

3 bridges without link roads for yrs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

People of Joshar union in Narsingdi's Shibpur upazila cannot use any of the three bridges since completion of its construction over a decade ago, due to lack of approach roads connecting them.

Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) built those concrete bridges on farmlands during the tenure of the last BNP-led government.

LGED constructed the bridges at a cost of Tk 29.65 lakh, but surprisingly no connecting roads were built to make the bridges usable.

LGED office sources said construction work of a bridge at Jankhartek close to Dhaka-Sylhet highway completed in 2004-05 fiscal year but locals cannot use it due to

the lack of a connecting road.

Two other concrete bridges at Khoinkut near Srishtighar-Kutibazar road in the union built at a total cost of Tk 18.68 lakh have also remained unused since its construction was completed in 2005-06 fiscal year.

Ibrahim Mia, a resident of Jankhartek village, said the BNP-led government constructed the three bridges at a single union only for political reasons and win over local voters.

Local people said due to absence of approach roads they are not getting benefit at all from any of those bridges as it remains totally unusable.

"After filling earth on either side of the bridges, we will start construction of the approach roads soon," said Fazle Habib, executive engineer of LGED in Narsingdi.



This concrete bridge at Khoinkut village in Narsingdi's Shibpur upazila remains useless for locals since completion of its construction more than a decade ago as it cannot be used due to lack of connecting roads. PHOTO: BENAJIR AHMED

Fish poisoned to death in Magura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Unidentified people killed fish worth over Tk 3 lakh by putting poison in a fish farm in Narashinghati village under Magura Sadar upazila yesterday.

Manager of Sukhi Nilganj project Syed Shahjahan Kabir said the fish in the poisoned farm started floating on the water at noon.

Kabir said he informed the fishermen and tried to collect the dead fish from the farm, but most of them could not be collected as they got rotten and sank.

He said the water in the farm has become toxic and bad odour from the rotten fish is coming from the pond.

Officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station Azmal Huda said action will be taken regarding the matter after investigation.

Rape victim still unconscious

Joypurhat rally urges PM to bear her treatment cost

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Speakers at a human chain in Joypurhat demanded immediate arrest and capital punishment of the criminals who raped a schoolgirl and also stabbed her on December 23.

Quoting doctors, father of the victim, said his daughter suffered a stroke and is yet to regain her consciousness.

People from all walks of life, including teachers and students of different educational institutions, joined the programme at Matrai Bazar in Kalai upazila yesterday.

They also urged the prime minister to bear the treatment cost of the rape victim.

A gang entered the house of the ninth grader and locked the door of her parents' room. They later raped her, father of the victim said, adding that at one stage, they stabbed his daughter.

She was rushed to Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital in Bogra



Human chain in Joypurhat yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

in a critical condition. Later, the girl was referred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital as her condition worsened further.

Police arrested two men in connection with the incident on Thursday.

Our staff correspondent in Dhaka confirmed that the girl is still unconscious as of filing of this report around 8:50pm yesterday.

Prepare fair list of land acquisition

Say Mymensingh char people

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Speakers at a rally yesterday said they will not spare even an inch of land if fair list of land acquisition for Mymensingh division is not prepared involving four unions.

The unions are Char Nilaxia, Char Ishwardia, Char Sirta and Khagdahor in Sadar upazila.

The first phase was scrapped and the new list of land acquisition was prepared overnight, which raised many questions as to why such initiative was taken by the administration in a hurry, they said.

The speakers also said, as they believe in balanced development in the char areas, they are ready to assist the administration on the basis of equity.

Indiscriminate deer hunting: 2 arrested

Poachers active in collusion with locals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Poachers have become active in different upazilas of the district due to negligence of the authorities concerned.

They are hunting deer indiscriminately in collusion with the local influential people, and selling the flesh, hides and horns at high prices.

Forest department personnel arrested two people with arms from Dhalaicherra bamboo forest in Juri upazila of the district on Thursday. They are Abdur Rouf, 55, and Hason Ali of Fotiguli village in Kulaura upazila.

Raghna beat officer Nazrul Islam told this correspondent yesterday that police arrested them with five bullets and a single-barrel gun. "We filed a case against them under the Arms Act with Juri Police Station on Friday," he added.

The forest department does not have any list of professional poachers nor has it taken any positive move to stop poaching of deer, said a conservator of forests, seeking anonymity, adding that deer

population is declining fast in the forests in the district.

According to locals, at least 10 organised groups of poachers are involved in poaching animals, mainly deer.

The poachers mainly use traps, sedatives mixed with food and firearms to hunt deer.

Assistant Conservator of Forests in Sylhet Rajesh Chakma told this correspondent that some poachers kill deer round the year without facing any obstacles and sell the venison to their agents.

He added that shortage of manpower and other logistic support are hampering operations against poachers.

General Secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) Sylhet chapter Abdul Karim Kim told this correspondent that many poor people adjacent to the forest have chosen deer poaching as their means of livelihood. It is very important to create awareness among the people of the forest area about the matter to stop poaching, he added.



Schoolgirls prepare to start cycling from Thakurgaon town to Baliadangi upazila in the same district as part of an awareness campaign against social evils, organised by Eco Social Development Organisation yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Cycle race against child marriage

Thakurgaon schoolgirls join programme

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Five groups of schoolgirls took part in cycling in different areas of the district yesterday as part of an awareness campaign against social menaces like child marriage, dowry, stalking, drug abuse and militancy.

Simultaneously, around a hundred youths participated in a mini-marathon in the district town for the same purpose.

Seventy schoolgirls started cycling towards Baliadangi upazila from Thakurgaon town's central Shaheed Minar premises, following inauguration by Additional Deputy Inspector General of Police of Rangpur Range Chowdhury Manjurul Kabir.

From the same spot, around 100 youths started a race for Lokayan Museum in Sadar upazila while four other groups (each comprising 70 schoolgirls) started cycling from Baliadangi to Haripur, Haripur to Ranishankoil, Ranishankoil to Pirganj and Pirganj to Thakurgaon Sadar.

Non-governmental organisation

Eco Social Development Organisation (ESDO) arranged the programme in association with Palli Karma-Shahayak Foundation (PKSF) and Community Policing, Thakurgaon.

"Along with awareness campaigns against social evils, we organise traditional games, wall magazine competitions, cultural events and indoor games in different high schools of five upazilas of the district to develop creativity of the young learners," ESDO Executive Director Mohammad Shaheed Uz Zaman earlier said at a discussion at the same venue.

Superintendent of Police Farhad Ahmed, Commanding Officer of BCB 30 Battalion Lt Col Tusher Bin Yunus, and Principal of Eco College Selima Akhter, addressed the programme.

Local lawmaker Ramesh Chandra Sen as chief guest distributed prizes among the participants of the cycling and mini-marathon at the concluding session of the programme on the premises of Oporajeyo '71 in the afternoon.

30 hurt in clash over bus fare

Traffic movement comes to a standstill in Brahmanbaria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

At least 30 people were injured in a clash between two rival groups over bus fare on Dhaka-Sylhet highway in Sarail upazila of the district yesterday.

Passengers suffered a lot as traffic movement on the highway was suspended for about one and half hours after the incident.

The clash took place between the residents of Kuttapara and Khatihata in the upazila around 11:30am.

Police charged baton, fired rubber bullets and tear shell canisters to disperse the agitating mob.

An altercation ensued between the driver and passengers of a bus over giving Tk 5 less fare by a passenger.

Over the issue, the residents of Kuttapara and Khatihata villages were divided into two groups and engaged in a clash using locally made weapons, said Sub-Inspector Mejbah Uddin of Sadar Police Station.

The situation is under control now and the traffic movement on the highway returned to normalcy, said the SI.

Beheaded body of youth found near rail bridge

A CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

An unidentified youth was found dead near a railway bridge in Poirtola area of the district town yesterday.

Sub-Inspector Sanaul Islam of Government Railway Police (GRP) in Brahmanbaria said on information, police

recovered the beheaded body of a young man, aged about 20, in the morning and sent it to Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police suspect that the deceased might have committed suicide under the wheels of a running train, the OC added.

Sand lifting puts bridge over Bangalee risky

Croplands, houses under threat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Illegal lifting of sand threatens the bridge over the Bangalee river, and also farmlands and homesteads in Dhunat upazila of the district.

An influential local person has been lifting sand illegally with dredgers at Bererbari in Nimgaci under the upazila.

Locals said sand trader Raihan Ahmed took lease for lifting sand in the area this year. The rules stipulate that the lessee can lift sand without boring, but the lessee and local union parishad (UP) member Nabab Ali have placed dredgers near the bridge and are lifting sand illegally by using pipes to bore into the riverbed.

The boring has created a huge hole in the riverbed, which is threatening the bridge and erosion of farmlands and houses on both sides of the river, they added.

UP sources said mobile courts were con-

ducted twice, which fined them Tk 50,000 each time, but they started lifting sand again.

Azibor Rahman and Muzam Sheikh of Bererbari area said the villagers informed the local administration about the matter, but the officials did not take any initiative to stop the sand lifting.

Raihan and Nabab Ali said they have been lifting sand following the rules.

Upazila Engineer of Local Government Engineering Department Shafiqul Islam said the lessee has to lift sand from at least 500 metres away from the bridge. If he does not follow the rule, the bridge may collapse and action will be taken against him, he added.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Dhunat Mohammad Ibrahim said he will look into the matter and take action against the people lifting sand illegally.



An influential local has been illegally lifting sand with dredgers in Bererbari area of Nimgaci union under Dhunat upazila of Bogra, threatening the nearby bridge over the Bangalee river and farmlands and homesteads in the area. PHOTO: STAR