



A village road in Jhalakathi's Rajapur upazila lies in awful state for years, causing immense sufferings to commuters.

PHOTO: STAR

Jhalakathi villagers suffer for over a decade

The 1.5 kilometre road in Rajapur upazila lies in awful condition since it was hit by super cyclone Sidr in 2007

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhalakathi

Carrying his ailing mother in his arms, Abu Alam had to walk about one kilometre to reach Rajapur Upazila Health Complex due to a damaged village road.

The one-and-half km road at Gopalpur in Rajapur upazila lies in awful state since it was hit by super cyclone Sidr in 2007, causing immense sufferings to commuters of five villages.

Especially critical patients and students of different educational institutions are the worst

sufferers due to the bad condition of the road, said locals.

The villages are Pargopalpur, Gopalpur, Sangor, Suktagar and Jagyrhat.

Rafizuddin, a farmer of Gopalpur village, said due to the damaged road, they have to face immense problem to bring their agricultural products to markets in the upazila and district headquarters.

Rana, a student of Rajapur Government College, said "I have to walk to go to my college. Even I can't use my bicycle on the road as a number of potholes have developed

on the road."

Despite repeated pleas, the authorities concerned are yet to take any steps to repair the road, said villagers.

Mojibul Haque Mridha, chairman of Suktagor union parishad, said a tender will be floated soon to renovate the road.

Md Golam Mostofa, engineer of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) in Rajapur, said he joined here recently. Yet immediate steps will be taken to repair the road.

Resilience wins her Joyeeta Award

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Jatri Rani Barman, an auto-rickshaw driver, has won the Joyeeta Award in Sunamganj under the category 'resilience against violence on women'.

She is among the five women who received crest of honour under different categories at a programme at district Shilpakala Academy on Monday marking the Begum Rokeya Day and two week-long activism following International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Sunamganj Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mohammad Abdul Ahad handed over the crests at the event organised by the district office of Women and Children Affairs Directorate in collaboration with the district administration.

Jatri got the award in recognition for her starting a new life, leaving behind a past with long-time abuse by husband.

"I married a man of Sunamganj town following an affair 20 years ago. But happiness eluded me as he started torturing me shortly afterwards," said the 39-year-old woman.

"When the time for delivery of my eldest son neared, my husband did not even accompany me to hospital. I went to hospital alone and returned home with the newborn. Later two other kids



were born to us.

"As my husband did not work regularly, I decided to earn and learned how to drive auto-rickshaw," Jatri said.

Early this year, she started living separately from her husband.

"I started driving auto-rickshaw on March 8 this year and continued the work. With the earning I maintain myself and my three children, who live with me," she said.

Expressing happiness over the award, Jatri said, "Such honour will encourage women to stand against abuse and work for materialising their own dream."

The government enacted many laws, rules and regulations for protection of women and children and is working to implement those properly, DC Abdul Ahad said in his speech at the award giving programme.



Joyeeta Award winner Jatri Rani Barman runs battery-run auto-rickshaw in Sunamganj to maintain herself and three children, having said goodbye to abuse by husband.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



While a passenger stands bemusedly at Shambhuganj bridge bus counters in Mymensingh city, a woman checks with a transport worker about the possibility of resumption of bus services. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon, before the bus owners called off the strike.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Bus services resume on Dhaka-M'singh, 3 other dist routes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

After keeping their vehicles off the road for the second consecutive day, resulting in a suspension of communications with the capital via Mymensingh city, bus owners in Mymensingh and three other districts called off their strike last evening.

The decision was made around 8:30pm yesterday evening at the assurance of settling the matter owners and leaders of the transport sector in Mymensingh said adding that they would elaborate on their decision after today's meeting of the Regional Transport Committee (RTC).

RTC Chairman and Mymensingh Deputy Commissioner Mizanur Rahman is scheduled to preside over the meeting at 12 noon today.

Mymensingh district motor owners' association enforced the indefinite strike from Monday afternoon over an alleged assault on several of their transport workers by staffers of Bangladesh Road Transport

Corporation (BRTC), the state-owned transport service operator.

Ali Hossain, joint secretary of Mymensingh district motor vehicle workers' union also confirmed the decision made by the bus owners.

Mahbubur Rahman, secretary of the bus owners' association, claimed that the incident took place around 11:00am on Monday at bus counters of private bus operators near Shambhuganj bridge in Mymensingh city.

After two BRTC buses from Netrakona made stops at the counters, the workers of the private operators locked in an altercation with BRTC staffers and at one stage the BRTC staffers "assaulted" some of their workers, he also claimed.

After visiting the spot, the owners' association leaders decided to go on an indefinite strike for bus services operating between Dhaka and Mymensingh as well as services to and from Sherpur, Netrakona and

Kishoreganj districts via Mymensingh city, Mahabur added.

Several passengers who found themselves stranded at Shambhuganj bridge bus counters yesterday told this correspondent that the general public usually prefer BRTC to private operators for affordable fares and better vehicles and that might be the reason behind the hostility of private operators towards BRTC.

Many others said although the private transport operators have been making people hostage for their own gains for a long time, there seems to be no one to stop them from causing such recurring sufferings to people.

Holding her five-year old son's hand, Arifa Akter was also looking for a transport to Haluaghat upazila at the Shambhuganj bridge bus counters. Finding no bus, she was pondering whether she should hire a CNG-run auto-rickshaw at a fare that is three to four times costlier.

Driver dies as tractor overturns

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A driver was killed when his tractor overturned in a cropland in Hakimpur upazila yesterday.

The deceased, Farukul Islam, 30, son of Moslem Uddin, was a resident of Khattamadhampur village in the upazila.

Quoting locals, police said Farukul sustained critical injuries when his tractor overturned while he was ploughing a cropland at Khatta village yesterday morning.

Villagers rescued injured Farukul and took him to Hakimpur Upazila Health Complex, from where he was referred to M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital.

He died on way to the hospital, Officer in Charge of Hakimpur Police Station Abdur Razzak said.

Meherpur Allah'r Dal chief held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Meherpur district chief of banned militant outfit Allah'r Dal from Chuadanga town early yesterday.

The arrestee was identified as Robiul Islam Tutul, 35, son of Khodabax Mandol of Buripota in Meherpur Sadar upazila.

Commander of Rab-6 in Jhenidah Masud Alam said on secret information, the elite force raided a bus stand area in the town around 3:30am and arrested Tutul.

Tutul went into hiding since November 27. On the day, Rab men raided Zafarpur village in Chuadanga Sadar and arrested three members of Allah'r Dal. At the time, a group of Allah'r Dal men were holding a secret meeting there.

Sensing the presence of the elite force, Tutul managed to flee the scene then, said the commander.

2 kids drown in pond

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Two minor children drowned in a pond in Damdama Harigara area under Singra municipality yesterday morning.

The deceased are Kawsar Hossain, 2, son of Shamim Hossain, and Mim Khatun, 2, daughter of Mithun Ali, of the area.

Jahangir Alam, a councillor of Singra municipality, said the two kids slipped into a pond beside their house and drowned.

Family members took them to Singra Upazila Health Complex, where the doctors declared them dead.



Marking the Victory Day to be celebrated on December 16, Chapainawabganj district administration organised a colourful rally holding the national flag on the deputy commissioner's office premises yesterday morning. Around ten thousand people including freedom fighters, students and teachers of different educational institutions, social and cultural activists and officials of different government offices participated in the programme. The participants later marched through streets of Chapainawabganj town, inset. PHOTO: RABIULHASAN

