



Like many other infrastructures damaged by the recent floods in Sundarganj upazila of Gaibandha, Belka-Sundarganj road cum flood control embankment remains without any repair.

PHOTO: KM REZAUL HOQUE

DAMAGE BY FLOODS IN SUNDARGANJ

Affected people await rehabilitation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

The recent floods caused extensive damage to agriculture, dwellings and infrastructure in Sundarganj upazila while rehabilitation work is yet to start after the recession of floodwater. A large number of farmers cannot prepare their fields for Aman cultivation due to deposition of sand and garbage during the floods. Those who are trying to start farming have to count additional cost for removing the garbage, said local farmers. Nur-un-Nabi Sarker, project implementation officer of Sundarganj, said the recent floods caused an estimated

loss of Tk 41 crore 47 lakh 13 thousand 550 in the upazila. It includes Tk 33 crore 59 lakh 78 thousand 550 in rural infrastructures like roads, bridges, culverts and cluster villages, Tk 4 crore 83 lakh in agriculture, Tk 1.80 crore in roads, bridges and culverts under Local Government Engineering Department, Tk 50 lakh of secondary education department, Tk 18 lakh of primary education department, Tk 43 lakh of fisheries department, and Tk 13.35 lakh of livestock department. "I took shelter on the embankment after the flood washed away my two huts used for dwelling. The water has receded but I am still staying here as I can't rebuild

my home due to hardship," said Afsar Ali, a farm labourer in Belka of Sundarganj. "My three bighas of land got covered with a thick layer of sand as surging water inundated the area after breaches in the embankment. Normally it would take at least two years for the land to regain fertility," said Solaiman, a small farmer of Belka. Many of the croplands in char areas are still under knee-deep water and so, Aman farming there still remains uncertain, said Faridul of the same area. Farmer Rafiqul Islam of Kapsia union said they are worried about the next Aman cultivation as the three-week-long floods damaged seedbeds in large areas.

Road communications are still in disarray as floods damaged roads, culverts and bridges at different places. "Without special allocation from the government, it would be difficult to renovate damaged roads and culverts in the area. Besides, many of the flood-affected people need financial help for rebuilding their damaged houses and removing sand from croplands," said Nafiul Islam Jimy, chairman of Hariapur union parishad. Md Solaiman Ali, upazila nirbahi officer of Sundarganj, said a list with estimated damage in flood affected areas have been sent to respective ministries, urging for immediate allocation to start rehabilitation work as early as possible.

Stalkers attempt to abduct schoolgirl from home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A schoolgirl and her family are in distress after her stalker along with two accomplices stormed their house in Jashore Sadar upazila and attempted to abduct her by force on Saturday evening.

The girl's father in a complaint filed with Kotwali Police Station yesterday said Mehdi Hassan Runu, 18, son of Mofazzel Hossain of Churamankathi village in the upazila, had been stalking his daughter and making abduction threats to her for quite some time.

Although Mehdi's parents were informed on various occasions of his conduct, he did not stop harassing the girl, a ninth-grade student at Jaudia Meherullah Secondary School.

Around 7:30pm on August 31, Mehdi and two others -- Meher Ali, son of late Fazar Ali Sardar from Jaudia village; and Nashim, son of Rabiul Islam from Badiatola village -- came to their house wielding sharp weapons.

The three met resistance from him and his brother as they tried to take his daughter out of the house by force, her father said, adding that the armed attackers beat him up and injured his brother with sharp weapons.

Being unable to abduct his daughter, the criminals vandalised his brother's motorbike parked by the house. His family is now living in fear of further attacks and his daughter has stopped going to school, he also said.

Samiran Sarkar, officer-in-charge (investigation) of the police station, said they initiated an investigation after receiving the complaint and would take necessary action against the accused if the complaints are found to be true in the investigation.

MURDER OF RANGPUR BOY

Another held, prime accused still at large

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Police yesterday arrested an accused in the case for the brutal murder of 14-year-old Abdur Rashid in Rangpur city.

The arrestee, Md Monti Mia, 19, son of Abul Kalam of Satgara Mistripara under Rangpur city, was detained from Panchagarh Sugar Mills area early hours of Sunday.

"Monti was No 2 accused in the murder case. We are trying best to arrest others including Md Mozaffar Hossain, 22, the prime accused," said Abdur Rashid, officer in charge of Kotwali Police Station in Rangpur.

Earlier on Friday night, a team of Rangpur Rab-13 arrested Md Al Amin Sardar, 22, as a suspect in the murder.

Abdur Rashid, son of Shahidar Rahman of Satgara Mistripara area in Rangpur city, was critically injured on Thursday night as a few people allegedly led by Md Mozaffar Hossain pushed him in front of a speeding bus on Dinajpur-Rangpur highway after stabbing him, said family members.

The ill-fated boy died at Rangpur Medical College Hospital at 4:20am on Friday and his father Shahidar Rahman filed a murder case against six people including Mozaffar.

Rashid was killed as his elder brother Md Mohan Mia declined to give Tk 500 demanded by Mozaffar Hossain as extortion a week earlier, Shahidur said.



Roadside garbage piled up in Churipatty area of Dinajpur town for long, causing sufferings to locals and commuters.

PHOTO: STAR

Town turns a waste dumping ground

Garbage piled up for months causes sufferings to dwellers, traffic movements

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

Heap of garbage, a major source of environmental pollution, has been piled up almost everywhere in the town in absence of regular cleanliness drive by the authorities concerned, making people's lives intolerable. The town has now turned into breeding ground for mosquito as heap of scattered garbage was piled up all around in the municipality, said locals. As most of the trash bins remain overflowed, townspeople keep on dumping waste on the street corners. M Iqbalur Rahim, lawmaker of Dinajpur-3 constituency, several times at different meetings expressed his distress over non-cooperation from the municipality. During a recent visit to different areas in the municipality, this correspondent found piles of garbage at Kalitola-Barabandar road, near Dinajpur Kotwali Police Station, Modern mor, Munsipara, Basuniapatty and various other places of Dinajpur Satellite town. Besides, heaps of garbage left Rail Bazarhat to Chhoto Gurgola and Boro Gurgola road much narrower. Due to this, transport movement

on the roads is being disrupted, said townspeople. On the other hand, many waste bins were also found broken in the town. Kanchan Ghosh, a resident of Ketripara area, said it is quite impossible for the pedestrians to pass through the way due to bad odour from the heap of garbage. It is also posing a health risk to humans, he said. The situation turns worse in the area during rainy season, said Kanchan Ghosh. Another resident Apurpa Roy of Kalitola area said as the municipality's staffers have not been collecting garbage for over two months, the area has become a breeding ground for mosquito and fly. He further said "It seems that our grievances have so far fallen on deaf ears of the municipality authority." The area of Dinajpur municipality is 24.5 square kilometre. It has been split into 12 wards. There are four cleaners for each ward. If the cleaners do their duties every day, there would not be any waste in Dinajpur town, but they skip off their duties in absence of strong monitoring of mayor. Mayor of Dinajpur municipality Syed Zahangir Alam said he would look into the issue seriously.

Man to die for killing wife

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

A Bagerhat court yesterday sentenced a man to death for killing his wife in 2002.

The convict is Ebarat Ali, 45, son of late Hashem Sheikh of Bishnupur village in Sadar upazila.

Judge SM Saiful Islam of Bagerhat Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-1 also find Ebarat Tk 25,000.

According to the prosecution, Ebarat beat his wife Selima Begum mercilessly, leaving her dead following a family dispute on December 10 in 2002.

Later, the victim's father Rustom Ali filed a murder case with Bagerhat Model Police Station.

After investigation, police submitted charge sheet against Ebarat on April 7 the following year, said Public Prosecutor (PP) Mohammad Siddikur Rahman.

After examining witnesses, the judge found Ebarat guilty, said the PP.

ACC arrests college teacher

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday arrested a teacher of Hatiya Degree College on allegation of continuing job with fake teachers' registration certificate.

The accused is Shahida Akhter Rubi, lecturer of Islamic History and Culture department at the college, said Subel Ahmed, assistant director of ACC in Noakhali.

Rubi allegedly got the job with the fake certificate of the teachers' registration exam in 2010.

Later, she enrolled in the MPO and drew Tk around 5.5 lakh during the period between November 2012 and March 2016.

A team comprising with the officials of education ministry and audit department announced her certificate fake in 2015.

RIVER EROSION

School lost into Padma in four hours

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

The lone primary school of Char Madhupur village in Pabna Sadar upazila disappeared into the Padma within a matter of four hours as the river suddenly turned violent on Thursday midnight and started to erode land early Friday.

The river devoured the entire one acre land of the school compound along with its tin-roof concrete building, the playground, and the Shahid Minar.

"There is no trace of the school now," said Rafikul Islam Bishwas, vice-president of the managing committee of Char Madhupur Government Primary School, the only education institution in the village, which was built in 2010 at a cost of Tk 14.4 lakh.

"The river was calm until Thursday night, but it started roaring at midnight. Within four hours from 6:00am, the school and its surrounding homes and croplands were gone."

Until Saturday, 25 to 30 homesteads went into the river, he said.

The school headmaster, Abdul Karim, said, "The river was about 300 feet away from the school but the intensity of erosion increased suddenly, devouring the entire school."



"We could save some important official papers and a few chairs, tables, and benches with the help of locals and the students when the school was slowly disappearing into the river. We are worried about the children's education."

As the erosion continued to claim more land, more than a hundred villagers migrated from the river side and took shelter in open spaces around the char.

About 3,000 people live in the village, said Najir Uddin Bishwas, a former headmaster of the school and a resident of the village. "The villagers face the threat of erosion as no steps were taken to shore up the bank," he alleged.

He demanded immediate steps to protect the river bank and save the village.

Meanwhile, Pabna Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Joyanal Abedin said that as the village is not located in the mainland, it is not possible to start the bank protection work immediately. "We are giving dry food to the affected villagers and making a list of them for rehabilitation."

The UNO said the school, which has around 150 students, would be rebuilt soon so that the children are not deprived of education.



Within only four hours, the mighty Padma devoured the entire compound of Char Madhupur Government Primary School and adjacent croplands in Pabna Sadar upazila on Friday.

PHOTO: STAR