

Bamboo in rail bridges, again

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Authorities of Bangladesh Railway (BR) are again using bamboo sticks to support track sleepers, this time on two railway bridges on Dhaka-Sylhet-Chittagong route in Kulaura upazila under the district, ignoring the risk of serious accidents.

During visits to the rail bridges on the Fanai and Unfanai rivers yesterday, this correspondent saw that around half of the sleepers were damaged and bamboo sticks were used to prevent displacement of the remaining sleepers.

"We have to examine the rail lines twice a day and fix the damaged parts regularly. We use the bamboos to prevent the sleepers from being displaced," said Abdur Rahman, a railway employee.

Driving trains on the bridges over the Fanai and Unfanai rivers have become very risky, said a train driver seeking anonymity.

Ali Azam, senior sub-assistant engineer of BR in Sreemangal, said they have a maintenance worker who constantly monitors the area.

Contacted, Mujibur Rahman, assistant engineer of Sylhet Railway, claimed that there is not much risk due to use of bamboo sticks in railway tracks.

"Due to the shortage of wood, the damaged sleepers could not be replaced. I will inspect the spots and there are plans to set new sleepers soon," he added.

The railway authorities should identify the risky railway bridges and repair those quickly to avoid serious accidents, said Abdul Karim Kim, convener of Songkhudon Nagorik Andolon.

Earlier, the authorities did some repair works of Monu Railway Bridge on Dhaka-Sylhet-Chittagong railway in Kulaura upazila, following a report titled 'Flirting with danger' published by The Daily Star on January 4.



SAME CALLOUS ACT: Bamboo sticks are set to prevent displacement of weak railway sleepers in this bridge on the Fanai river on Dhaka-Sylhet route in Kulaura upazila under Moulvibazar district although such futile attempt at another place on the same route earlier gave rise to grievance among the stakeholders.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

Teachers' ultimatum to govt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Speakers at a rally yesterday threatened to go for tougher agitation if their demands including nationalisation of education system, are not met by the government within January 25.

The other demands are five percent increase of salaries, full festival bonus, increase of house rent allowance and medical allowance.

The threat was made at the programme organised by Bangladesh Shikhhak Samity Mymensingh district unit in the town's Krishnachura Chattar.

Teachers from Mymensingh, Sherpur, Netrakona and Jamalpur joined the grand rally.

Md Chand Miah, general secretary of the unit, also urged the prime minister to take immediate steps to fulfill their demands.

Later, the teachers submitted a memorandum to the divisional commissioner in favour of their demands.

Bridge construction firm too busy to build

Communication hampered in three districts for a year

EAM ASADUZZAMAN with ANDREW EAGLE

When the age-old pre-fabricated Bailey bridge across the Auliakhana River in Nilphamari collapsed on 23 July 2015 as a forty-tonne stone-laden truck attempted to cross it, the event promised prolonged hardship for many people. The Jaldhaka to Deviganj road on which the bridge is located is a busy one. For the people of six upazilas in three districts, it's an important transport route.

Thankfully the roads and highways department responded quickly. Considering the road's importance, tenders were soon invited to build a new concrete bridge, 31 metres long

and 7.3 metres wide, at an estimated cost of Tk 3.76 crore.

By December 2015 a bid from construction firm Messrs Md Shahjahan Ali was accepted, with their proposal valued at a seemingly cost-efficient Tk 3.5 crore. The new bridge is supposed to be completed by June 2017.

But progress has stalled. More than a year after the contract was awarded work on the new bridge is yet to start.

To visit the site is to observe that the construction firm has recently erected a rig for the piling work at the base of the bridge, but apart from the rig no piling work has been undertaken yet. Some steel rods are lying

nearby, unused for a long time.

"Several thousand people need to cross the river daily," says Abdul Gaffar, a teacher of Jaldhaka Degree College. "I also used the old bridge twice a day. Construction of the new bridge has been stalled for months; we have been facing difficulties for so long."

The lack of a bridge directly affects residents of Jaldhaka, Dimla, Domar, Hatibandha, Patgram and Deviganj upazilas in the districts of Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat and Panchagarh. Along with others from further afield trying to pass that way, they are currently reliant on a vulnerable by-pass, with the promises of a new bridge stagnant.

"We couldn't do the work because the water in the river is too deep," says Bijoy Kumar Mondol, a representative of the construction firm. "We have also been busy completing other big works on government tender in different parts of the country which means we haven't been able to start the work here. But we have set up the rigs to start the piling work soon."

It would seem unfortunate that a government contract was awarded to a firm too busy elsewhere to manage the project in a timely fashion. Two-thirds of the scheduled timeframe for completion of the new bridge has already expired. "Seventy-five percent of the

Brutality by drug addict husband

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Achhiya Begum, who was tortured by her drug addict husband on January 1 as she objected to his drug taking, is still in a serious condition.

Achhiya, 34, mother of two children, was rescued by neighbours from her home in Bishbari village under Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila and admitted to Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital. As her condition deteriorated, she was referred to Rangpur Medical College Hospital from where she was released on January 10. She has been living in her sister's house since then.

Dr Azmol Haque of Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital said there were many injury marks on her body due to torture.

"My husband Kalam Miah was under the influence of drugs on the night when he tortured me, causing serious injuries," Achhiya said. Achhiya's sister Shahina Begum said, "I and my parents are poor, so it is impossible for us to continue her treatment."

"As Kalam is a dangerous drug addict, we dare not file any case with the police against him," said Achhiya's mother Jahura Begum.



Progress in constructing a new bridge over Auliakhana river on Jaldhaka-Deviganj road in Nilphamari has been stalled for a year due to the alleged negligence of the construction firm, forcing its users to depend on a vulnerable by-pass.

PHOTO: EAM ASADUZZAMAN

Marma girl's rape sparks protest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Speakers at a human chain in the town yesterday demanded exemplary punishment to the culprits who raped a 16-year-old SSC examinee of Marma community on Friday.

Sammilita Adivasi Chhatra Samaj organised the programme in front of Bandarban Press Club. U Ma Prue Marma, Aung Cha Hla Marma and U Thoai Nu Marma spoke at the rally.

Police arrested Mizanur Rahman, 23, and Saiful Islam, 24, in this connection.

Mizanur took the girl to the woods nearby, and raped her. Saiful captured the whole thing on a mobile phone.

BRIDGE OVER SWARNAMOTI IN LALMONIRHAT

Slow progress in work

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Construction work of a bridge over the Swarnamoti river on Lalmonirhat-Burimari Highway in the district is going on at a slow pace.

More than a thousand vehicles, especially loaded trucks, use the risky Bailey bridge beside the under-construction Swarnamoti bridge every day. As construction is progressing slowly, it will not be completed by the deadline of May 15 this year.

Sources in the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) in Lalmonirhat said the government sanctioned Tk 12.35 crore for constructing the 94-metre-long four-lane bridge in Aditmar upazila. A joint venture firm of PTSL and Zahurul Islam was contracted to construct the bridge with the target of completing it by May, 2017. A Bailey bridge was set up beside the main bridge for ensuring communication with Burimari land port.

Construction workers said work of the bridge started in May last year and progress during the first four months was good, but it slowed down in the next three months.

"After three months of slow progress, 100 construction workers are working every day since December," said Nur Islam, 42, a worker.

Villager Mujibur Rahman, 56, said construction of a bridge over the Swarnamoti was their longstanding demand. "We want to see the bridge completed by May this year," he added.

Narendra Nath Barman, 55, said loaded vehicles face trouble in crossing the risky Bailey bridge as the construction work is going so slowly.

Truck driver Ziaul Islam, 44, of Lalmonirhat town, said he sometimes does not carry goods from Burimari land port for fear of accident on the risky Bailey bridge.

RHD Executive Engineer Sajedur Rahman said construction of Swarnamoti bridge would be completed by May this year and it would be opened for vehicular movement in June, adding that 50 percent of the work has already been done.

কৃষিই সমৃদ্ধি

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উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

"বঙ্গবন্ধু জাতীয় কৃষি পুরস্কার ১৪২১ ও ১৪২২" এর নিম্নলিখিত কার্যাবলী সম্পাদনের জন্য ০৫ (পাঁচ) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন আত্মহী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে নিম্নলিখিত প্যাকেজ সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্রের সাথে পূর্বে কাজ করার নমুনা দাখিল করতে হবে।

কাজের বিবরণঃ

(ক) স্বর্ণ পদক ও রৌপ্য পদক তৈরি করে পদকের পিছন দিকে পুরস্কারপ্রাপ্ত ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম, পুরস্কারের ক্ষেত্র এবং পুরস্কারের বছর (বঙ্গাব্দ ও খ্রিস্টাব্দ) মুদ্রিত করে লেখা।

(খ) বিতাক কর্তৃক প্রস্তুতকৃত স্বর্ণ পদকের রেলিফা ও রোজ পদক কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয় হতে বুখে নিয়ে পুরস্কারপ্রাপ্ত ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম, পুরস্কারের ক্ষেত্র এবং পুরস্কারের বছর (বঙ্গাব্দ ও খ্রিস্টাব্দ) খোদাই করে লেখা।

(গ) রেলিফাপ্রস্তু প্রেরিত করা।

(ঘ) প্রতিটি পদকের জন্য একটি করে সার্টিফিকেট লেখা ও লেমিনেট করা।

(ঙ) তেলভেটের কাসকেট তৈরি করা।

(চ) পদকে রিবন সেটিং করা।

০২। দরপত্রের বিস্তারিত শর্ত ও সিডিউল আগামী ০৭/০২/২০১৭খ্রিঃ তারিখ দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ভবন নং-০৪, কক্ষ নং-৪২৮ হতে বিনামূল্যে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।

০৩। দরপত্র আগামী ০৮/০২/২০১৭খ্রিঃ তারিখে সকাল ১০.০০টা হতে দুপুর ১.০০টা পর্যন্ত কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়ে (বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ভবন নং-০৪, কক্ষ নং ৪২৮) রক্ষিত টেভার বাজ্রে জমা দিতে হবে। দরপত্র বাজর ঐ দিনই বেলা ১.৩০ মিনিটে দরপত্রদাতাদের সম্মুখে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) খোলা হবে।

০৪। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

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জিডি-১৩০

Govt to be sincere about land issues

Hopes Santu Larma at CHT Land Commission meet in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Land Commission held its meeting at Bandarban Circuit House in the hill district town yesterday noon.

Earlier on August 1 last year, the government approved Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Dispute Resolution Commission (Amendment) Act-2016.

"We hope the government will be sincere to move forward the activities of the commission by following rules of the Land Dispute Resolution Commission (Amendment) Act, setting up offices in three hill districts, and recruiting manpower," Jyotirindra Bodhipriyo Larma (Santu Larma), chairman of CHT Regional Council, said after the meeting that continued from 11:10am to 2:30pm.

"The commission has received 22,881 applications from three hill districts, including 4,568 from Bandarban, 9,940 from Rangamati, and 8,373 from Khagrachhari. It is working for all people of Chittagong Hill Tracts," said Anwar-ul Haque, chairman of CHT Land Commission.

"The commission needs manpower and office to work. The matter has been discussed in today's meeting," said Kwe Shwe Hla, chairman of Bandarban Hill District Council.

Shacing Prue, Mong Circle chief, engineer U Chaw Prue, Bohmong Circle chief, Raja Debashish Roy, Chakma Circle chief, Aung Shwe Prue Chowdhury, Rangamati Hill District Council delegate, Kongjori Chowdhury, chairman of Khagrachhari Hill District Council, Momenur Rashid Amin, additional divisional commissioner (Revenue) of Chittagong, were present at the meeting.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Memo No-74 Date: 15-01-2017

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Tender ID & Tender No.	Name of works	Tender document price (in BDT)	Tender security (in BDT)	Last selling & opening (date and time)
ID No-80758 Tender No: eGP/06/NRD/2016-2017	Carpeting & Seal Coat Work with pavement Repair by Carpeting coat at 1st, 2nd, 3rd (P) Km of Domar (Boragarirhat)-Joldhaka (Vadurgah) road under Road Division, Nilphamari during the year 2016-2017.	1000	80000	Date: 01-02-2017 Time: Up to 17.00 & Date: 02-02-2017 Time: After 13.00
ID No-80431 Tender No: eGP/10/NRD/2016-2017	Earth work, Primer Seal & Palisading work at 14th(p), 18th(p), 23rd(p), 28th(p), 37th(p), 45th(p) and 47th(p) km of Paglapir-Dalia-Teesta Barrage Road under Road Division, Nilphamari during the year 2016-2017.	1000	70000	Date: 01-02-2017 Time: Up to 17.00 & Date: 02-02-2017 Time: After 12.20
ID No-80432 Tender No: eGP/11/NRD/2016-17	Seal Coat with pavement repair by Carpeting at 4th(p), 6th(p), 7th(p), 8th(p) & 9th(p) km of Domar-Chilahati-Voulaganj Road under Road Division, Nilphamari during the year 2016-2017.	1000	75000	Date: 01-02-2017 Time: Up to 17.00 & Date: 02-02-2017 Time: After 11.30
ID No-80428 Tender No: eGP/12/NRD/2016-17	Repair with Seal Coat work at 26th(p), 27th(p), 28th(p) and 29th(p) km of Boda-Debiganj-Domar Road (Z-5003) under Road Division, Nilphamari during the year 2016-2017.	1000	55000	Date: 01-02-2017 Time: Up to 17.00 & Date: 02-02-2017 Time: After 12.30

e-Tender details can be downloaded from 15-01-2017 at 10:00.

A K M Hamidur Rahman
Executive Engineer (CC), RHD
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GD-126