



Vessels cannot take shelter in Shibbaria harbour at Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali due to siltation and setting up of brick kilns on the banks of the harbour.

PHOTO: STAR

# Sea-bound vessels lose safe shelter

*Shibbaria harbour in Patuakhali faces navigability crisis, grabbing*

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Navigability of Shibbaria harbour in Kalapara upazila is being hampered due to siltation, depriving vessels of a safe place to take shelter during storm or cyclone.

Sea-bound vessels could take shelter in the harbour as Andharmanik river mouth (around 10 km west from Kuakata Zero Point) and another mouth at Kavar Char area (around 20 km east of Kuakata zero point) connect to the Bay.

The 24-km-long channel flows through Latachapplee, Mohipur, Dalbuganj and Dhulashar unions in Kalapara upazila. Vessels could enter the harbour from both sides to take shelter, but both the mouths are facing navigability problems due to siltation.

Water Development Board (WDB) took up a project in 2010-2011 fiscal year to make the harbour active round the year. WDB Kalapara Circle office sent a project profile of around Tk 67 crore to the higher authorities, seeking approval and allocation of funds. A team from WDB visited the site but the project has been waiting at the WDB office for approval for around seven years.

Md Ruhul Amin, 60, of Barkatia village in Dabluganj union said the river was about half a kilometre wide during his childhood, but now it has become so narrow that even one trawler cannot pass easily.

Some influential people set up brick kilns by occupying the riverside about five years ago, he said. This correspondent found three brick kilns set up on the southern side of the river by occupying the bank.

Bipul Hawlader, owner of a brick kiln, also mayor of Kalapara municipality, said he is a shareholder of a brick kiln, and they bought the land from local people but did not occupy it.

Mohipur Trawler Owners' Association Secretary Nimai Chandra Das said they worry when there is a storm or cyclone in the Bay as their trawlers cannot take shelter in the harbour.

Nuru Mia, a driver of a fishing trawler, said it would be of great help to the fishing trawlers if the harbour is re-excavated.

Fish landing at Mohipur and Alipur would be much easier if the harbour's navigability is restored, said Mohipur Fish Traders' Association President Gazi Fazlur Rahman.

## RMG worker falls from bus, dies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A garment factory worker died allegedly after falling from an unidentified running bus in Mirzapur upazila yesterday.

The deceased was Sheuli Begum, 28, wife of Sharif Miah at Postkamuri Chapara village, and worker of a garment factory at Hatubhanga in the upazila. "Informed by locals that a woman died after falling from a running passenger bus on Dhaka-Tangail highway at Baoar Kumarjani around 7:00am, police recovered the body," said

AKM Kawsar, OC of Gorai Highway Police Station. The body was sent to Tangail General Hospital for autopsy, he said.

# Tk 6 lakh bill for two windows, a door!

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

The contractor of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has taken bill worth Tk six lakh after making only two windows and a door of Haziganj Government Primary School in Aditmari upazila while, in reality, only Tk 20,000 was spent for the work.

Contractor Iqbal Hossain Daud did this in unison with the local LGED official, school headmaster and school managing committee (SMC) president, alleged Anwar Hossain, a donor member of the school committee.

Upazila LGED official sources said, contractor Daud was given the work order to make 13 windows, eight doors and a ceiling of the school at a cost of Tk six lakh.

The contractor took the final bill against the work in the last week of June, although he made only two windows and one door, and the work is sub-

standard, said Anwar.

The contractor did it easily as the school headmaster, SMC president and LGED official were given bribe money, he alleged.

Refuting the allegation of taking bribe from the contractor, SMC president Abdur Rashid said the contractor assured them that the rest of the work would be done according to the schedule in the current month.

School Headmaster Teacher Abdul Hamid said he does not know how the contractor took the final bill against the work because he did not give any approval letter to the contractor.

Contacted, the contractor said he didn't take the final bill against the school maintenance work from LGED.

Meanwhile, LGED's Aditmari Upazila Engineer Fazlul Haque said the contractor was given the final bill against the work following the approval letter signed by the school authority.

He also refuted the allegation of taking bribe from the contractor.

## CELEBRATING LIFE Photography exhibition held in Faridpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A photography exhibition with 43 winning photographs of Celebrating Life-2018 was held at the auditorium of Government Rajendra College in the town yesterday to mark the district tour of Standard Chartered-The Daily Star Celebrating Life.

Prof Mosharraf Ali, principal of the college, inaugurated the daylong event as chief guest.

He thanked The Daily Star for organising such events for years.

He said, "This kind of arrangement inspires our students to have more creative activities and refrain from negative thoughts."

# Teacher beaten by student's guardians

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Elder brothers of a student mercilessly beat up a teacher of Balirdiar High School in Daulatpur upazila after the teacher scolded the student over his nuisance act at school on Wednesday.

The victim, Ahsan Habib, an assistant teacher, is undergoing treatment at Daulatpur Upazila Health Complex.

A case was filed with Daulatpur police station in this regard.

"Samrat Ali, a student of class X, was repeatedly making sound with the horn of a motorcycle kept at the school ground, causing disturbance during class hours," goes the case statement.

Ahsan asked the student to stop the nuisance but the latter continued the misdeed at short intervals.

As Ahsan scolded the student, the latter went home and returned back

with his three siblings Milon Ali, Tufan Ali and Tushar Ali.

They dragged out Ahsan from a classroom and mercilessly beat him with bamboo sticks on the school veranda at about 4:00pm, the case statement says.

Other teachers rescued Ahsan. Seeking justice, Ahsan filed a written allegation to the school managing committee.

Managing Committee President Mohammad Obaidullah forwarded the allegation to Daulatpur Upazila Nirbahi Officer Sharmin Akter who asked the officer-in-charge (OC) of Daulatpur Police Station to record a case in this regard.

"We are trying to arrest the culprits. These three siblings are involved in various misdeeds in the area. They assaulted an UZ vice chairman," said Daulatpur Police Station OC Shah Dara Khan.

# 21 km dilapidated road

*Thousands of commuters suffer in Mymensingh*

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The 21-km-long Mymensingh-Phulbaria road has become dilapidated at several points due to lack of repair.

The only road for thousands of people to travel between Mymensingh town and Phulbaria has become a source of suffering for them as around five km of the road is in an awful state, locals said. The worst affected areas are Dapunia, Deukhola, Koshabari, Koiyerchala and Bhalukjan Bazar.

Huge potholes have developed on the road, and it looks like a small canal after a light shower, locals said, adding that accidents occur frequently at the broken spots.

They said students are the biggest sufferers.

Farmers cannot easily transport their produce to local bazars through the road and are deprived of fair price, said Kabir Uddin Sarker, a local journalist.

Repair work of the spots is carried out sometimes, but it does not help make the journey smoother, he said.

Thousands of people use the road every day, but the authorities concerned are not interested in mitigating their problems, said Phulbaria Municipality Mayor Golam Kibria.

Nazmul Haque Sarker, a businessman in Phulbaria municipality, said they have been suffering for long due to the pitiable state of the road. He informed the authorities concerned on several occasions, but the situation is the same as it was, he added.

Shahidul Islam of Bhalukjan Bazar area said they wanted development of road communication with the district headquarters, but it is still far away.

Kayes Ahmed, an honours student at Phulbaria Degree College, said the perennial suffering has now gone beyond description. Hundreds of students have to use the road to reach their educational institutions in

Phulbaria and Mymensingh town, and the awful state of the road has become a cause of waste in terms of both time and money, he said.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Lira Tarafder said the matter has been raised at the monthly coordination meeting at district level, but it is yet to be solved.

Mymensingh Roads and Highways Department Executive Engineer Masud Khan said he visited the spots recently and repair work with bricks is going on as part of their routine maintenance work.

As waterlogging occurs at different points after rainfall, there is no scope to repair the road with bitumen, he said.

The whole road will be constructed with 'rigid pavement' system and Tk 23 crore has been allocated for the work, the engineer said.

A tender for the work will be floated soon and the work could start by September this year, he added.



Mymensingh-Phulbaria road in Bhalukjan bazar area appears like a small canal after a moderate rain. The photo was taken a few days ago.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

# Brac wants govt

FROM PAGE 20

\$640.55 million in grants, down from \$749.86 million a year earlier.

The issue bears significance as NGOs have been playing a vital role in the country's socio-economic development, especially in health, education, microfinance and women development.

Founded by Sir Fazle Hasan Abed in 1972, Brac has become the world's largest NGO in terms of number of employees. Though it began as a charity, it eventually set up a number of social enterprises, including Aarong, Brac Chicken, Brac Dairy, Brac Fisheries, Brac Nursery etc.

Apart from operating in Bangladesh's districts, it started working in 13 other countries in Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

Brac executives said the organisation was now working in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals in the areas of eradicating extreme poverty, skills training for the underprivileged people and help them find jobs and promoting health, urban and gender development and addressing the chal-

lenges of climate change.

Last year, Brac provided services to 11 crore people in Bangladesh at a cost of \$362 crore. More than 75,000 households have permanently come out of extreme poverty with the help of Brac in last year alone, according to Brac annual report.

Brac Senior Director Asif Saleh said the organisation's future focus would be on young people, their education, skills and jobs.

"We see a jobless growth in Bangladesh now. We don't know what sort of jobs will be created in the next 10 years. So we want to help youths prepare themselves with analytical skills so that they have better adaptability."

Every year, some 22 lakh youths become eligible for the job market, but a large number of them remain unemployed.

Asif said if education cannot be linked to employment, its consequences will be seriously bad.

He said Brac wants to train 4 lakh youths and facilitate jobs for 80 percent of them by 2020.

## Yaba inside

FROM PAGE 1

Kotwali area in the early hours of yesterday and found four brinjals, wrapped in a polythene bag, from his possession, Assistant Commissioner Asif Mohiuddin of DB (Bandar), told The Daily Star.

"We recovered about 2,000 yaba tablets hidden in two of the brinjals," he said.

Ahmed was arrested and handed over to Kotwali Police Station. Later, a case was filed against him with the police station, he said.

Earlier on July 1, DB men recovered 4,000 yaba pills from a digital wall clock and arrested a man in that connection.

The illegal business of the crazy pills seems unstoppable. As the law enforcement agencies have been cracking down on the harmful drug, the peddlers are resorting to new techniques to carry them. They are peddling yaba pills inside gourds, jackfruits, wall clocks, books, laptops, sugarcane etc to dodge the law enforcers.

# Hanga jaal still popular

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

The traditional fishing net, locally known as *hanga jaal*, is still popular among villagers in the district, although shortage of indigenous species of fish in the water bodies does not allow its large-scale use.

*Hanga jaal*, (pushing net), is a three-to-five-foot-long triangle made of net and bamboo. It is especially suitable for catching indigenous species of fish. Women and children can use it to catch fish in shallow water.

District Fisheries Officer Muhammad Farooqul Islam said it is cheaper and easier to use than any other fishing net. "This type of fishing net is seen in villages especially during the rainy season when there is water everywhere," he said. "People know that indigenous fish are not available in local water bodies, but they still use the traditional *hanga jaal*," he said, adding that the net is seen in every house.

Ratindranath Sen, 78, of Senpara village in Patgram upazila, said he used *hanga jaal* since his childhood for fishing in the local water bodies. "We used to catch eight to 10

kg of indigenous fish with the net about three decades ago, but now that is only a dream," he said.

"It needs strong arms to handle *hanga jaal*," said Nehanat Ullah, 65, of Etapota village in Sadar upazila. "Our women are also trained to catch fish using the net," he added.

Azizul Islam, 46, a day labourer of Doljor village in Aditmari upazila, said he earned his livelihood through fishing with *hanga jaal* about eight years ago, but it is not possible now as indigenous species of fish are not available. "I still use *hanga jaal* to catch fish when there is water all around," he said.

Rubel Islam, 12, a Class VI student of Etapota village in Sadar upazila, said everyone is in a festive mood when children use *hanga jaal* for fishing in the local water body. "It does not matter how many fish we get, what matters is that we all enjoy fishing with our traditional net," he said.

"We also catch fish with *hanga jaal* in the water body beside our homestead during the rainy season, and, of course, we are able to handle this type of net," said Rubel's mother Rehana Begum.

## Schoolteacher suspended for misbehaviour

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A teacher of Falimari Government Primary School in Aditmari upazila of the district was suspended yesterday on charge of unethical behaviour with female students of the school.

He is Amir Hossain, 43, an assistant teacher of the school, said Aditmari Upazila Primary Education Officer Shafiqul Islam Khandker.

On Monday, Aditmari police arrested the teacher for misbehaviour with female students.

Headmaster Pulin Chandra Sarkar said the arrestee was warned several times in this regard but he did not care.