



Poor drainage system is one of the main causes of waterlogging in Brahmanbaria town.

PHOTO: STAR

Moderate rain inundates Brahmanbaria town

MASUK HRIDOV, Brahmanbaria

Waterlogging has become a common phenomenon in monsoon at a number of neighbourhoods in Brahmanbaria. Residents in these areas suffer badly as they remain marooned for days following rain lasting as little as 15 minutes, locals said.

A poor drainage system is the root cause of waterlogging in the town, observed local activists and civil society members.

Unplanned construction of buildings, filling up of wetlands, and mindless garbage dumping were responsible for the situation, said Advocate Nasir Mia, an environmental activist and the secretary of the Brahmanbaria unit of National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas.

Lack of maintenance of roads and sewerage system by the municipality

authority and the lack of consciousness among town dwellers were among other reasons, said Habibur Rahman Pervez, joint secretary of Brahmanbaria Zila Nagorik Forum.

Bonikpara, Kazipara, Kandipara, Madhyapara, Kumarshill Moor, Court Road, Collegepara, Munsepara, Fulbaria, and Paschim Medda are the worst affected areas.

During a visit on July 14, this correspondent found knee-deep and waist-deep filthy stagnant water in these areas. Residents said they had been bearing the nuisance for about a week.

The 18 sq km Brahmanbaria municipality was formed in 1868 by river Titas.

"Although it is a grade one municipality according to documents, it doesn't appear to be so given the condition of

the roads and drains. The authorities are not doing anything to permanently solve the problem," said Biswajit Bonik of Bonikpara.

"The residents go through untold sufferings as they need to wade through the filthy stagnant water," he said calling on the authorities to address the issue immediately.

Jalal Hossain Khoka of Collegepara said population in his area was higher than other areas. A number of educational institutions, including Brahmanbaria Government College, was situated there.

"Still, families here, particularly those living on the eastern side, remain marooned during rainy days," said Jalal.

Akbar Hossain Chunno, a resident of Kandipara, said, "Water seeps into the tin-shed houses whenever it rains. This happens because the ponds in this area

have been filled up.

"Residents then need to shift to rented places to save their valuables. It is a huge hassle," he said.

Regarding the concerns, Nikash Chandra Mitra, executive engineer of Brahmanbaria municipality, said, "We are trying to solve the problem but things cannot change overnight as we are short of funds."

At a programme held at the municipality office on Monday, Brahmanbaria Municipality Mayor Nayar Kabir said, "We will mark the most vulnerable areas and they will be incorporated in the upcoming development projects."

"The waterlogging problem is being taken seriously. We hope to come to a solution before the arrival of monsoon next year," the mayor said in response to a journalist's query at the programme.

Indefinite transport strike begins in Brahmanbaria

Vehicle owners, workers press for 7-point demand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Vehicle movement came to a halt to and from the district headquarters as transport owners and workers enforced an indefinite strike yesterday.

Brahmanbaria Bus-Minibus Owners and Workers Oikya Parishad called the strike to realise their seven-point demand.

The demands include withdrawal of unauthorised vehicles and CNG-run auto-rickshaws from the highways and eviction of illegally built roadside makeshift shops.

Brahmanbaria Bus-Minibus Owners and Workers Oikya Parishad General Secretary Mohammad Hanif said they have demanding to the authorities concerned to shift the illegally erected CNG-run auto-rickshaw stands at different points on Dhaka-Sylhet and Cumilla-Sylhet highways to elsewhere for long.

Due to plying of unauthorised vehicles on the highways, transport business has now become a non-profitable venture, Hanif said, adding that they will continue the strike till their demands are not met.

During a visit to different spots yesterday morning, this correspondent saw transport workers were staging demonstrations at different points of the town, including Kowali, Bhadughar and Medda Bus Stand areas.

Although small vehicles like microbus, battery-run three-wheelers and easy-bikes were seen plying on different roads, long distance buses and trucks remained off the roads.

Madrassa student missing for 7 days

Parents fear a gang might have kidnapped the boy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A teenage madrasa student, who went missing from Kalapara upazila town a week ago, remained traceless as of yesterday.

The victim, Siam, 14, son of Golam Rabbani of Lalua village in Kalapara, is a student of Kalapara Markajul Tahfij Model Madrasa in Kalapara upazila town.

His parents live at Chigoria in Kalapara town.

"Siam left house on Friday [July 19] evening for his madrasa and he has remained missing since then. We searched for him at different places including houses of all relatives but in vain," said Golam Rabbani.

"I filed a GD with Kalapara Police Station on Monday night. We fear that a gang might have kidnapped my son amid the rumour of the necessity of sacrificing people at Padma Bridge construction site," he said.

Md Monirul Islam, officer-in-charge of Kalapara Police Station, said they will take steps including search for the missing boy.

Flood damages 847km roads in Sunamganj

MINTU DESHWARA, back from Sunamganj

Floods have caused severe damage to most roads in all eleven upazilas of Sunamganj, suspending road communications between many upazilas including the district headquarters and Tahirpur.

The damage of infrastructure including roads, bridges and culverts in the district amounts to Tk 209 crores and the figure may rise when the final assessment is done after flood water recedes completely, according to Local Government Engineering Department (LGED).

So far, the LGED has assessed that about 817 kilometres of the district's 275 roads have been damaged by the flood. In addition, the number of damaged bridges in the district now stands at 96. Total number of culverts assessed to have been damaged is 1,119.

Another 30 kilometres of roads in the district under Roads and

Highways Department (RHD) were also assessed to be damaged by the flood.

The damage incurred by the LGED is estimated at Tk 194 crore, while it is Tk 15 crore by the RHD.

Most roads were damaged by torrential rain and surge of water from hills, while many other roads degenerated due to submersion.

As per the LGED, 185 km of road were damaged in Doarabazar upazila, 45 km in Shalla upazila, 60 km in Sunamganj Sadar, 126 km in South Sunamganj, 28 km in Derai, 168 km in Bishwambharpur, 16 km in Tahirpur, 6 km in Jamalganj, 75 km in Jagannathpur, 50 km in Dharampasha and 58 km in Chhatak upazila.

Asphalt upper layer of most of these roads have been washed away. Many other roads have developed large craters and potholes all over.

Munem Mia, an auto-rickshaw driver in Tahirpur upazila, said the

road damage is so extensive that vehicles are getting into accidents frequently.

LGED Senior Assistant Engineer in Sunamganj Anwar Hossain said roads in many upazilas are still under water and a more accurate assessment of damage would be possible only after the water recedes completely.

The repair work on the damaged roads would start after the authorities allocate necessary funds, he also said.

RHD Executive Engineer in Sunamganj Shafiqul Islam said Sunamganj-Sachna, Sunamganj-Kachirgati, Chhatak-Doarabazar and Anwarpur-Tahirpur roads are among the 30 km of damaged roads under RHD.

He also said his department already started urgent repair work on some of the roads and they would complete elaborate repair work on the roads once the flood situation improves.

Train communications between Dhaka and northern districts remained suspended for a couple of hours yesterday when a goods-laden truck veered off the east link road of Bangabandhu Jamuna Bridge and damaged a 20-foot stretch of adjacent rail tracks at Salla of Tangail's Kalihati upazila. The trucker and his assistant escaped unhurt, reports our correspondent in Tangail.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



With upper asphalt layer completely washed away and large craters and potholes developed all over, this is what's left of the Sunamganj-Tahirpur road after the flood. The photo was taken in Tahirpur upazila recently.

PHOTO: STAR

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