was locked at that time.

General secretary of Paikgachha Bar Wazid Mondal and former president advocate Abdus Sabur said, the court building, established in 1985, had developed a number of cracks 4-5 years back, but the authorities were yet to take any step to repair those.

Serious accident may occur any time if the cracks are not repaired immediately, they said.

In Lalmonirhat, two academic buildings of Railway Children Park CP High School in

the district town were sealed off following detection of cracks yesterday noon, reports our correspondent.

The academic activities at the school will be hampered as there are only nine classrooms, teachers said.

A team of railway engineers yesterday noon sealed off the two buildings.

The team told the local journalists that they found at least 40 cracks at different points of the two buildings.

The teachers and students of the school saw the cracks on a few pillars and walls of the buildings and informed it to the railway authorities.

Headmaster of the school Kazi Latifa Khanam said that three unused buildings of the railway would be used temporarily for academic activities of the school until construction of new buildings.

## 4 women raped in Chandpur, Natore

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Four women, two of them siblings, were violated in Chandpur and Natore districts yesterday and the day before.

In Chandpur, two sisters were raped alleged by a gang of workers at the godown of a rice mill at Puranbazar of the district town yesterday morning.

Aged about 35, and 30, the victims said, like the other days they went to collect waste papers from the garbage near the rice mill in the area.

At one stage, a gang of five workers forcibly took them to the godown of the rice mill and violated them.

The criminals later released the duo after cutting their hairs, added the victims.

Immediately after the incident, the two sisters went to Chandpur Sadar Model police station and lodged a complaint.

Police rushed to the spot but failed to capture the criminals. However, they late arrested Liton, Subir and Ismail in the afternoon.

Mahbub Morshed, officer in-charge of the PS, said they sent both the women to hospital for medical check-up.

In Natore, two women were raped in Singra and Lalpur upazilas on Monday night and early yesterday, reports UNB.

A gang picked up a housewife forcibly from her house at Dhulauri village in Singra upazila at 1:00am yesterday in absence of her husband.

Then they took her to a riverbank and raped her.

Later, local people rescued and took her to Sadar Hospital.

In another incident, criminals raped a garment worker at Kadimchilan village in Lalpur upazila on Monday night.

The victim's family said that a gang kidnapped her from a human hauler (Nasimon) and took her to a field when she was returning home from Ishwardi EPZ at about 8:30pm.

After taking the girl to the field, they violated her.

## Transport workers in Thakurgaon on strike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Thakurgaon*

Transport workers here yesterday stopped plying passenger buses in the internal routes of the district.

The associations of the workers enforced the strike in the morning, demanding immediate steps to stop plying of all the unauthorised vehicles, including Nasimon, Karimon, Bhotbhoti and easy-bike, on the regional roads and highways.

Buses remained off the roads in the district while diesel-run three-wheelers and human haulers were resisted by the supporters of the association, causing untold suffering to the commuters.

Besides, the district administration arranged a negotiation meeting on the day at 10:00am at DC's conference room. Superintendent of police Faisal Mahmud, leaders of the transport owners' association, Thakurgaon Auto (battery-run easy-bike) Malik Samity members, local public representatives and journalists attended the meeting but it failed to make any headway.

Secretary of Thakurgaon Transport Workers' Association Entazul Haque alias Enta told this correspondent over cell phone that the strike will continue until their demand was met.

# Unique Unicef move helps Kaptai kids attend schools

SHANTIMOY CHAKMA, *Rangamati*

At least 2000 kids in the district are now getting access to quality primary education in a child-friendly atmosphere, thanks to a Unicef project taken in Kaptai Lake area.

With an objective to increase access to better primary education as well as learning opportunities for the children in remote areas of Kaptai, Unicef is implementing the project.

Twenty-one government primary schools in three upazilas -- Rangamati Sadar, Bilaichhari and Barkal -- of the district have been brought under the project titled 'Child Friendly School for the Children of Kaptai Lake Area, Rangamati'.

The project helps reduce the dropout rates because those who can not reach the schools due to lack of engine boats in the lake areas can now use Unicef supplied shuttle boats with life jackets.

Consultant of Unicef, Rangamati office Rita Chakma said, 15 schools in Sadar upazila and three each in Bilaichhari and Barkal upazilas have been brought under the five-year project (2012-16) launched in December last year.

Moreover, adolescent boys and girls in the project areas will also be benefited due to improved access to information and technology through resource centres set up in schools.

A desktop computer with an Internet modem, a solar module, a bookshelf, almirah and some technical books have been provided in the resource centres.

A man will be employed to run the centre, said Rita Chakma, the consultant of Unicef.



PHOTO: STAR

A few kids coming to Baradam Government Primary School by the shuttle boat provided by Unicef for schools in Kaptai Lake area, right, four having swimming training pose for photograph in front of school.



Special training on swimming is also being provided to the kids so that they can swim across the lake in case of any accident during the journey to the school.

Alongside these activities, during implementation of the project the existing school buildings will be renovated and repaired to ensure hundred percent attendance at schools.

Alpona Chakma, a guardian in Balukhali village, said "I am very happy about the unique steps taken by Unicef, particularly about the shuttle boat and swimming training to the kids."

"Earlier, my grandson

couldn't attend classes regularly due to scarcity of dinghy boat," she said.

"When we go to our workplaces, our kids cannot go to school as we have only one boat like many other families. Now my kid's can reach school with the help of shuttle boat," said Niva Rani Chakma, another guardian at Gurgojjyachhari.

Mita Chakma, a teacher of Golachhari Government Primary School, said many students from far-flung areas were now coming to schools by the engine boat supplied by the Unicef.

Earlier, they often faced problem due to lack of suffi-

cient dinghy boats, she said.

While visiting a school in the area, this correspondent found the students coming to schools spontaneously by shuttle boats. Some students were seen swimming as part of swimming training in the Kaptai Lake.

"I can swim now in the river and I am capable of crossing the lake quite confidently," said a beaming Biswajit Chakma, a student of playgroup at Boradom Primary School.

Chairman of Rangamati Hill District Council Nikhil Kumar Chakma said, "We have a plan to expand this project in other areas."



PHOTO: STAR

Hefajat ameer Allama Shah Ahmad Shafi came to Bogra by a private helicopter from Hathazari in Chittagong to address a rally of the Islamist group at Eidgah ground in the town yesterday.

# Hefajat chief lands from chopper, addresses rally

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bogra*

Leaders of Hefajat-e-Islam Bangladesh have threatened to unseat the government if their 13-point demand is not met by May 5.

They sounded the warning from rally held at Central Eidgah in Bogra town yesterday.

Chaired by Mufti Abdur Rahman, the rally was addressed, among others, by Ameer of Hefajat-e-Islam Bangladesh Allama Shah Ahmad Shafi, Secretary Junaid Babunagari, central Vice President Noor Hossain Kashimi, Bogra unit member secretary Engineer Shamsul Islam, Maulana Abdur Rouf and Nazmul Ahsan.

A helicopter, carrying

Hefajat Ameer Allama Shah Ahmad Shafi from Hathazari in Chittagong, landed Sultanganj High School field at 3:05pm. Party secretary Junaid Babunagari accompanied the Hefajat ameer.

Asked who had provided the helicopter for the Hefajat ameer, Bogra unit member secretary engineer Shamsul Islam told this correspondent that an *imandar* (believer) of Islam chartered the helicopter for him (ameer).

He, however, declined to mention the name of the person who hired the helicopter for Hefajat ameer.

Addressing the rally, the Hefajat leaders said Savar tragedy is a *gazab* (curse) of Allah as the activists of Gonojagoron Mancha are

involved in immoral activities at Shahbagh. They demanded immediate arrest of the atheist bloggers.

The Hefajat leaders vowed to shed blood to realise their demands and urged the people to join Dhaka siege programme on May 5.

Allama Shah Ahmad Shafi in his speech urged the people to get ready for sacrificing their lives for the sake of Islam. "We want to make the country free from atheist bloggers as they are illegal sons of the soil," he said.

District unit BNP leaders led by President VP Saiful Islam and Jagga Bogra unit President Ameer Mondol also attended the rally.

## Krishak Dal leader killed

A CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

A local Krishak Dal leader was killed and another injured in a clash between two rival groups in Tala upazila yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Insar Ali Goldar, 50, general secretary of Tala upazila unit Krishak Dal and a member of Tala union parishad.

Police and locals said, the clash took place when a gang of 25 to 30, allegedly led by Sarulia UP chairman Badruzzaman, attacked the followers of local BNP leader Rashedul Haque at a meeting of Krishak Dal at the Patkeghat BNP office at 12:00pm.

The gang beat up Insar Ali and Rashedul Haque mercilessly, leaving them seriously injured and fled the scene.

Insar Ali died on his way to Khulna Medical College and Hospital.