

Collapsed bridge still unrepairs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The bridge over Banshunia Canal that collapsed during cyclone Roanu on May 21 in 2016 is still unrepairs, causing immense suffering to over 20,000 people of six villages under Amtali upazila of Barguna.

Locals, including a good number of students, have to cross the canal by country boat, which is very risky.

The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) built a concrete bridge over the canal in Haldia union in 2006 at a cost of Tk 40 lakh. Over 20,000 people of Jogotchad, Madhya Tepura, Dakkhin Tepura, Purbo Tepura, Uttar Tepura and Dakkhin Taktabunia villages used the bridge to communicate with different places, including the upazila headquarters.

Several hundred students of Senerhat Government Primary School and Taktabunia High School used the bridge to go to their educational institutions.

Around 30 metres in the middle of the bridge collapsed and communication was snapped totally during cyclone Roanu.

Achhia Begum, 65, of Jogotchad village, said they have to cross the canal by the country boat, which is risky.

Headmaster of Senerhat Government Primary School Ashish Kanti Howlader said many students were injured when boats capsized while crossing the canal. The children are now afraid to cross the canal by boat, which is hampering their studies.

Headmaster of Taktabunia High School ABM Sobhan said the authorities concerned should take immediate steps to repair the bridge considering the interest of school goers and local people.

Haldia Union Parishad Chairman Md Shahidul Islam Mridha said they requested the authorities concerned several times to repair the bridge, but in vain. LGED gave them only 'hope,' he added.

Upazila Engineer of LGED Md Nazrul Islam said they have sent a letter to the higher authorities for funds to repair the bridge, but they have not received any funds.

"We will take steps to repair the bridge after getting allocation," he added.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN



The bridge over the Banshunia Canal in Amtali upazila of Barguna has not been repaired since it collapsed during cyclone Roanu on May 21 in 2016.



To ease Eid journey

85 old rail coaches are being repaired at Saidpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Eighty-five old railway coaches are being repaired at Saidpur Railway Workshop here to cope with the increase in passengers during the Eid holidays.

Workers and officers are working relentlessly to refurbish the damaged coaches so as to be able to carry around 35 lakh additional home-bound passengers.

Divisional Superintendent under Bangladesh Railway West Zone Mohammad Kudrat-e-Khuda told the media that they decided to operate some special trains on the Dhaka-Parbatipur-Dhaka and Dhaka-Khulna-Dhaka routes and other routes under this zone to make the home-bound passengers' journey comfortable.

They have also taken steps to increase transportation capacity of intercity and mail trains by attaching

the repaired coaches with them, he added.

"To meet this goal, the workshop set a target to recondition 85 damaged rail coaches ahead of Eid," Kudrat-e-Khuda said.

"Workers and officials of 29 different workshops are working day and night to repair all the targeted coaches before Eid. Thirty-five of them are fully ready and the rest are likely to be completed within a few days," he said, adding that it would be possible to carry 35 lakh passengers with the added coaches.

He said the life of rail coaches is usually 30 years and many inoperable coaches were kept abandoned in the yard for a long time, but they are being repaired now.

It takes around Tk 20 lakh to refurbish one coach while it would cost several crore taka to import a new coach, he said.

Senior Assistant Engineer Arifur Rahman said they are facing acute manpower crisis which is hampering the work. "The paint shop needs 221 workers, but there are only 67 at present," he said.

There are only 1,262 workers in the mechanical and electrical shops when 3,171 are required, said Senior Assistant Engineer Shahjahan Ali Molla at the electrical workshop.

"We have to do complicated repairing work either manually or using traditional tools as we do not have modern machinery and equipment," said welder Mizanur Rahman.

Jatiya Sramik League's Workshop unit former president Moksedul Momin said, "If we are provided with all the materials, human resource and funds, it would be possible for us to refurbish double the number of coaches."

One dies in clash over mosque committee

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A man was killed and six others were injured on Friday in a clash over formation of the mosque committee at Nayadighi village in Boda upazila of Panchagarh.

The victim was Aminur Rahman, 55, of the village, also a retired army soldier.

Police, quoting locals, said a meeting was held after Jumma prayers over formation of Nayadighi Islampur village mosque committee, adding that the yearly income and expenditure of the mosque was also discussed.

At one stage, Nur Nabi, younger brother of the general secretary of the mosque committee Nur Alam, and Aminur engaged in an altercation. After that, those present divided into two groups and attacked each other with sticks.

The clash left seven people of both groups, including Aminur, injured.

Aminur was taken to Boda Upazila Health Complex where the doctor declared him dead.

The injured are Aminur's son Sohel, 20, younger brother Mominul Islam, 50, Nur Nabi, 40, his father Amaz Uddin, 65, mother Nazira Begum, 60, and wife Shirin Akhter, 36. They were admitted to the health complex.

Victim's son Shahinul Islam filed a case with Boda Police Station, accusing eleven people, including Nur Nabi, Amaz Uddin, Nazira Begum and Shirin Akhter, said officer-in-charge AKM Nurul Islam.

Police arrested Amaz Uddin, Nazira Begum, and Shirin Akhter.

Workers at Saidpur Railway Workshop are passing a busy time in renovating the damaged compartments to carry the additional home-bound passengers during Eid holidays.

PHOTO: STAR

'Free 100 acres of land from grabbers'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Several people at a press conference in the town yesterday demanded eviction of the influential people who have allegedly grabbed about 100 acres of land at Dulma mouza in the district's Phulbaria upazila in last four years.

"The grabbed land belongs to forest department and some 25 families, many of whom have been evicted from their homesteads," said Enamul Kabir Kajal, reading out a written statement on behalf of the affected people at the conference at Mymensingh Press Club auditorium.

The victims were harassed by police and men of influential people. Moinul Haque, the then superintendent of police (SP) of

Youth killed by cousin

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A youth was stabbed to death allegedly by his cousin at Kashimala village in Kahaloo upazila here yesterday.

The deceased, Aminur Rahman, 27, was a battery-run auto-rickshaw driver.

Police said an altercation took place between Aminur and his cousin Abdul Mannan, 30, as the victim's goat allegedly ate some plants of the latter.

At one stage, Mannan stabbed Aminur on the chest with a knife.

Family members took Aminur to Duppacharia Upazila Health Complex where the doctors declared him dead.

Two beaten dead

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Two people, including a woman, were beaten to death in Dinajpur and Lalmonirhat yesterday and on Friday.

A woman, who was beaten allegedly by her neighbours for collecting fallen blackberries in Biral upazila on Friday, died early yesterday.

The deceased, Kulsuma Begum, 35, was wife of Jamal Uddin of Okra village.

Quoting witnesses, police said the couple locked in an altercation with Mamunur Rashid over collecting some fallen blackberries from Mamunur's tree on Friday evening.

Later, Mamunur and his two brothers Wazed Ali and Obaidul Haque went to the couple's house and beat them up.

Locals took the injured couple to Biral Upazila Health Complex and later shifted

to Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital, where Kulsuma died around 3:30am.

In Lalmonirhat, a construction worker was beaten to death allegedly by a fellow worker in Aditmari upazila on Friday.

The deceased is Abdur Razzak, 28, of Madanpur village.

Quoting witnesses, police said a quarrel took place between Razzak and Ripon Islam, 35, as Razzak's meal box was changed with Ripon's one at Lalmonirhat-Burimari highway construction site in Palashia area.

At one stage, Ripon and his father Nuruzzaman beat up Razzak with bamboo sticks.

Razzak was taken to Aditmari Upazila Health Complex and later referred to Rangpur Medical College Hospital. He died on way to the hospital.

People fear further erosion by Padma

24 families made homeless

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

People of three villages are passing their days in fear of further erosion by the Padma river in Faridpur Sadar upazila.

The erosion by the Padma took serious turn seven days back following the rise of water level, affecting around 24 families of the villages at North-Channel union.

At least 16 families lost their 33 dwelling houses and five families lost their croplands in the river erosion at Sotter Biswaser Dangi village when about 10 more families are under threat. The Padma also devoured a 300-metre earthen road during the five-day erosion.

At least five families lost their 22 dwelling houses and croplands at Sukur Ali Mridha Dangi village.

The correspondent found that the affected people are busy in shifting their houses wherever they can on the bank of the river.

Moreover, three families of Adu Matobbarer Dangi village were also washed away in the erosion.

The locals said the river has already devoured a mosque at Sotter Biswaser Dangi.

Boru Khatun, 70, of Sotter Biswaser Dangi said she had lost her homestead 19 times, including this year. Now she does not know where to go.

Kabir Bapari, 35, said he has lost 12 bighas of croplands while 25 bighas of croplands three years ago. He said he is now totally helpless.

Local Awami League leader Jinna Biswas said a section of people are illegally lifting sand from that area, causing the erosion.

North-Channel Union Parishad Chairman Mostak Jaman said the Faridpur town embankment would be threatened if the erosion at Sukur Ali Mridha Dangi is not stopped.

Water Development Board Executive Engineer Sultan Mahamud said he did not hear about the erosion at the villages.



Residents of Sukur Ali Mridha Dangi village in Faridpur Sadar upazila give a bleak look, sitting on the bank of the Padma, which devoured homesteads and croplands for five days till Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR

Char people to continue movement

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Rejecting the district administration's recent proposal for rehabilitation of the affected people by building a new city, hundreds of char people vowed to continue their peaceful movement until their demand for a fair acquisition list is met.

The proposal is among many tricks of the administration to make their 'motivated' acquisition list a success, speakers said at a pre-iftar rally organised by Basatibhita Rokhha Committee at Char Gobindapur yesterday.

The char people have been living in the areas for centuries and they want to keep their homesteads and farmlands safe, they said.

Protesting the 'unfair' and 'motivated' land acquisition for development of Mymensingh division, thousands of char people have been continuing their movement for the last nine months.

Committee convener Prof Syed Mosharraf Hossain, Shahidul Islam, Abdul Monsur, Dr Harun-ur-Rashid, Sadequl Islam Sabuj, Zillur Raham Likhon and Golam Kibria spoke at the rally.

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