

'Unending wait' for bridge over Pakhimara canal

Foundation laid in 2000, work yet to take off

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Thousands of villagers are suffering for want of a bridge on Pakhimara canal in Nilganj union under Kalapara upazila. The then lawmaker Md Anwar-ul-Islam laid foundation stone of a bridge on Pakhimara canal on

June 3 in 2001, but the work did not even start in last 13 years.

Three years ago, Md Kamal Hossain, member of Nilganj union parishad (UP), built a bridge made of bamboo and wood on the canal to ease communication for the people of

Kumirmara, Alempur, Majidbaria, Majidpur, Faridganj, Pakhimara, Naubhanga, Sonatala and Baintala villages in Kalapara upazila with the upazila town.

But the bridge has remained virtually unusable since its collapse six months ago.

"Most of the people of the nine villagers are vegetable growers and they have to regularly carry their produce to the upazila town for sale. But they are facing problem due to lack of a bridge," said UP member Kamal Hossain.

"We badly need a bridge on Pakhimara canal to ease communication with the upazila town as we have to carry our vegetables daily for sale. We have to bear extra cost to cross the river by country boats amid risk or cover additional five kilometres to bring vegetables to Kalapara town," said Abdul Mannan, a vegetable grower of Kumirmara village.

School and madrasa students are also suffering for want of a bridge on the canal.

Immediate steps should be taken to build a bridge on the canal, said Maulana Habibur Rahman, principal for Naubhanga Senior Madrasa.

Pronob Kumar, upazila engineer of Local Government Engineering Department, said they have taken an initiative to build an iron bridge on the canal and the work is likely to start soon.



PHOTO: STAR

Pakhimara canal in Kalapara upazila under Patuakhali district is yet to see start of the construction work for a concrete bridge after 13 years of the laying of its foundation stone while collapse of the lone bamboo and wood bridge there a few months ago left the locals in despair.



PHOTO: STAR

A good number of farmers in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila cover their vegetable fields with mosquito nets as the method has been proved effective to protect the plants from vermin and insects, without the use of any harmful chemicals. The photo was taken from Fulgachh village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila a few days ago.

Mosquito nets protect winter crops

Innovative, environment-friendly method to get rid of insects getting popular in Lalmonirhat

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

A good number of farmers in around 50 villages of Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila are now using mosquito nets to protect their winter crops, especially vegetables, from vermin and swarm.

"Instead of using any pesticides, I cover my vegetable fields with mosquito nets to save the plants from vermin and swarm. I am getting better results by applying this method for the last three

years," said Nabir Hossain, 60, of Fulgachh village in Lalmonirhat Sadar.

"We can use the same mosquito nets several times for protecting crops, especially vegetables. The method costs less than that of using pesticides," Sabarul Islam, 48, of the same village said.

"Attack of insects decreases about 90 percent if mosquito nets are used for protecting vegetables. Like me, many farmers in our village are getting benefit by using this method," said Ataur

Rahman, a farmer at Mogholhat village in Lalmonirhat Sadar.

Use of the method sees gradual increase in different areas of the district, said Alok Adhikary, sub-assistant agriculture officer in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

Safayet Hossain, deputy director of the Department of Agriculture Extension in Lalmonirhat, said the environment-friendly method of using mosquito nets has been found effective to save crops from vermin and swarm.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS

Jubo Dal leader stabbed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole, Jessore

A local leader of Jubo Dal was stabbed by criminals at Khaskhali village in Jhikargachha upazila of the district on Friday night. The injured was identified as Touhidur Rahman, 33, organising secretary of Shimulia union unit Jubo Dal, the youth wing of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and son of Tozammel Hossain of the village. Police and hospital sources said a gang swooped on Touhidur and stabbed him with sharp weapons, leaving him seriously injured. He was admitted to Jessore 250-Bed Hospital.



PHOTO: STAR

The memorial plaque built for over 25 freedom fighters who met tragic death in an accidental blasts of mines at the transit camp at Moulvibazar Government High School on December 20 in 1971, only a few days after the nation's final victory against Pakistan occupation forces.

Man killed by second wife

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

The second wife of a man allegedly strangled her husband for his 'extra marital affair' at Khorshedpur village in Sadar upazila of Chuadanga district yesterday. Police at Begumpur camp said Nasir Uddin, 55, had been living with his second wife Bulu Khatun. On hearing the matter, Bulu locked in an altercation with Nasir on Friday night. At one stage, Bulu pressed a pillow on Nasir Uddin's face while he was asleep. Later, Bulu and her son Ashraf, 20, took the body to a nearby pond and dumped there. Locals found the body in the morning and informed the police.

Youth murders his father

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A man was killed allegedly by his son at Laskarpur tea garden in Chunarughat upazila of Habiganj district on Friday night. The deceased was identified as Manik Kalindi, 50, father of Liton Kalindi, 26, of the area. Police said, Manik and his son locked in an altercation at home around 8:00pm over a family feud. At a stage, Liton hit on the head of his father with a steel jug, leaving Manik dead on the spot. Police recovered the body but Liton went into hiding after the incident.

Two held on rape charge

A CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

The law enforcers on Friday night arrested two youths in connection with the alleged gang rape of a Class V student in Daudkandi upazila of the district in the evening. Meanwhile, hundred of villagers yesterday morning brought out a procession demanding steps to bring the culprits to book. On Friday evening, the girl was 'gang-raped' by criminals who also took the scenes on their mobile phones, the victim alleged. The incident took place when she went to her school in Sundalpur area in Daudkandi upazila with her mother to receive her stipend. When the mother went to collect the money, leaving her daughter with other students in the playground, the criminals pick her up and raped at a nearby place.

Abducted banker yet to be freed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Three days into the incident, police are yet to rescue a Brac bank official abducted for ransom from Arabpur bus stand area in Jessore town on Thursday night.

Victim Shankar Das Roy, 28, son of Tagore Das Roy of Benepara village in Kotchandpur upazila of Jhenidah, was an executive officer at Brac Bank Arabpur branch in Jessore town.

Tagore Das, quoting Shankar, said a gang of criminals picked up his son on a private car forcibly, while he was waiting for a bus in the area to return to his village home around 11:30pm.

Later, the same night around 12:30am, the

abductors rang him and demanded Tk 2 lakh for his son's release. However, Tagore filed an abduction case with Kotchandpur Police Station on Friday afternoon.

Around 10:30pm on Friday, Shankar again called him using an abductor's phone and asked Tagore to send Tk 2 lakh through a bKash account, and said that otherwise the gang would kill him.

Shahidul Islam Shahin, officer in-charge of Kotchandpur Police Station, said Shankar joined the bank this December and had been attending his office from his native village in Kotchandpur.

'We are trying locate Shankar to rescue him', added the OC.

Garment trader rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police yesterday rescued a garment trader from Chuadanga district yesterday, two days after his abduction.

Victim Abu Zafar, 35, of Haripur in Kushtia Sadar upazila, runs a garment shop in the area. He was also involved in bringing clothes from India through border.

Police and family sources said, one Madhu, Habu and Mikalay of Munshipur in Damurbuda upazila of Chuadanga took Zafar to Munshipur village at Damurbuda border point on Thursday afternoon with a promise to arrange Indian clothes at cheap rate.

The trio later demanded Tk 12 lakh ransom from the family for his release over mobile phone. The abductors confined him to the house of one Shahed Ali at Pipurkulla village in the upazila.

On Friday morning, Zafar's wife Rubina Khatun filed a case with Kushtia Model Police Station in this connection.

On secret information, a team, led by SI Emdad Hossain of Karpusdanga police camp, raided Shahed Ali's house at 3:30pm yesterday and rescued Zafar.

However, none was arrested as the abductor fled the scene sensing presence of the law enforcers.

Bogra BNP enforces 8-hr hartal

UNB, Bogra

The half-day hartal was enforced in the district by the local unit BNP demanding the release of its five leaders whom a court on December 11 sent to jail in a case for crude bomb blast in front of district Awami League office.

Picketing by the party activists was seen in different parts of the town in the morning.

Motorised vehicles stayed off the roads while shops remained closed.

However, no long-route buses left the district town.

The shutdown that began at 6.00am ended at 2.00pm.

Earlier, Saiful Islam, district BNP president and an executive committee member of the central BNP, announced the shutdown after a joint meeting of BNP and its associate bodies at the local BNP office on Wednesday evening.

The general strike is also meant for registering protest against an attack on Sadar upazila Jubo Dal president Rafiul Islam Rubel.

The party staged demonstrations in the district town on Thursday and in all 12 upazilas and 21 wards of Bogra municipality on Friday to press for its demands.

A local court on December 11 sent five BNP leaders to jail in a case filed in connection with the crude bomb blast in front of district Awami League office on September 3.

Another court on Wednesday denied them bail for the second time.



PHOTO: STAR

Publicity extravaganza like colourful gates grips Pabna town as the district unit of ruling Awami League yesterday saw its triennial council after long nine years. The photo was taken from Pabna Police Lines area.

Clashes leave teenage boy, man killed in 2 districts

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A 15-year-old boy, who was injured during a clash between two groups of villagers over a football match in Lahiripara union in Sadar upazila of Bogra, died at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital (SZMCH) yesterday morning.

Deceased, Raihan Ali, 15, was son of Solaiman Ali, a resident of Nandipara village of the union.

Police, quoting witnesses, said the clash erupted when Raihan shook hands with a teenage girl of Nandipara Dakkhinpara village after a football match held between the two villages.

A group of angry local

youths of Dakkhinpara village attacked Raihan with sticks and bamboos, leaving him critically injured.

Following the incident, people of Nandipara village attacked Dakkhinpara village and vandalised at least 10 houses of the village. The also beat up three women, Rowsan Ara, Jyotsna and Chaina and allegedly looted seven cows, four goats and two bicycles.

Away in Chapainawabganj, a man was killed by his neighbours allegedly over a land dispute at Enayetpur village in Raninagar upazila of Naogaon yesterday, reports our correspondent.

The deceased is Golam Rabbani, 40, son of Kaiser Pramanik of the village.

Al-Masud Chowdhury, officer in-charge of Raningar Police Station, quoting locals said there had been a long standing rivalry between Golam Rabbani and his neighbour Rahmat Pramanik over the ownership of one decimal land adjacent to their house.

On Friday night, the duo locked in an altercation over the issue and at one stage, supporters of Rahmat attacked Rabbani with sticks and bamboos, leaving him critically injured and fled the scene.

Locals rushed Rabbani to Naogaon Sadar Hospital the same night where he succumbed to his injuries yesterday morning.



PHOTO: STAR

Teachers and students accompanied by locals form a human chain in front of Seed Store Bazar in Bhaluka upazila under Mymensingh district yesterday, demanding arrest and punishment of the criminals who killed nursery student Zinnia Akhtar along with her parents and baby sister on December 16.

KILLING OF FOUR OF A FAMILY Mastermind still at large

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Students and teachers formed a human chain and held a rally in Seed Store Bazar area under Bhaluka upazila on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway yesterday to protest the brutal killing of six-year-old student Zinnia and her three family members.

The authorities of Nakhattr International English Medium School and other kindergartens organised the programmes.

Zinnia was a nursery student at the school.

Addressing the rally, the speakers demanded capital punishment to the killers. However, the alleged mastermind of the killing still remained out of the dragnet. Local union parishad chairman Morshed

Alam, schoolteachers Mehdi Hasan, Raihana Akhtar, Anwar Hossain and Nazmul Huda, among others, spoke at the rally.

On December 16, Rafiqul Islam Bachchu, 35, general secretary of Habirbari union unit of Sramik Dal, his wife Parul Akhtar, 28, and two daughters -- Zinnia Akhtar, 6, and one-year-old Riva Akhtar were brutally killed at their house at Lobonkotha village in Bhaluka upazila.

Bachchu's father Wares Ali filed a case with Bhaluka Police Station on Tuesday night, accusing four people.

Detectives on Wednesday detained six people, including two women, suspecting their involvement in the gruesome murder.

We are raiding different places to arrest Hafizur Rahman Tanu, alleged mastermind of the murder, said a DB official.