

Under construction bridge lacks required height

Water transports to face danger during the rains

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

An under construction bridge on the Ichhamoti River in Sirajdikhan upazila under the district is likely to pose serious threat to the water transports plying under the bridge in the rainy season as the structure lacks required height.

"The bridge is about 11 feet high from the present water level. In the rainy season the water level will rise by around eight feet, leaving only three feet room for river vessels to move under the bridge," said Mujibor Rahman, a resident of Majidpur village in the upazila.

It will not be possible to run boats carrying agricultural products under the bridge in the rainy season, he added.

Collecting signatures from a large number of people, villagers submitted a complaint to the upazila engineer of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) and demonstrated on three occasions demanding stoppage of the work of the bridge but to no effect.

S Sarker Enterprise is constructing the 54 metre by 7.3 metre bridge at a cost of over Tk 2.61 crore under UNR-GDP project of the local government division on a branch of Ichhamoti River at Mirzakanda under Keyain union of the upazila, LGED sources said.

Locals farmers alleged



PHOTO: STAR

This under construction bridge on the Ichhamoti River in Sirajdikhan upazila under Munshiganj district leaves too little height for boats, posing danger to vessels plying the river, especially during the rainy season when the water level rises by several feet.

that the under construction bridge is lower than the target of 10,109 hectares under Nimtola Rajanagar-Shekhornagar-Mirzakanda road near Mirzakanda Government Primary School and it will make carrying of agricultural produces on the waterway risky in the rainy season.

Once the bridge is built with low height, about 50,000 people of three unions will suffer as the structure will create obstacle to running of any river transport under it during the rainy season, said local union parishad member Meher Hossain.

A government serviceholder seeking anonymity said the contracting firm in collaboration with the upazila engineer hurriedly completed the moulding work of the bridge.

Contacted, engineer Aminul Islam of LGED said, "The bridge has been

built as per plan and I do not think that the height is a bit low. There was not any financial wrongdoing here."

This correspondent made several phone calls to contracting firm S Sarker Enterprise, but none received those calls.

DIARRHOEA BREAKS OUT IN C'NAWABGANJ TOWN Hospital struggles to cope with patients

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Chapainawabganj Adhunik Sadar Hospital is seeing upsurge in diarrhoea cases as the disease continues to spread in different areas of the municipality.

Hospital sources said over 10 diarrhoea patients, mostly children and women, were admitted to the hospital between 6:00 am and 11:00 am yesterday. 175 people attacked by the disease were admitted between Sunday night and yesterday morning.

Bakul Sarkar of Masjid Para said four people of his family, including his mother, were attacked by diarrhoea and took treatment at the hospital.

When this correspondent visited Sadar Hospital yesterday, he saw many diarrhoea patients were being treated in the hospital corridor due to lack of accommodation.

Over 40 to 50 patients come to the hospital every day, but the hospital authorities cannot provide them with accommodation at the 10-bed ward meant for diarrhoea patients, said a senior staff nurse of the hospital.

According to a hospital source, 40 to 50 patients arrive every day at the outdoor section also. The on-duty doctors are providing better healthcare services for them. "We are facing problems in dealing with the growing number of patients due to shortage of manpower," the nurse added.



PHOTO: STAR

Treatment seekers lie on the floor of the veranda of Chapainawabganj Adhunik Sadar Hospital yesterday as its diarrhoea ward now fails to accommodate all the patients amid sudden rise of the waterborne disease in the municipality area.

Most of the patients are from Masjid Para, Alinagar, Balubagan, and PTI areas in Chapainawabganj municipality.

Dr. Shafiqul Islam, Resident Medical Officer (RMO) of Adhunik Sadar Hospital, said there is no shortage of oral saline and necessary medicines at the hospital, except for IV fluid. He has informed the higher authorities about the matter, he added.

Most people were

attacked by diarrhoea after drinking unsafe water supplied by the municipality, he alleged.

Saidur Rahman, acting mayor of Chapainawabganj municipality, said they are supplying safe drinking water from their pumps, but there was a leak in the supply line at Pathan Para, which was repaired.

The municipal authorities advised townspeople to drink boiled water.

Bumper yield, good price make chilli growers happy

QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, Thakurgaon

Chilli farmers of Panchagarh and Thakurgaon districts are happy due to its bumper production and good market prices during the ongoing harvesting season.

Traders from different districts including Dhaka, Manikganj and Narayanganj are coming to buy it from makeshift markets in Atwary, Boda and Debiganj upazilas of Panchagarh and Sadar upazila of Thakurgaon district where a maund (40 kg) of green chilli is selling at Tk 800-1000 and dried chilli at Tk 3,000-3,500.

It is considered as an essential ingredient for preparing curry in our country.

Farmers have cultivated

chilli on 10,130 hectares of land in five upazilas of Panchagarh district against the target of 10,109 hectares, while the cultivation area in Thakurgaon district is 865 hectares of land against the target of 750 hectares, said sources of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE).

The production target in the two districts is 14,658 tonnes and 1,380 tonnes of dried chilli.

Of the ten upazilas of the two districts, Boda, Debiganj and Atwary upazilas of Panchagarh and Sadar and Baliadangi upazilas of Thakurgaon are more suitable for chilli cultivation, DAE sources said.

Sandy-loamy soil, favourable weather, easy availability of labourers and

irrigation facilities are reasons for the production of high quality chilli in the area, said Rafiqul Islam, deputy director (DD) of DAE, Panchagarh.

This correspondent recently visited several makeshift markets at Sonahar, Barabari and Kaliganj villages in Debiganj upazila, Radhanagar, Kismat and Fakirganj in Atwary upazila, and Shingpara and Kalurhat in Boda upazila of Panchagarh district.

Huge quantities of chilli arrive at Sonahar market and several trucks loaded with the item start for different areas of the country every day, said Ashekur Rahman, a local chilli trader.

Hamidul Islam, a farmer of Barabari in Debiganj upazila, said he cultivated chilli on 50 decimals of land

and produced 60 maunds of chilli spending Tk 20,000. He got Tk 48,000 by selling the produce.

Nolini Barman of Kismat Rosea village in Atwary upazila of Panchagarh said he cultivated chilli on 50 decimals of land spending Tk 18,000 and produced 17 maunds of dried chilli. He sold it for Tk 51,000 at Fakirganj Haat in the upazila.

Cultivation of chilli is quite easy and usually less expensive than other crops, DD Rafiqul Islam said.

"A farmer can easily earn Tk 18,000 to Tk 20,000 by growing chilli in a bigha of land. It is possible to produce 30-35 maunds of chilli per bigha if the climate remains favourable and proper care is taken," he said.

KORNAI ATTACK CASE

Charge-sheeted BNP man elected UP chairman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A local BNP leader, charge-sheeted accused in a case for attacking Hindus of Kornai village in 2014, has been elected as chairman of Chehelgazi Union Parishad in Sadar upazila of the district.

Election in the union parishad was held on May 28.

The accused is Anisur Rahman Badsha, vice president of Dinajpur municipality unit of BNP.

He went into hiding soon after the attack during the national election on January 5 in 2014.

Jamaat-Shibir and BNP men allegedly attacked Kornai village. At least 34 shops were vandalised and burnt during the incident. As many as 86 families were affected due to the attack.

The attack was carried out in the Hindu dominated village as it was considered a vote bank of Awami League, said locals.

Later, three cases were filed in connection with the incident. On May 31 last year, CID submitted charge sheet, accusing 87 men including Badsha.

ATM Khalequzzaman, officer-in-charge of Dinajpur Kotwali Police Station, said Badsha got six weeks bail from the High Court but he is yet to surrender to local court.

Bomb hurled at AL candidate's office

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Criminals hurled a crude bomb at the office of the Awami League nominated chairman candidate in a union parishad election under Sharsha upazila of Jessore district on Tuesday night.

However, none sustained injuries during the incident. None was arrested in this connection, said sub-inspector Babul Akhter, in-charge of Gorpara police camp.



PHOTO: STAR

Candidates for chairman and member posts accompanied by a large number of locals bring out a procession in Fulchhari upazila headquarters under Gaibandha district yesterday demanding holding of the election to Gazaria union parishad (UP) in the upazila on June 4, as per the earlier schedule. The authorities have suspended the voting after a High Court order following a writ petition filed by the incumbent chairman, seeking settlement of boundary disputes in erosion-affected wards.

SI, aide sent to jail as 23 bikes sold thru' forging documents

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A Dinajpur court yesterday sent a sub-inspector and his aide to jail rejecting their bail prayer, as the two were accused in two cases for selling 23 motorcycles with forged documents and signature of a magistrate.

They are Jahangir Hossain, a former sub-inspector of Birganj Police Station in Dinajpur [now posted in Godagari of Rajshahi], and his aide Abu Syeed, a notorious bike lifter in Birganj upazila of Dinajpur.

The Court of Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate FM Ahsanul Haque issued an arrest warrant against the two on May 12 after Md Mamun Hasan, an official of the court, filed a case against them on May 9 on charge of forging the documents and signature of a magistrate.

Abdul Gaffar, son of Enamul Haque of Birganj, also filed another case Dinajpur police station for the same reason on May 9. Zahangir Hossain and Abu

Syeed yesterday appeared before the court that ordered police to send them to jail, rejecting their bail prayer.

"In the case it was mentioned that the accused sold 23 motorcycles forging signature and seals of the Court of Magistrate FM Ahsanul Haque. In exchange of money, SI Zahangir Hossain gave papers to those who bought motorcycles from him," said Abdul Gaffar, one of victims of forgery.

Everything came to the fore as Birganj police on April 14 seized one of motorcycles bought from the SI.

After checking the documents police found that those were forged.

As they contacted with Mamun Hasan, nazir of the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court, the latter confirmed that the court has no relevant documents of any vehicles auctioned by Birganj Police Station. The court officials confirmed that the signature and seals used in the so-called auction papers were forged, Gaffar said. The 23 motorcycles were

sold for a total of Tk 27.45 lakh, police said, adding that they so far seized four motorcycles auctioned by forging the signature and seal of court.

Porimal Roy of Kaharol upazila said his bike went missing on March 2 this year. Birganj upazila Police recovered it but he was not informed as it was auctioned through forged documents, he said.

Dinajpur Superintendent of Police (SP) Ruhul Amin said a three-member investigation team led by Additional SP Mizanur Rahman, and comprising ASP of Birganj Circle and a court inspector, was formed on May 2 to investigate the incident of selling motorbikes through forgery.

The committee was asked to submit their report within 15 workdays but they failed.

Sujan Sarker, ASP (Birganj Circle), told this correspondent over phone that they could not submit the report on time due to the union parishad elections held in Dinajpur district on May 7 and 28.



PHOTO: STAR

Workers harvest ripe chilli at a field of Chandipur village in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila. The area sees good yield of the item used as an essential item to add to taste in curries.