



**Above,** the bridge on the Ghanoshyam canal on Tushbhandar-Aminganj road in Kaliganj upazila of Lalmonirhat remains under water after its collapse during last year's flood. **Below,** people face problem to get on the newly constructed bridge on the Nabaganga river in Magura Sadar upazila due to lack of approach roads on both sides, an old bridge on Hangarkul canal in Satkania upazila of Chittagong lies in an awfully dilapidated condition, and the wooden bridge made by locals on the Denki river at Ranigaon in Kalmakanda upazila of Netrakona broke down a few days ago.

PHOTO: STAR

# Broken bridges woe for commuters

STAR COUNTRY Desk

People of different areas in Chittagong, Magura, Lalmonirhat and Netrakona are suffering as a few bridges are lying broken or without approach roads.

A 50-year-old concrete bridge on Hangarkul canal in Satkania upazila of Chittagong remains in an awful condition for over a year, reports our correspondent Arun Bikash Dey.

Locals said the 40-foot-long concrete bridge became vulnerable due to lack of renovation for long and it developed a large hole in the middle a year ago, making it difficult for vehicles and pedestrians to pass.

Hundreds of residents of nearby Hangarkul, Patiyakhali and Dhemsha villages use the bridge that connects the upazila headquarters and a few local markets.

Besides, students of two primary schools, a high school and a girls' madrasa use the bridge to go to and from the institutions.

"My friend fell off a rickshaw while we were crossing the bridge. However, she was lucky enough not to fall into the canal through the big hole," said Tasfia Bint-e Rashid, a student of Daimar Khil Mahila Dakhil Madrasa.

The bridge has turned too risky for users, especially during the night, Md Mostak, an advocate's clerk, said, adding that they submitted an application to the local union parishad (UP) chairman in this regard over six months ago, but no initiative has been taken yet.

Dakhin Dhemsha UP Chairman Ridwan Uddin said, "After receiving the application, I informed Satkania upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) and the local lawmaker of the matter and asked for fund to reconstruct the bridge."

UNO Mobarak Hossain said he will look into the matter.

Our Jhenidah Correspondent reports: People of 25 villages including Bannadul, Parnanduali, Barashia, Belnagar, Ramnagar, Tagorbari and Kushundia in Magura Sadar upazila are badly suffering as the newly constructed bridge over the Nabaganga river is lying unused due to not having approach roads on both sides.

Magura Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) built the 570-foot-long bridge over the river about seven months ago at a cost of Tk 10.67 crore.

In December 2016, LGED floated a tender for the purpose and Tarikul

Islam, owner of Islam Traders of Jessore, was awarded the work order.

The construction of the bridge was completed in December last year, but the approach roads are yet to be built.

Six motorcyclists met accidents while crossing the bridge recently, said trader Sumon Sarkar.

Contractor Tarikul Islam said construction of the approach roads was hampered due to heavy rain but it will be completed soon.

The remaining work is being hampered due to heavy rain and shortage of labourers, Magura LGED Executive Engineer Harunur Rashid said, adding that he directed the contractor concerned to complete the work soon.

Our Lalmonirhat Correspondent reports: Thousands of people of four villages in Kaliganj upazila of the district have been suffering a lot since the lone bridge over Ghanoshyam canal on Tushbhandar-Aminganj road collapsed due to strong current during last year's flood.

The people of Ghanoshyam, Uttar Ghanoshyam, Dullarpara and Amin Bazar villages under Tushbhandar union in the upazila have to travel an additional five kilometres to reach

the upazila headquarters and local union parishad (UP) office as the only alternative.

Nazrul Islam, 58, of Ghanoshyam village said they appealed to the authorities concerned to repair the bridge several times, but to no effect.

Kaliganj Upazila Parishad Chairman Mahbubuzzaman Ahmed said after visiting the area he sent a letter to Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) authorities to build a new bridge or repair the older one to ensure easy communication of the villagers.

Kaliganj Upazila LGED Engineer Parvez Newaz Khan said he visited the area and informed his higher officials of the matter.

A new bridge will be built there soon, he said.

Our Mymensingh Correspondent adds: A wooden bridge constructed with local initiative in Kalmakanda upazila of Netrakona was washed away by floodwater on July 4, putting thousands of people in the remote area into serious trouble.

"With the help of local elite and Kharnoi Union Parishad Chairman Obaidul Haque, we built the 150-foot-long and seven-foot-wide wooden

bridge on the Denki river in Kalmakanda's Ranigaon, at a cost of Tk 4.50 lakh three months ago and named it 'Muktijuddha Setu'," said freedom fighter Md Harun-or-Rashid, who led the work.

The bridge collapse has caused problem for the people of some 12 villages who use Kalmakanda-Ranigaon road to reach their destinations including the upazila headquarters, the only way to connect with Netrakona and other parts of the country, said Md Saiful Islam, member of Awami League's Kalmakanda upazila unit.

There are some 10 educational institutions including primary and high schools and a college on both sides of the river and the students have to cross the river by boat for attending their classes, said Hafizur Rahman Ansari, headmaster of Borodal Government Primary School.

Local farmers and fishermen said they are facing problem to carry their produces to market due to poor communication system.

The locals have urged for construction of a concrete bridge on the river.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Arifuzzaman said he has informed the higher authorities of the matter.

## Teenage girl gang-raped in Habiganj, four held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A teenage girl was gang-raped allegedly by a group of youths in Madhabpur upazila of Habiganj on Sunday night.

Being informed, police rescued the 19-year-old victim from the spot and admitted her to Madhabpur Upazila Health Complex early Monday.

Police detained four youths from different areas of Madhabpur municipality the same afternoon for their alleged involvement with the incident, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Madhabpur Police Station Kamruzzaman said.

The arrestees are Emran Mia, 20, son of Nurul Islam of Mirnagar village in the upazila, and his three accomplices Nuru Miah, 21, Shah Alam, 20, and Saddam Mia, 23.

Meanwhile, the victim's mother filed a rape case with Madhabpur Police Station accusing six people on Monday.

According to the case statement, Emran, a CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver, developed a love affair with the girl, who worked at a factory in the municipality, recently.

Emran called the girl to Mirnagar village on Sunday evening. As the girl reached the village Emran along with his accomplices took her to a field near his house and raped her there, leaving her unconscious on the spot.

Police are conducting drives to arrest the other accused in the case, the OC said.

## Manikganj BNP leader arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A local leader of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) was arrested from his house in Sewta area of the town on Monday.

A team of police led by Sub-Inspector Faruk of Sadar Police Station arrested Nasir Uddin Ahammed Zadu, president of the municipality unit of BNP, also a former ward commissioner of the municipality.

He was taken to the police station.

Zadu's younger brother Zia Uddin Ahammed Kabir said his brother is sick. He has a political case against him and got bail from the High Court in that case.

Officer-in-Charge of the police station Rokibuzzaman said Zadu was detained in a sabotage case.

## Chirirbandar UZ gets fire station

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A Fire Service and Civil Defence station was inaugurated in Chirirbandar upazila of Dinajpur yesterday.

Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali inaugurated the station as the chief guest.

Public Works Department of Dinajpur constructed the three-storey building at Ghugratolimor at a cost of Tk 1.855 crore.

Mahmood Ali, also local lawmaker, said it had long been a dream of the people of the upazila, which finally came true on Tuesday, adding that now it will be easier and faster for fire fighters to get to the site of the fire.

Earlier, firefighters from Parbatipur or Dinajpur station had to rush to Chirirbandar upazila if there was any fire incident, he said.

## 'Man killed daughter to trap own brother'



Naima Akhter

Farid Mia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Investigation into the case for the killing of Class II student Naima Akhter in Bahubol upazila of Habiganj last year has finally revealed that her father Farid Mia, not main accused Shukur Mia, committed the gruesome murder, police said.

Farid on Saturday gave a statement under Section 164 before the Court of Habiganj Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Shahinur Akhter, confessing to the murder of his daughter Naima, Senior Assistant Police Superintendent (Bahubol-Nabiganj Circle) Parvez Alam Chowdhury told a press briefing on Monday evening.

Earlier, police arrested Farid on Friday.

Against the backdrop of a land dispute with his elder brother Shukur Mia, 52, Farid Mia, 40, of Swayia village in Bahubol, planned to kill his own daughter to trap Shukur, said Bahubol Model Police Station OC Md Masuk Ali.

"On August 9, 2017, Farid with the help of neighbour Sajon Mia, 20, strangled Naima.

"Farid filed a murder case against Shukur and the latter's six sons on September 6. After a 10-month-long investigation, the fact came out," the OC said.

## Rural women's savings at odds

Many banks reluctant to receive coins defying Bangladesh Bank order

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Sharmin Akhtar, 26, a housewife from a lower middle class family in Sadar upazila, who prefers to deposit coins in earthen banks, a traditional method of storing surplus income or savings, desired to buy new dresses for her children during Eid.

She, however, could not fulfil her wish during the Eid shopping this year as shop owners refused to receive the payment when she tried to make the payment with coins, saying banks don't receive coins for want of adequate storage facilities.

Many women in rural area still prefer to save coins as paper notes become damp, discoloured and sometimes face fungal attack when kept in earthen banks.

Like Sharmin, many rural women in the district had to face such unwanted situation during the Eid shopping as shopkeepers were not interested to sell products to them in exchange of coins.

Akhtar Siddiquee Pappu, owner of a confectionary in Saidpur municipal area, said, "A good number customers in rural areas are women and children and they buy bread, biscuits, or chocolates with coins."

"I went to the local branch of National Bank Limited to deposit huge amount of stored coins recently. But the bank manager received a small portion of the coins and returned the major portion saying that there is not enough room in



Many rural women, who prefer to save coins, in Nilphamari Sadar upazila are now facing problems as traders refuse to receive payments with coins.

PHOTO: STAR

his bank to keep those," he said.

Nilphamari Chamber of Commerce and Industries (NCCI) Vice-president Md Farhanul Huque said, "Coins amounting to crores of taka remain as idle money in the hands of individuals, especially women, creating a deadlock in rural savings."

Bangladesh Bank (BB) through a circular, issued on March 29, 2017, directed all commercial banks to pay and receive coins otherwise they

would face stern action, Farhanul said, adding that the banks receive only a small amount of the coins.

Ariful Islam, manager of Agrani Bank's local branch, said, "We tried to follow Bangladesh Bank's order which directed us to receive coins amounting up to Tk 30,000. But we've stopped receiving coins as we can't transfer those to BB which has a shortage of space."