



Due to such a rickety state, over 300 students of Koyamadhu Government Primary School in Tangail's Sakhipur upazila have been attending classes at a rented tin-shed structure for the last four months. *Inset*, Ghuni Gazamati Government Primary School in Nagarpur upazila is in a similar situation as rods are visible while plasters have fallen off most of the places.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

DILAPIDATED SCHOOLHOUSES

Govt pry school runs in rented house

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A government primary school in Tangail's Sakhipur upazila, having nearly 300 students, is running at a rented tin-shed structure for the last four months.

In January this year, the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) visited Koyamadhu Government Primary School at Boheratoli and found its 25-year-old one-storey building on the verge of collapse.

It has cracks on the walls and roof while bamboo were placed to prevent the roof from falling.

UNO Aminur Rahman declared the building abandoned immediately to protect the students from any untoward incident, but the danger still prevails as the classes are now being held at a nearby rented tin-shed structure.

The students are taking classes in two small rooms inside the rented structure which used to be a shop.

School authorities are paying the owner

Tk 1,000 as monthly rent.

"A government school cannot run inside a rented structure. We are worried about the students' safety. This structure is not strong enough to survive storms," Aminur Rahman said.

"I have talked to the officials of the ministry concerned over phone several times and requested them to construct a new building as soon as possible. But I do not know when that will happen," he added.

Headmaster of the school Saiful Islam said academic activities of the school, established in 1972, was being greatly hampered due to shortage of space.

Sakhipur Upazila Education Officer Manobendra Das said, "The building was declared abandoned due to its rickety state. We have already written to the education ministry seeking a new building."

The letter addressing the secretary was sent via the UNO in February. Two days later, in a letter, the ministry informed us that it had allocated Tk 3 lakh for construction of a

temporary tin-shed structure, but we are yet to receive the money."

The fund might be released by June, the officer added.

Meanwhile, the students and teachers of Ghuni Gazamati Government Primary School in Nagarpur upazila are in a similar situation.

There are 157 students in the school located at Sohobotpur village. The building is in shambles.

Rods are visible on the ceiling, pillars, and walls as plasters have fallen off most of the places. Water leaks through the ceiling; many doors and windows are also broken.

Authorities, however, have not declared the building abandoned yet.

Md. Mofiz Uddin, headmaster of the school, said, three students got hurt when plaster fell on them last month. Since then, attendance had been thin.

The students and staffers are suffering more now as summer had arrived and

ceiling fans could not be installed, he added.

"We have not taken any step because no direction has come from the authorities concerned yet. We have requested them to declare the building abandoned and make temporary arrangements," Mofiz told this paper.

Asaduzzaman Chowdhury, assistant education officer in Nagarpur, said the school's name was among 14 buildings identified as "risky" in the upazila.

"Necessary measures will be taken as soon as possible, upon discussion with the higher authorities," he told this paper.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Syed Fayezul Islam said that tenders process was on. Construction of the new building was expected to start in two-and-a-half months, said the UNO.

"I have asked the school's management committee to construct a tin-shed structure to carry out the academic activities for now. Some financial aid will be provided by the upazila parishad in this regard," he added.

Complainant's severed leg yet to be recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Three days into the barbaric incident, police are yet to recover the severed leg of Kala Mia, a resident of Ruposdi upazila in Brahmanbaria.

On Friday, Abul Bashar, vice president of Brahmanbaria upazila unit of Sweekhasebok League, and his men allegedly severed the right leg of Kala Mia, 45, from the knee over previous enmity and took it away.

They also cut tendons of both the legs of Kala Mia's son Biplob Mia, 20, during the time.

The injured are now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said police.

Salma Akter, wife of Kala Mia, on Sunday filed a case with Brahmanbaria Model Police Station against 15 people including Abul Bashar, also a sand trader.

Salma said they are passing their days in panic as police are yet to arrest Bashar Mia.

Meanwhile, Brahmanbaria upazila unit Sweekhasebok League in an emergency meeting on Sunday night expelled Abul Bashar from the party for his involvement in the heinous act, said Lokman Hossain, president of the district unit of Sweekhasebok League.

Two months ago, Bashar and his cohorts torched the house of Kala Mia following an altercation over sand trading. As the victim filed a case with a court against Bashar in this regard, the accused carried out such acts of barbarism.

Additional Superintendent of Police Alamgir Hossain said they are raiding different areas to arrest the accused.

FAILURE TO ARREST RAPIST SI closed, OC served show cause notice

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A sub-inspector (SI) of Sreemangal Police Station was 'closed' and sent to police lines and an officer-in-charge (OC) of the same police station was served a show cause notice by superintendent of police (SP) of Moulvibazar on Sunday.

They were both responsible for investigating a case filed on Thursday over raping of a sixth grader girl in Sreemangal of Moulvibazar on April 16.

SI Delwar Hossain was investigation officer of the case, while Sohel Rana was the OC (investigation) at the police station.

Moulvibazar SP Mohammad Shah Jalal yesterday said although the incident took place on Tuesday last week and a case was filed on Thursday, two police officials failed to take swift action and arrest the accused rapist.

The accused, Munna Mia, 19, son of Matlib Mia, raped his daughter on April 16 in the afternoon when he was out for work.

Munna fled the scene sensing his return home, he said, adding that his daughter was taken to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital where she is still undergoing treatment.

Girl dies by 'suicide'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhalakathi

A schoolgirl allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from a tree nearby her house at Indrapasha village in Rajapur upazila of the district on Sunday.

The victim, Sumi Akhtar, 14, daughter of Modasser Ali of the village, was a Class IX student at Rajapur Government Girls' School, Officer in Charge of Rajapur Police Station Jahid Hossain said.

Quoting the deceased's family members, police said Sumi's mother scolded her as she engaged in a quarrel with her elder sister on Sunday night.

Later, family members found her hanging from a tree adjacent to her house the same night and took her to Rajapur Upazila Health Complex, where the doctors declared her dead, victim's uncle Shamsher Ali said.

Being informed, police recovered the body yesterday and sent it to Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Save Khowai, other rivers from grabbers

Green activists at a human chain in Habiganj urge marking Earth day

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Protesting pollution and encroachment of four vital rivers including the Khowai, Old Khowai, Sutang and Sunai in Habiganj, environmental green activists yesterday formed a human chain by the Sutang river in Sadhubazar area of Habiganj Sadar upazila.

Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) Habiganj unit and Khowai River Waterkeeper jointly organised the event, marking Earth Day that is celebrated worldwide on April 22.

Speaking with this correspondent, a number of locals, mostly landless farmers, said crop cultivation becomes almost impossible when the Sutang dries up during the dry season.

They all blamed the local influential people for the situation, saying that those people constricted the river's water flow by encroaching or setting up factories on it.

Sheikh Md Kamal Mia, a resident in the area, said fish is no longer found in the river's discoloured water -- thanks to dumping of toxic waste from factories.

Aminul Islam, coordinator of Green Voice, an environmental organisation in

Habiganj town, said the severely polluted water of the river is now unusable in cultivation.

The factories on the bank of the river are also causing a serious air pollution, resulting in respiratory illnesses for people living nearby, said Dr Ali Ahsan Chowdhury Pintu, a resident of Habiganj town.

Advocate Shibli Khayer said pollution in the Khowai river has reached an alarming level as chemical waste is being dumped directly into the river from factories along its banks.

Bapa General Secretary in Habiganj Tofazzal Sohel said encroachers have turned the Sutang and Khowai, flowing by Habiganj town, into narrow canals and their water in those has become extremely toxic due to rampant dumping of industrial waste.

Contacted, Touhidul Islam, executive engineer of Water Development Board in Habiganj, said the district administration during drives in two phases already demolished 200 unauthorised structures on the Khowai and such drive will continue to free the river from encroachment.



Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) Habiganj unit and Khowai River Waterkeeper jointly organise a human chain by the Sutang river in Sadhubazar area of Habiganj Sadar upazila. The event was organised yesterday to mark Earth Day that is celebrated worldwide on April 22.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA



Pirojpur 100-bed hospital gets crowded with patients as diarrhoea and other heat-related diseases see a sharp rise.

Pirojpur hospital sees surge of patients

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

The spread of diarrhoea and other heat-related diseases has sharply increased in the district in the last few weeks, triggering a sudden influx of patients into Pirojpur District Hospital.

Due to shortage of doctors, it becomes tough to handle the huge number of patients, said Dr Nani Gopal Roy, resident medical officer of the hospital.

There are 32 doctor posts at the hospital but at present only 16 doctors are serving, he said.

During the last week, over 2,000 patients have taken treatment from outdoor daily and 1,000 patients have taken emergency service while 550 patients have been admitted to the hospital, said sources at the hospital.

Around 150 patients are being admitted at diarrhoea and children wards of the 100-bed hospital every day. Patients lie on floor of the hospital for want of beds.

Due to scorching heat, increased

viral attack causes various diseases like diarrhoea and high fever, especially to children and elderly people, said doctors at the hospital.

Every day at least 38 patients are admitted to the children ward having 19 beds only, said Shikha Rani, senior staff nurse of the hospital, adding that the situation has been going on for the last four weeks.

Meanwhile, every day over 20 patients remain admitted at the diarrhoea ward having seven beds, said another senior staff nurse Karuna Bala, adding that at least 174 patients have received treatment from the ward in the last seven days.

Tania Aker of Parerhat village in Indurkani upazila said her 18-day-old child has been attacked with high fever.

She has been staying at the hospital with her baby for the last five days, said Tania.

In unusual hot weather, the number of patients has also increased at other upazilas in the district, said Dr Roy.

'Save Panchagarh rivers from encroachers'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Speakers at a human chain on Panchagarh-Dhaka highway in the town urged the government to ensure flow of water in all 33 rivers flowing through Panchagarh.

District unit of Panchagarh 'Green Voice', a youth organisation of environmentalists, organised the programme on Friday.

They also demanded to take immediate steps to save the rivers including Karatoya, Talma, Dahuik, Tangon and Ghoramara in the district by demarcating those.