



A ramshackle Bailey bridge on Tangail-Aricha road at Tirsra in Nagarpur upazila of Tangail.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Shaky Bailey bridges pose risk on Tangail-Aricha road

Commuters, transport owners demand permanent bridge at 12 spots

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

All the 12 Bailey bridges in Tangail portion of Tangail-Aricha road are now in dilapidated conditions, posing risk for a large number of vehicles including passenger buses, goods-laden trucks and light vehicles. The stakeholders have demanded construction of permanent bridges at the spots and widening of the road. Of the 55.5-kilometre-long Tangail-Aricha road, 35.5-kilometre area is in Tangail district and the rest in Manikganj, said officials of Roads and Highways Department (RHD) in Tangail. Starting from Tangail town, the road joins Dhaka-Aricha Highway at Borongail of Manikganj after crossing the Dhaleswari River and moving through Delduar and Nagarpur upazilas in Tangail and Doulatpur and Ghior upazilas of Manikganj. When the road was constructed over two decades ago, the 12 bridges were constructed in Chasha Bhadra,

Dhuburia, Ararakumar, Tengripara, Tirsra, Bhalkutia, Barapusha, Thana Intersection, Dhalapara and Khorshed Market areas under Nagarpur, Delduar and Sadar upazilas of Tangail. Vehicular movement on the road saw a great increase after opening of Dhaleswari Bridge on the road at Elasin in Delduar upazila in 2013 as vehicles no longer needed to cross the river by ferry to go to Aricha. A number of passenger buses and goods-laden trucks from southern districts use the road to go to different districts including Tangail, Sherpur and Jamalpur while several hundred CNG-run auto-rickshaws use the road daily for local communications. Movement of a large number of vehicles turned the old Bailey bridges risky and the RHD has set cautionary signs on both ends of the bridges. The steel-made decks of the Bailey bridges have decayed and light vehicles like motorcycles often slip there, locals said.

The bridges shake when any heavy vehicle move on, they said. "The Bailey bridge here was repaired after a goods-laden truck got stuck on it due to displacement of steel plate on the deck in January this year," said Jafar Ali of Tirsra village. Azizul, Haque, driver of a truck plying the road, said he feels anxious while crossing the shaky Bailey bridges. Golam Kibria, general secretary of Tangail District Bus-Minibus Owners' Association, said they demand construction of permanent bridges at the 12 spots and widening of the road to ease communication between greater Mymensingh region and southern districts through Aricha. Aminul Ehsan, executive engineer of RHD in Tangail, said a proposal to construct permanent bridges to replace the Bailey bridges and widen the road was sent to the higher authorities and the works can be started after approval of the proposal.

SEPARATE RAILWAY BRIDGE ON JAMUNA

Construction work begins next year

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan yesterday said the construction work of a separate railway bridge beside the Bangabandhu Multipurpose Bridge on the Jamuna river will begin next year. He said this while talking to journalists after visiting the site proposed for construction of the east part of the railway bridge at the east end of Bangabandhu Multipurpose Bridge in Tangail. The west part of the railway bridge will be constructed at the west end of the Bangabandhu Multipurpose Bridge in Sirajganj. Sujan hopes that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the construction work before or after the 100th birthday celebration of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on March 17 next year. The construction work of the railway bridge will be completed after four years from the day of beginning the construction work, he said. The minister also said the tender processes of the railway bridge construction has already been completed. Deputy Commissioner Md Shahidul Islam, Superintendent of Police Sanjit Kumar Roy and high officials of Railway Department accompanied the minister during the visit.

60 deer poachers held, hunting traps seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Forest department personnel arrested 60 alleged deer poachers from Jaimoni area under Chandpai Range of the Sundarbans Eastern Forest Division early yesterday. The forest guards also recovered deer hunting traps and sharp weapons from their possession. The arrestees hail from Gourmava union in Bagerhat's Rampal upazila, said Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Sundarbans East Division Mahmudul Hasan. Informed that some people were going to Sundarbans in three trawlers to hunt deer they raided the area and arrested the poachers with the traps and sharp weapons, said Mahmudul. They also seized the trawlers, said the forest official, adding that action will be taken against the arrestees.

Robbers loot five jewellery shops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Robbers looted 109 tolas of gold ornaments, 500 tolas of silver and Tk 18 lakh from five jewellery shops after injuring two night guards at Ghorashal bazar in Palash upazila of Narsingdi early yesterday. They also looted a rice trading shop at the bazar, said Officer-in-Charge Sheikh Md Nasir Uddin of Palash Model Police Station. A gang of 20/25 robbers introduced themselves as policemen swooped on the jewellery shops and looted the ornaments and money. At the time, they tied up the night guards and beat them mercilessly. Hearing screams, locals rushed to the spot and rescued the guards. However, the robbers managed to flee the scene. On information, Narsingdi Police Superintendent Proloy Kumar Joarder visited the spot yesterday. They are investigating the incident, said the OC.

Fire guts shops, houses

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

At least 15 shops and three dwelling houses were gutted in a fire that broke out at Badura Bazar in Galachipa upazila on Monday. On information, three firefighting units from Patuakhali and Barguna's Amtali upazila went to the spot and brought the blaze under control after three hours of frantic efforts. Station Officer at Patuakhali Fire Station Mohammad Feroz Ahmed said the fire might have originated from a battery-run auto-rickshaw garage. Shop owners said the fire broke out around 2:00pm and soon engulfed the adjacent shops.

Woman gets life term for killing husband

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A Madaripur court yesterday sentenced a woman to life term imprisonment for killing her husband in 2018. The convict, Asma Begum, 30, is wife of late Alhaz Sardar of Purba Botla village in Kalkini upazila of the district. Madaripur District and Sessions Judge Nitai Chandra Saha also fined the convict Tk 50,000. In default, she is to suffer one year more in jail, Public Prosecutor (PP) Siddiqur Rahman said. According to the case statement, Asma developed an extramarital affair with one Lal Mahmud of neighbouring Ramnagar village. As a sequel, she fed her husband some sleeping tablets, mixing with homemade cakes (pithas), and then strangled him to death on January 12, 2018. The following day, deceased's sister Sajeda Begum filed a murder case accusing Asma and Lal. After investigation, police submitted the charge sheet against Asma. After examining the witnesses and evidences, the court found Asma guilty and delivered the verdict.



This road obstructs flow in Bogra major branch canal under Teesta Irrigation Project at Belaichondi village in Parbatipur upazila, thanks to the negligence of the authorities concerned.

PHOTO: STAR

TEESTA PROJECT

Irrigation hampered as road across major canal obstructs flow

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

A metalled road obstructs flow in Bogra major branch canal under Teesta Irrigation Project at Belaichondi village in Parbatipur upazila as Bangladesh Water Development Board's (WDB) Saidpur divisional office in Nilphamari failed to follow rules while constructing the canal. Consequently, irrigation of targeted agricultural fields in the downstream is hampered in the dry season and flooding occurs during the monsoon, said the stakeholders. The 34.5-kilometre-long and 120-metre-wide Bogra canal was completed in 2017 to irrigate 10 thousand hectares of land in Kishoreganj, Saidpur, Taraganj, Badarganj and Parbatipur upazilas, said Rafiqul Islam, sub divisional engineer of WDB in Saidpur.

"As per project rule, bridges are to be built over the canal, cutting the existing roads on the way, so that movement of people and vehicles as well as flow of water remains unhindered," he said.

Rafiqul Bari, WDB's agriculture extension officer in Nilphamari, informed that Teesta Irrigation Project commissioned in 1998 has an overall target to irrigate 2.50 lakh hectares of land in 35 upazilas of Nilphamari, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Joypurhat and Bogra districts. For the purpose, Rangpur and Dinajpur major branch canals were constructed initially while the Bogra canal is a recent addition. Besides, there are a number of secondary and tertiary canals to serve the purpose. LGED built the 3.5-km Belaichondi-Baluchar Kutipara metalled road long before the construction of Bogra canal, said Hasibur Rahman, chairman of Belaichondi union parishad. "During construction of the canal, I requested WDB officials to cut the road and build a bridge here, so that the canal is not divided into two segments. They ignored the matter although 18 such bridges were constructed over the canal connecting other existing roads," he said. As irrigation is seriously hampered due to

obstruction to the water flow, farmers in the downstream have to use expensive shallow pumps for irrigation, said Ananda Das, 30, a farmer of Kutipara village. In face of locals' demand, the authorities concerned set concrete pipes under the road, through which only a little water passes, said farmer Mohammad Ali, 55, of Belaichondi village. The obstruction to flow in Bogra canal causes flooding in the area during the rainy season when Teesta Barrage authorities open the regulator gates at Dalia to release excess water, said Shahidul Islam, headmaster of nearby Baluchar High School. Contacted, Krishna Kamol Chandra Sarker, executive engineer of WDB's Saidpur division, said, "After joining here recently, I noticed the matter. We're likely to launch another project titled 'Teesta Barrage command area development project' and during its implementation, we'll build a bridge at the point and remove the obstruction to flow in the canal."



As in other areas, workers pass busy time making quilt in Padmabati area of Barishal city as the cotton-filled item, used to keep people warm during cold weather, sees a rising demand amid approaching winter. The photo was taken on Tuesday. PHOTO: STAR