

School that halts classes in monsoon

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Classes of 12 No Modon Gouri Government Primary School in Kulaura upazila under the district remain suspended for a few months every year as the school situated in Hakaluki Haor area faces long floods.

The situation has continued for the last 23 years.

"The floor of this school is five metres below the level of the roads and so, it remains flooded most of the time, and we have kept the classes suspended, especially in the rainy season," said Abdul Kadir, president of the school managing committee (SMC).

The school was established at Dighirpar of Bhuksimul union under Kulaura upazila in 1882 and it was transferred to its own land at Modongouri in the same union in 1994. Since then the school has continued facing floods and consequent closure of classes for months every year.

Now 180 students read in the school.

Saif Uddin, who passed Class V from the school in 2000, said, "I saw from my childhood that classes in this school

remained suspended at least four months every year as flash floods triggered by heavy rain and onrush of water from the hills affect the area."

Most of the students can't achieve good results due to the situation, said Saif Uddin, also owner of a shop near the school.

Farhana Sultana, headmaster (acting) of the school, said special classes have been arranged at her house to prepare the Class V students for the PSC examinations.

"We are attending special classes for PSC exams in teachers' houses or sometimes under the open sky as the school is flooded," said Tahmina Akhter, a student of Class V.

"The authorities concerned have not taken any steps although we sent letters, demanding steps for building a new school-house including a flood shelter centre," SMC President Abdul Kadir said.

Masudur Rahman, acting education officer of Kulaura upazila, said they have sent a list of the affected educational institutions to the higher authorities, but to no response yet.



Modon Gouri Government Primary School in Kulaura upazila of Moulvibazar remains flooded for a couple of months during the monsoon every year, forcing the authorities to keep the classes suspended.

PHOTO: STAR

Rain compounds passengers' woe

Journey of Dhaka-bound people on 10km of the highway in Sirajganj turns a nightmare due to tailback on the potholed road

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

"We started from our Pabna counter at 8:45am with a target to reach Dhaka around 3:00pm and get the return trip from the capital at 3:30pm but we reached only Tangail around 3:00pm," Md Shahin Alam, helper of a Dhaka-bound passenger bus 'C Line', said yesterday.

"We reached Hatikumrul intersection in Sirajganj around 11:00am and it took one and a half hours to get to Bangabandhu Bridge, only 30km away," Shahin said.

Md Faruk Hossain, driver of the bus, said, "I had to move the bus at 5 to 10 kilometres per hour in the 10-kilometre area of the Sirajganj highway from Hatikumrul to Nalka

Bridge as the road turned awful due to the incessant rain in last one week.

The situation was much worse on Wednesday as it took five to six hours to cross the 30km road from Hatikumrul point to Bangabandhu bridge.

Md Abdur Rafique, inspector of the Bangabandhu Bridge West Zone Police Station, said the massive damage of the road from Nalka to Hatikumrul point of the highway causes the slow movement of the vehicles.

"Huge potholes have developed in 10-kilometre road from Hatikumrul point to Nalka point. Besides, vehicles have to move

slowly with extra caution as the Nalka bridge is in an awful state," he added.

Due to the awful state of the highway in Sirajganj, vehicular movement is disrupted on Dhaka-Sirajganj, Dhaka-Bogra, Dhaka-Rajshahi and Dhaka-Pabna roads from Hatikumrul point (intersection of the four roads) where the thousands of vehicles from 16 northern districts going to and from the capital cross.

Md Hena Mostafa, executive engineer of Sirajganj Roads and Highways, said the repair work is going from Nalka point to Hatikumrul point of the Sirajganj highway.

"Due to the continuous rain in last few days, the highway got damaged at a few places. As repair work has started in the affected areas, the traffic movement got slower. The problem will be solved after the repair work is complete," he added.

One Mirza Hasan went to Dhaka from Pabna on Saturday by travelling 11 hours and his return journey on Wednesday took 10 hours.

"This is too much. It seems nobody cares about the importance of our time," he said in tone of grievance.

Like him, most of the passengers moving on the highway blamed the negligence of the authorities concerned for the sufferings.



Vehicles get stuck in a long tailback on the road from Hatikumrul intersection in Sirajganj to Bangabandhu Bridge yesterday, turning the journey a patience test for the stakeholders.

PHOTO: STAR

Prof Alauddin Bhashani univ new VC

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Prof Mohammad Alauddin of bio-chemistry department has been made vice chancellor (VC) of Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University once again.

He may join the post tomorrow, said university sources.

President Abdul Hamid, also the chancellor of the university, reappointed Alauddin as VC for the next four years.

Prof Alauddin had been made the 5th VC of the university on May 4 in 2013 and his four-year tenure was ended on May 3 this year.

Since then teachers and students had been observing different programmes at the campus for quick appointment of a VC of the university.

Earlier, he was the pro-VC and acting VC of Chittagong University.

CATTLE TRADER MURDER IN MANIKGANJ

Man jailed for life

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A court here yesterday sentenced a man to life term rigorous imprisonment (RI) for killing a cattle trader in 2014.

Manikganj District and Sessions Judge Md Mizanur Rahman Khan delivered the verdict in presence of the accused Sachchu Molla, 55, son of Abdus Salam of Kachhidhara village in Shivalaya upazila of the district.

The court also fined Sachchu Tk 20,000, in default, to suffer five years more RI in cattle trader Azahar Hossain murder case.

The court, however, acquitted five cattle traders -- Kirman, 50, son of Shib Matabbar, and Janab Ali, 55, son of Khayer Ali of Pukhuria village under Ghior upazila, Fazlul Karim Fazal, 27, son of Sachchu Molla of Kachhidhara village, Kabir, 30, son of Delwar Hossain of Dulakanda village, Anis, 28, son of Jasim Sheikh of Khalisha village in Shivalaya upazila of the charges as the allegation brought against them could not be proved.

According to the prosecution, cattle trader Azahar, 50, of Pukhuria village in Ghior upazila, was killed by other cattle traders on October 4 in 2014 while returning home from Gabtoli cattle market in Dhaka.

The police recovered the body wrapped in a sack from near Proshika office in Singair municipality the next morning.

After four days of the incident, Azahar's wife Asma Begum filed a murder case with Singair Police Station on October 8 the same year.

Police arrested Fazal on November 30 in 2014. According to his confessional statement, police arrested five others.

Police submitted charge sheet against the six before the court on February 27 in 2015. After examining 12 witnesses, the court gave the verdict.

ELECTRICITY OFFICE ACTIVITIES

Vehicular movement hampered in Pirojpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Workers of Pirojpur Palli Bidyut Samity office load and unload electric poles on the busy Pirojpur-Barisal road, hampering smooth movement of vehicles.

Due to the situation, bus passengers and truck drivers who use the road for going to Barisal and other southern areas from Khulna, Jessore and Dhaka suffer a lot every day.

Locals said for the last two months, Palli Bidyut men are using a spot of the busy road between Khalisakhal and Ranipur area for unloading electric poles from truck and loading them on trawlers.

When workers carry the poles from one side to another side of the road, it takes a long time, resulting in traffic jam, said Shahidul Islam, an auto-rickshaw driver.

Sometimes they miss the ferry on Kumimara-Bekutia route in the Kacha river due to the loading and unloading, said Mizanur Rahman, a motorcyclist riding on the road.

This correspondent found many electric poles piled up beside the road.

Samity General Manager Shankar Kumar Kar said they are using the spot as they do not have enough space for keeping all the poles.

Coal sale resumes at Barapukuria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The sale of coal at Barapukuria mine resumed on Wednesday after a weeklong suspension.

The coalmine authorities suspended the sale of coal on July 19 after selling around 32,825 tonnes of coal to some traders in a single day on July 17.

Deputy Manager Khan Zafor Sadiq of Sale and Marketing at Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Ltd claimed that the mine sold 32,825 metric tonnes of coal to 42 traders.

However, coal traders of the mine area in Parbatipur upazila said the mine authorities allegedly sold the coal to a few influential people.

The sale of coal to some influential persons triggered an outcry among the coal consumers, mostly brickfield operators of northern districts and other districts in the country.

Around 450 traders applied for the coal.

Mine officials said each applicant to get 100 tonnes of coal, said Shariful Islam, general manager (administration) of the mine.

Raihan Ali, general secretary of Barapukuria Coal Traders' Association, said coalmine authorities sold 32,825 tonnes of coal to some handful traders.

He demanded cancellation of the delivery orders of these traders got the coal on July 19.

All the coal traders applied for 50,000 tonnes of coal, he said.

Cattle lifter beaten dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

An alleged cattle lifter was beaten to death at Barobamondah village in Kotchandpur upazila early hours of yesterday.

Victim Faruk Hossain, 40, used to live in his in-law's house in the village.

Kotchandpur Police Station Officer-in-Charge Aminul Islam said Faruk was caught red-handed when he was trying to steal a cow of Aminul Islam of the village.

Aminul's family members raised a hue and cry sensing presence of the thief and the locals caught him red-handed. The villagers beat him indiscriminately, leaving him critically injured. He was taken to Kotchandpur Health Complex where he succumbed to his injuries around 6:30am.

Dire state of Bhaluka road

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The awful condition of the Seedstore-Sakhipur Road in Bhaluka upazila has become a serious concern for thousands of people, especially during the rainy season.

Of the 23-kilometre-long road, 14-kilometre portion in Bhaluka is in a dilapidated state, and the condition of the portion from Seedstore Bazar to Kachina Bazar is beyond description, locals said.

Even after light rainfall, the road becomes very muddy at Morolbari More, Lautikhal and Rice Mill areas, said Awlad Hossain Rubel, a local journalist.

The road was repaired five years ago at a cost of Tk 2 crore, but big potholes have developed at many points, locals said. Use of poor quality construction materials is responsible for the present condition of the road, they alleged.

Due to the bad condition of the road, commuters have to face serious difficulties as it takes at least twice as long time to reach their destinations, Saidur Rahman of Paragaon village said.

Malek Munshi, a trader of Masterbari area, said they have to face severe trouble in carrying their goods due to the dam-

aged road.

Thousands of students of a college, six high schools, seven primary schools and five madrasas use the road to go to their educational institutions.

Assistant teacher of Palgaon Government Primary School Mahmuda Akhter Mina said students are the worst sufferers as there is no alternative road to go to their institutions.

Attendance of students decreases during the rainy season, she added.

Mizanur Rahman, a Class VII student of Sonar Bangla High School, said they have to go through mud in the rainy season and dust in the dry season due to the bad condition of the road.

Hobirbari Union Parishad Chairman Tofael Ahmed Bachchu said he, along with the parishad members and local youths, recently repaired a portion of the road with financial support from the local people.

The road should be upgraded with proper drainage facilities in the bazar and residential areas, the chairman said.

Bhaluka Upazila Engineer of Local Government Engineering Department Faridul Islam said they have started repairing the road at a cost of Tk 24 lakh.

An upgradation project of Tk 4.5 crore has been submitted to the department concerned, but it is yet to be approved, he added.



The road from Seedstore to Sakhipur in Bhaluka upazila of Mymensingh remains in an awful condition, much to the sufferings of the people, especially during the rainy season. The photo was taken from Lautikhal in the upazila on Wednesday.

PHOTO: STAR