



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

It has the whole setup -- a basin, a faucet, a soap dish and the plumbing to connect it to a drain outlet and to a water tank. But the hand wash outlet, installed by Pirojpur Zila Parishad, beside the BRTC counter near CO Office intersection in Pirojpur town, now lies covered with filth and in an unusable condition without any supply of clean water and soap. The photo was taken this Friday.

COVID-19 HAND WASH OUTLETS

Money spent on installation, not on maintenance

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Like everywhere else in the country, the hand wash basins, set up in Pirojpur town when the first wave of Covid-19 struck the country last year, are lying in neglect.

When those were installed, many people did not wish to use those simply out of lack of awareness. But now, when more of them are aware of the benefits of washing hands frequently, the wash basins are left unclean and without necessary supplies -- clean water and soap.

Many of the basins now are either damaged or so dirty that touching those might even cause health risks to the public.

Many government and private offices throughout a good part of last year did not allow visitors to enter the office premises without washing their hands at the wash basins set up outside the offices.

But later, when the number of novel coronavirus infections gradually fell across the country, most offices eventually stopped making their visitors wash hands prior to making entry.

With a second wave of the virus waiting to break out, this correspondent tried to locate the hand wash facilities that were installed last year at public places around Pirojpur town, especially at government offices or hospitals.

But, none of those were found to be in a condition recommended by health experts.

The wash basins installed on the premises of Pirojpur Sadar Upazila Parishad and Pirojpur District Hospital had water supply, but did not have any soap.

A hand wash outlet, installed by Pirojpur Zila Parishad, beside the BRTC counter near CO Office intersection, bore

all indications that it had never been cleaned. A large water tank was connected to it, but there was no water in the tank or any soap on the soap dish.

Many townspeople this correspondent spoke with said many of the residents of the town now feel that they no longer need to wash hands before entering an office.

But the ones who still want to continue the practice for the sake of public safety, are in no luck as there is not a single operational hand wash outlet in the entire town, they said frustratingly.

Shahidul Islam, a resident of the town, said, "Although we washed our hands several times a day when the Coronavirus first broke out, we had to stop the practice as no hand wash facilities are found to be operational in the town anymore."

Hand wash outlets must be cleaned and maintained properly so the general public would be enticed into using those, said Obydul Haque, another resident of the town.

Ishtiaq Ahmed, a medical officer at Pirojpur District Hospital, said, "Hand washing is the best way to protect us from different diseases" and people should get used to continuing this practice.

Contacted, Rebeka Khan, chief executive officer of Pirojpur Zila Parishad, said as part of an emergency measure, they installed the hand wash outlets at key locations in every upazila to ensure access to hand wash facilities for the general public.

Even though they "have no funds for its maintenance", they have asked the upazila parishads, if necessary, to send bills of expenses spent for the maintenance of the hand wash outlets installed by the zila parishad.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A bailey bridge on Kalihati-Dhalapara-Barachaona road in Nondakuri area under Birbasinda union in Kalihati upazila has remained badly damaged for long, causing untold sufferings to its users as well as hampering the movement of traffic.

The severely damaged bridge on a local waterbody has virtually turned into a death trap for commuters.

Locals said different goods-laden trucks, passenger carrying vehicles and pedestrians cross the vulnerable bridge, constructed on a river pass between Kasturipara and Razafair, risking their lives.

Due to the dilapidated condition of the bridge fatal accidents can occur any moment, locals added.

During a recent visit to the area this correspondent saw that the steel plates on a large portion of the deck have caved in due to heavy pressure of vehicles.

Villagers said alongside the pedestrians, various light vehicles including pick-up vans, CNG-run three-wheelers, battery-run easy bikes and motorcycles ply the damaged bridge taking risk of accidents.

Several hundred vehicles, carrying passengers and goods, from Kalihati upazila headquarters use the damaged bridge every day to go to Borochoana, Dhalapara and Deopara villages in Sakhipur and Ghatail upazilas and several other villages in Kalihati upazila.

Mohammad Ali of Razafair village said they are forced to use the vulnerable bridge as there is no alternative.

Despite repeated appeals for long the authorities concerned are yet to repair the damaged bridge, he added.

Saheb Ali, an easy-bike driver who drive his vehicle on the risky bridge every day, said fear grips him while moving the damaged portion of bridge.

"We have no other alternative, but to cross the

bridge risking our lives to go to the destinations," he said.

Three-wheeler driver Aminur said as thousands of passengers and hundreds of vehicles ply the bridge every day, the authorities concerned should repair the damaged portion of the bridge immediately.

"Condition of the bridge is so dilapidated that vehicle can fall into the river at any time," one of the commuters Atiqul Islam said.

Kalihati Upazila Engineer of Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) Zahir Mehedi Hasan said all the four bailey bridges, including the damaged one, were previously under the Roads and Highways Department which were later handed over to LGED.

"Works to repair the damage bridge will begin next week," the engineer said.

Initiative to construct concrete bridges in place of the worn out bridges will be taken as soon as possible, he said.



This recent photo shows pedestrians and vehicles cross the damaged portion of this bailey bridge on Kalihati-Dhalapara-Barachaona road in Tangail's Kalihati upazila amid risk of fatal accidents.

PHOTO: STAR



This injured rare Rufous-bellied Eagle, rescued from a house in Kalenga area in Moulvibazar Sadar upazila on Friday, is now undergoing treatment in Wildlife Service Centre in the upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

Re-Tender Notice for the procurement of works mentioned below under Sylhet O&M Division, BWDB, Sylhet. Includes details of Lot No., Name of works, Tender last selling date & time, and Tender closing date & time.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার. নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সওজ সড়ক বিভাগ, লালমনিরহাট. সেতু ইজারা কোটেশন আহবান বিজ্ঞপ্তি. Table with 2 columns: No. and Details of the tender items.

Youth stabbed death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Unidentified criminals stabbed a young man to death in front of Chinishpur union parishad in Narsingdi Sadar upazila early yesterday.

The deceased, Naimur Rahman, 25, son of Shafiqul Islam of Baraigram upazila in Natore, was serving as a salesman at Century Agro Limited Company in Narsingdi. Locals spotted Naimur's body lying on the road and informed them, the police official said, adding that they recovered the body and sent it to hospital for autopsy.

Meanwhile, Shahjahan Mia, a local construction worker, said three youths waylaid the victim around 5:15am.

They stabbed the victim indiscriminately with sharp weapon and snatched his mobile phone and cash before fleeing the scene.

Man send to jail for rape attempt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A Patuakhali court yesterday sent a man to jail after police produced him before it in connection with a case for trying to rape his daughter-in-law in Kalapara upazila on Sunday.

Earlier, villagers caught Siddique Musullii, 48, of Badurtali area in Kalapara upazila, while trying to rape his daughter-in-law on Sunday and handed him over to the police, Officer-in-Charge (investigation) of Kalapara Police Station Asaduzzaman said.

The victim filed a case with Kalapara Police Station accusing Siddique the same night.

Police said victim's husband went to Saudi Arabia nearly two years ago and since then her father-in-law has been giving her illicit proposals.

Siddique tried to rape the victim forcible when none of the family members were present at the house.

Teenager killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A teenage boy was killed in Bhaluka upazila early yesterday. The victim, Mehdi Hasan, 17, a paper mill worker, was son of Rafiqul Islam of Paragaon village in the upazila.

Quoting the victim's family members, Officer in Charge (Investigation) of Bhaluka Police Station Mehdi Hasan said the victim joined the factory in Hobarbari area only a few days ago.

The boy met the tragic death after he got entangled with a machine, used for making pulp, early yesterday and died on the spot.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার. সড়ক পরিবহন ও সেতু মন্ত্রণালয়. এয়ারকন্ডিশন মাইক্রোবাস মাসিক ভাড়াভিত্তিক গ্রহণ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি). Table with 2 columns: No. and Details of the tender items.