



A large section of Joypurhat-Bogura highway lies in an awful condition, posing serious risk of accident for vehicles plying the important road. The photo was taken from Kalai Bazar area in Joypurhat's Kalai upazila on Wednesday.

PROTEST OVER POOR ROAD CONDITION

Daylong strike observed in Joypurhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Transport operators and workers of different routes in Joypurhat jointly observed a day-long transport strike yesterday, protesting severely battered road condition.

Due to the day-long strike, hundreds of commuters, travelling different routes of the district, had to suffer immensely.

During a visit to the area this correspondent saw many people were travelling on three-wheelers to go to their destinations.

Grocer Shahrul Alam of Panchbibi upazila said he had to go through immense suffering while traveling to Joypurhat town which is only 15 kilometres from Panchbibi upazila headquarters.

Joypurhat Transport Owners Association President Bedarul Islam said all the roads are in bad shape.

Besides, Bogura-Joypurhat and Joypurhat-Hili roads are in most dilapidated condition and need immediate renovation, he added.

Carpeting on most of the affected roads have worn away and numerous potholes developed on those, posing life risks to the passengers and transport workers and

causing frequent road accidents on the battered roads.

The situation aggravated further due to heavy rain in the last couple of days, he said, adding that passengers have to spend more time to go to their destinations due to the bad road condition.

He said transport owners are counting huge financial loss as the vehicles, plying the dilapidated roads, have to burn massive amount of fuels and often get damaged due to bumping.

Bedarul urged the authorities concerned to look into the issue seriously and also threatened to go for more agitation if the situation does not improve in near future.

Zahangir Alam, president of Joypurhat Transport Workers Union, said they observed the strike not to cause suffering to anyone but to create awareness about safety on roads.

He also hinted to go for a tougher agitation if the situation remain unchanged.

Joypurhat Roads and Highways Executive Engineer Tanvir Siddiqui said development work of different roads have been going on but the recent rain has have aggravated the road condition a bit more.

Teacher, mechanic die, falling off roofs in Magura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Two people, including a retired schoolteacher, died after falling from roofs of separate buildings in Magura town on Tuesday.

The deceased were identified as Abdur Rauf, 65, a retired teacher of Stadium Para Government Primary School, and Akash Hossain, 18, a Thai Glass fitter and son of Omar Shikdar of Barunataila village in Magura Sadar upazila.

Quoting locals, police said around 10:00am Rauf slipped from the roof of his three-storey building in Stadium Para area and fell into a septic tank on the ground floor.

Family members took Rauf to Magura 250-bed Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Meanwhile, Akash fell from a building in Jamrultala area in the town while he was fitting glasses around 11:00am and died instantly on the spot.

Officer in Charge of Sadar Police Station Sirazul Islam said they recovered the bodies and sent those to Magura Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

New eco park wall collapses in six weeks

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Hardly one and a half months after construction, boundary wall of Tentulia Eco Park under the forest department collapsed on July 5.

The office of Dinajpur forest department invited tender for construction of the boundary wall in January this year, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Abdur Rahman said.

Bidyut Enterprise, Dinajpur, won the bid and got work order in the same month and the construction work was completed in last week of May, he said.

But the official failed to provide the specific dates of the tender floating and issuance of the work order.

Locals alleged that the wall collapsed during a moderate rain as it was constructed in an unplanned way without opinion of experts and substandard materials were used for the purpose.

Seeking anonymity, an official said

the DFO was personally involved in the supervision of the construction work, without taking help of any engineer or expert.

Refuting the allegation of using substandard materials, Abul Kalam Azad, owner of the construction firm, told this correspondent, "We built the wall properly. But it collapsed as rainwater collected in a hole outside the wall created extra pressure."

Replying to a query, he said, "Our security money is still deposited and we will rebuild the collapsed portion of the wall."

Tentulia Upazila Nirbahi Officer Saniul Ferdous said, "I had suggested the DFO to use pillars for construction of the boundary wall as there is a ditch nearby. But he ignored my suggestion."

The DFO did not make any comment when asked about the allegation of building the wall without proper planning or taking assistance from experts.



Chunks of concrete lie scattered as a part of the boundary wall of Tentulia Eco Park collapsed on July 5.

PHOTO: QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT



Mangoes are kept for sale along with other items at Khagrachhari Bazar. Local growers of the popular summer fruit, which sees gradual increase of cultivation and production in the hill district, want a separate facility for proper marketing with fair price of the crop.

PHOTO: SAIKAT DEWAN

Khagrachhari mango growers demand particular fruit market

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Although the district saw a sharp rise in mango production in the last couple of years, there is no particular place or markets for the growers and traders for selling their produce.

Due to the situation, local mango growers are being deprived of proper price of their produces while middlemen are taking the advantage of the situation and making a huge profit.

Local mango growers urged the authorities concerned to set up a separate market place for them in the district headquarters.

Growers said although earlier there was no commercial mango orchard in the district, a huge number of mango orchards have been developed for commercial purpose within the last one decade.

Although the production has multiplied during the period, no particular market has been developed to buy or sell the popular juicy fruit, they said.

As there is no particular mango market, growers compelled to sell their mangoes alongside other agricultural products at Khagrachhari Bazar.

Taking the advantage, middlemen are making the most of the benefits from the business.

According to Khagrachhari Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) over 3,000 hectares of land have been brought under mango cultivation in different upazilas of the district with a production target of 22,000 tonnes.

Grower Thoi Mong Marma of Gugrachhari village in Sadar upazila said although the yield was good, he failed to make a good profit as his

mango orchard is located in a remote area and it costs him Tk 5 per kilogram to bring his produces at Gurgrachhari Bazar.

Kiran Bikash Chakma of Gachhaban area said for quality mango production adequate medicines, fertilisers and proper care is a must which increases the production cost a bit as well.

"If a separate mango market is set up at Khagrachhari Bazar, traders from different parts of the country will come here and purchase mangos directly from the farmers," Kiran said.

Parimal Debnath, panel mayor-1 of Khagrachhari municipality, said the area of Khagrachhari Bazar is too small and as it does not have any specific place for mango or other fruits farmers sell their products in a much disorganised way.

Four 'robbers' arrested with goods

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Police in separate drives arrested four alleged robbers with looted goods from different areas in Jashore yesterday.

The arrestees are Laltu, 38, son of Gopal Mandal of Jhenidah's Kotchandpur upazila, Abu Bakkar, 38, of Natore Sadar upazila, Mohsin, 53, of Jashore Sadar and Shahin, 23, of Keshabpur upazila in Jashore.

Mainul Haque, superintendent of police (SP), said on secret information, police arrested the four with four mobile sets, gold ornaments and Tk 19,390 early in the morning.

A case was filed in connection with the incident, said the SP.

EXTORTION ON DHAKA-GAIBANDHA ROAD Six Dhaka-based companies continue service suspension

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Six Dhaka-based bus services have been abstaining from operating buses on Dhaka-Gaibandha route for the last five days over alleged extortion and misconduct by transport workers at various points of the route.

The transport companies -- Al-Hamra, SR Paribahan, Hanif Enterprise, Shyamoli Paribahan, ORN Travels and Akota Paribahan -- have kept their service counters closed at Gabtoli in Dhaka and Gaibandha bus terminals since July 6.

Confirming that the six transport companies based in Dhaka suspended operations over allegations of extortion and misconduct by transport workers on the route, Mokbul Hossain, president of Gaibandha bus owners' union, said in the meantime, from July 7, transport companies based in Gaibandha have restored their services, operating between Sayedabad and Mohakhali terminals in Dhaka and Gaibandha bus terminal.

However, passengers heading for Dhaka said they were still facing immense sufferings as the Dhaka-bound buses have been departing from Palashbari, which is 20 kilometres away from the Gaibandha bus terminal.

Contacted, Gaibandha Deputy Commissioner M Abdul Matin said he has called a meeting on Thursday (today) and invited all the stakeholders including unions of transport workers and bus owners to the meeting to discuss and address the allegations raised by six Dhaka-based bus service companies.

Woman killed by husband

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chauhanganj

A woman was stabbed to death allegedly by her husband over family feud at Kharagpur village in Bholahat upazila on Monday.

The deceased is Ayesha Khatun, 47, wife of Kobad Ali of the village.

Quoting locals, Officer in Charge of Bholahat Police Station Nasiruddin said the couple locked in an altercation over a family issue around 2:00pm.

At one stage of altercation, Kobad attacked his wife with a sharp weapon, leaving her dead on the spot, and fled the scene.

On information, police arranged sending the body to Sadar Hospital for autopsy, said the OC.



Lawyers under the banner of Tangail Zila Advocate Bar Samity form a human chain in court area of the district town yesterday demanding proper steps to rescue their fellow Miah Mohammad Hasan Ali Reza (inset). Reza, 76, also a central committee member of Krishak Sramik Janata League, went missing after going out of his residence at Sabalia in the town on Monday.



PHOTO: STAR