



PHOTO: STAR

Rainwater trickling down from the recently overhauled shed of Saidpur Railway Workshop gathers on the floor of the country's largest railway workshop in Nilphamari district.

MODERNISATION OF SAIDPUR RAILWAY WORKSHOP

Rainwater seeps thru' roof, weeks after work completes

Machinery getting damaged, workers under risk of electrocution

TEAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Believe it or not, rainwater trickles down from the roofs of different sections of Saidpur Railway Workshop in the district, only two months after completion of a massive modernisation project in the country's largest railway workshop.

The situation, especially during the rains, is causing damage to valuable machinery, hampering work, and even posing threat of electrocution to workers.

The government in 2011 launched the Tk 156 crore 'Saidpur Railway Workshop Modernization Project' under four packages as the old workshop, established in 1870 during the British

era, was facing production debacle, workshop sources said.

One of four packages comprised repair and development of 28 shops inside the workshop like heavy repair shop, general overhauling shop, electric shop, wagon shop, welding shop, paint shop, blacksmith shop and so on and also setting up heavy water pumps, said sources.

Dhaka-based construction firm Tom a Construction and Company got the work of the package with estimated cost of Tk 42 crore that includes replacing of old roofs and construction of floors.

Earlier scheduled to for June of 2014, the work was finally complete and

handed over to the authority on June 25 this year.

During a recent visit by reporters of different national dailies, it was found that rainwater trickled down the newly built roofs on machinery and electric wiring as the roofs developed small holes due to rusting.

As per schedule it was obligatory to use high quality zinc aluminium sheets in roofs but ordinary MS sheets were used instead, said an engineer of the rail workshop on condition of anonymity.

"Often we have to stop our work as different machines get electrified due to falling of rainwater from roofs," said Golam Mostofa, a first grade worker of weld-

ing shop.

On August 13, worker Abdul Jalil was hospitalised with injuries as he fell down while climbing on the roof for a temporary repair in traditional way to stop dripping of rainwater, workers said.

Dijoy Kumar Singha, in charge of heavy repairing shop, said, "There are 742 kinds of small and big machines in the workshops but they will be gradually damaged if exposed to water for long."

Nur Ahmed Hossain, divisional superintendent of Saidpur Railway Workshop, said he has brought the matter to the notice of his higher authorities for action on an urgent basis.



PHOTO: STAR

The upazila nirbahi officer of Chatmohar in Pabna district addresses the locals on the premises of Baghoil Koibari Dakhil Madrasa in the upazila yesterday, assuring them of action against five teachers of the madrasa for their alleged sexual harassment of a girl student.

Sexual harassment of madrasa girls spark protest

Body formed to probe allegation against 5 teachers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

The local administration yesterday formed a seven-member probe committee to investigate the allegation of sexual harassment of girl students against the superintendent and four other teachers of Baghoilbari Koibari Dakhil Madrasa at Handial in Chatmohar upazila under the district.

Earlier on Monday, angry locals besieged the madrasa demanding exemplary

punishment of the accused - superintendent Md Abdus Samad and teachers Moulana Nazrul Islam, Mozibar Rahman, Arshed Ali and Osman Gani.

Chatmohar Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Shoheli Laila along with police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control, assuring steps against the accused.

"The accused teachers have been asked not to

come to the madrasa. A seven-member probe committee headed by Mizanur Rahman, assistant commissioner (Land), has been formed to investigate the matter. They will submit probe report next Sunday and steps will be taken afterwards," the UNO said.

Moulana Nazrul Islam, religion teacher of the madrasa, developed illicit relation with a Class IX student of the institution,

sources said, adding that four other teachers also tried to make such relation with girl students.

"Suddenly their cellphone conversation regarding the matter spread out from a mobile repairing shop, sparking agitation among locals. Parents are now feeling insecure to send their girls to the madrasa," said Md Robiul Karim, chairman of Handial union parishad.

Floods damage crops worth Tk 500cr in Kurigram, Bogra

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Floods have damaged crops worth around Tk 500 crore on 87795 hectares of land in Kurigram and Bogra districts.

Our Kurigram correspondent, quoting Shawkat Ali Sarkar, deputy director (DD) of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in the district, reports that floods have damaged crops worth around Tk four crores in the district.

Aman paddy farmers cultivated 1,03,291 hectares of land in nine upazilas of the district while local agriculture department had fixed 88,396 hectares this year, said a source in Kurigram DAE.

The back-to-back floods inundated 507 villages of 63 unions under nine upazilas of the district and submerged 76,688 hectares of crop fields. Of them, 44,085

hectares of croplands have been damaged.

Jitendra Nath Sarkar, 55, a farmer of Topamari Beel area of Belgachha union under Sadar upazila, said, "About 18 bighas of my aman paddy field have been damaged by the recent flood and downpour. As there is no scope of replanting aman paddy, I have to count a huge loss."

Abu Bakar Siddique, 24, a farmer of Farajipara village under Jatrapur union of the upazila, said, "I cultivated aman on 12 bighas of land before this flood. The whole paddy field has been damaged by floodwater. There is no scope of cultivating paddy again as the lands are still under water."

Shawkat Ali Sarkar said, "The farmers have been badly affected this season. To recover their loss, we are advising them to cultivate

paddy saplings of Nabhi variety after the floodwater recedes. If the water takes longer to recede, we advise them to cultivate vegetables, mustard, pulse and ground nut."

Away in Bogra, the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Bogra has assessed the loss due to damage to crops by the recent flood in 150 villages of 25 unions under eight upazilas of the district to be around Tk 103 crore.

Crops on 11, 107 hectares of land were damaged by back-to-back floods in Sonatola, Shariakandi, Dhunat, Sherpur, Gabtoli, Shajahanpur, Shibgonj and Adamdighi upazilas.

DAE sources said T-aman on 10,233 hectares out of 1,85,500 hectares, seedbeds of T-aman on 173 hectares, aus on 282 hectares, vegetables on 340 hectares, and lentil on 115

hectares were damaged in the upazila.

The sources added that there is no chance of planting aman on the affected land, but the farmers can recoup their losses to some extent by cultivating a new kind of local paddy, "Gainza," in the damaged cropland.

Contacted, Deputy Director (DD) of DAE Bogra, Chandu Das Kundu said they have sent a letter to the authorities concerned, asking for Tk 7 crore for the rehabilitation of the affected farmers of the district so that they can recover their losses.

District education sources said at least 111 educational institutions of Shariakandi, Dhunata, Sonatola and Shibgonj upazilas have been affected, but the total amount of losses could not be estimated till Thursday.



PHOTO: STAR

A paddy field destroyed by the stagnant water at Rohodoha in Sariakandi upazila under Bogra district that saw massive flooding this season.

Maid raped in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

An indigenous housemaid was raped allegedly by two locals in Kalaghata area under Sadar upazilla of the district on Monday night.

Victim's brother Mong Cha Hla Marma said his sister has been working at the house of Thanchi upazilla chairman in New Gulshan area of the upazila for around one and half years. Police quoted the victim as saying that a gang of two forcibly took her to a nearby jungle while returning to her workplace from her brother's house in Kalaghata area at around 7:30pm and raped her.

The victim was admitted to Bandarban Sadar Hospital.

A case was filed with Sadar Police Station in this connection, said Investigation Officer (IO), Amir Hossain. Police of Bandarban Sadar Police Station recorded the victim's statement at the hospital.

Police arrested one alleged rapist Mong Ba Ching Marma, 26, of Kalaghata. They are trying to arrest the other rapist named Ponoj Chakma, 22, of the same area, the IO added.

3 houses looted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Robbers looted valuables from three houses at Bolotbunia village in Sadar upazila of the district early Monday.

The affected house owners are Abdul Barek, Abdul Aziz Majhee, and Aiyub Ali of the village.

SM Tariqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Patuakhali Police Station, confirmed the incidents.

Stalkers swoop on teachers, students: One arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A gang attacked at least 10 students and five teachers of Mallik Mondol Dakhil Madrasa at Duail village in Sadar upazila of the district yesterday as they protested stalking of female students of the institution.

The injured include Sahera Khatun, assistant superintendent of the madrasa and tenth grader Alam Hossain.

Critically injured Alam

was admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, said Farhad Hossain, superintendent of the madrasa.

Police and locals said some local youths used to tease female students on way to the madrasa.

Yesterday noon, a gang of 10/12 gathered in front of the madrasa. Seeing this, the teachers and students asked them not to gather there.

Angered by this, the gang equipped with lethal weap-

ons swooped on some students. As the teachers came forward to save the students, they also came under attack, said the superintendent.

On information, police rushed to the spot and arrested one Hridoy, 18, in connection with the attack, said Mahabab Kabir, sub-inspector of Sadar Police Station.

However, other culprits managed to flee the scene, sensing the presence of the law enforcers, said the SI.



PHOTO: STAR

A good number of women demonstrate in front of the upazila nirbahi officer's office in Mirzaganj under Patuakhali district yesterday demanding action against NGO Shuktara Mohila Sangstha that allegedly cheated around 2,000 local women of Tk 1,800 to 3,000 each