



The dried-up river bed is being used as cropland. The photo was taken from Golchokkor area under Katulee union in Tangail Sadar upazila recently.

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

Once turbulent Dhaleswari now cropland

MIRZA SHAKIL

The dried-up bed of once turbulent Dhaleswari river at different places in Tangail is being used for cultivation. Local farmers are using the river beds for cultivating different crops including paddy and vegetables.

In some places, there is still some flow but it is so polluted that it cannot be used for any purposes including irrigation to crop fields.

Vehicles, including sand-laden ones, are seen plying on the dried-up riverbeds.

The Dhaleswari river is a 160-kilometer-long distributary of the Jamuna river. It starts off the Jamuna near the northwestern tip of Tangail district.

After that it divides into two branches; the north branch retains the name Dhaleswari and merges with the other branch, the Kaliganga river at the southern part of Manikganj district. Finally, the merged flow meets the Shitalakshya river near Narayanganj district. The combined flow goes southwards to merge into the Meghna river.

During a recent visit, it was seen that the bed of the once turbulent Dhaleswari river has turned into a green pasture with crops— including paddies, mashkalai, and peanut etc— at different places in Sadar and Delduar upazilas.

Several villagers including Saiful Islam of Char Pakulla and Jahangir Alam of Mahmud Nagar said once upon a time, the depth of river was lot; boats used to ply during the dry season also. But now the river has almost dried due to siltation and lack of water from upstream. Water remains on the river only during the wet season for three to four months.

As a result, the local people cultivate paddies and vegetables on

its dried-up bed, they said.

Not only Dhaleswari but also most of the rivers in the district show similar pictures during the dry season as silting and pollution are leading them to gradual death.

Most of the rivers in Tangail district are heading towards the same destiny as the riverbeds remain waterless for nearly half of the year.

The main rivers in Tangail district are Jamuna, Dhaleswari, Jhenai, Bonshai, Louhajang, Elenjani and Bairan.

The rivers were full of a variety of fish while ships, launches, big merchant boats piled the rivers that had strong flow throughout the year only about four decades ago, said several senior citizens.

River ways were used as means of easy and cheap transportation of goods to from and the district, they said.

Big merchandizing boats laden with thousands of maunds of jute from different districts came to the ghats of different rivers in the district, including Elasin Ghat on the Dhaleswari river in Delduar upazila and Nolin Ghat on the Jamuna river in Gopalpur upazila as many governmental and non-governmental jute purchase centers were set up there.

But all these are past stories and now boats can ply on the rivers during the rainy season. As only a little water is available during half of the year, the river transportation system in the district is in a disarray.

International water expert engineer SI Khan, a resident of Basail upazila in the district who had worked at the United Nations, said that the amount of water flow in Jamuna River has reduced a lot due to withdrawal of water from the upstream.

The situation affects other rivers in

the district including the Dhaleswari that has also silted up and as a result, their water containing capacity has greatly reduced, he added.

Riverside fishermen and boatmen communities, who are mainly dependent on the rivers for their livelihood, are the direct victims of drying up of the rivers during the ongoing dry season.

The rivers now see very little fish resources as their sanctuaries have been destroyed.

Syed Irfanul Bari, general secretary of Bangladesh Chapter of the International Farakka Committee, also blamed withdrawal of water from upstream by constructing dams including at Tibet by China and at Assam by India for the sorry state of the domestic rivers.

He also said although most of the rivers in Tangail are drying but no step is yet to be seen to save them. Besides losing navigability, the rivers are victims of mindless pollution and grabbing by the influential quarters.

Sanowar Hossain, lawmaker in Tangail Sadar, said they have already talked to the Water Resources Ministry in this regard. The several rivers including Dhaleswari, Louhajang and Jhenai were divided in three categories—A, B and C. The Dhaleswari river was kept in A category.

The excavation of the river and also the works to construct the bank protection embankment will be done as soon as possible, he said.

Goutam Chandra Chanda, a senior research officer of Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (BELA), however, said the main problem is restraining water flow on Jamuna river during the dry season from the upstream. The river also needs excavation and it is so costly.



Grass is growing high around the cancer unit building of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College Hospital in Faridpur town -- a sign that the facility is not being maintained properly.

PHOTO: SUZIT KUMAR DAS

Faridpur BSMMCH cancer unit not ready in 10 years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Without allocation of necessary work force and a full set of equipment, the cancer unit at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College Hospital (BSMMCH) in Faridpur remains useless for cancer patients in the region.

The plan to build a comprehensive cancer unit for BSMMCH was initiated in fiscal year 2011-12. But all that was done in the past ten years was construction of a separate building to the south of the hospital building and procurement of a piece of equipment for Tk 14 crore.

Located in Harokandi area of Faridpur town, BSMMCH was previously known as Faridpur Medical College Hospital, which was established in 1992.

In fiscal year 2011-12, about 20

years after its establishment, an initiative was taken to set up a cancer unit at the hospital under a five-year project titled 'Establishment of Faridpur Medical College and Hospital'.

During a recent visit to BSMMCH, it appeared that the grass around the unused cancer unit, constructed by the Public Works Department, might not have been mown in a long time.

Shamsur Rahman, head clerk of BSMMCH, said that as part of the five-year project, a 'linear accelerator' machine was bought for the cancer unit at a cost of Tk 14 crore in 2016.

However, the equipment could not be made operational without other equipment required to operate it.

A 'CT simulator' was also procured, but it is till at the central office of the

Department of Health Engineering as the cancer building of BSMMCH is not fully ready yet, Shamsur added.

Monaim Mollah, assistant professor of cancer department at BSMMCH, said at least 20 people including doctors, nurses and word boys would be needed to run the cancer unit.

But "there's no doctor or even another employee [at the unit] except myself. I have been working in this department since 2016. It isn't possible to run the unit without necessity equipment and manpower."

Contacted, BSMMCH Superintendent Saifur Rahman said, "We sent letters to the higher authorities multiple times, requesting necessary equipment and manpower. But we got nothing for the cancer unit yet."

Man sued for raping 2 schoolgirls

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Two cases were filed on Tuesday with Rajbari Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal against a man for raping two teenage school girls.

The accused, Sabur Pramanik, 55, is a resident of Pangsha upazila in Rajbari.

One of the girls is in ninth grade at a local school while the other is a tenth grade student at a school in Kushtia. The older girl, aunt of the younger one, came to visit her sister's house in Pangsha upazila.

Each of the parents of the ninth grade student filed two separate cases against Sabur Pramanik.

According to case statements,

on May 9, Sabur tricked the ninth grader into waiting behind a palm tree near her house. He threatened her that if she did not comply, she will be possessed by rebellious jinns or unholy spirits.

He later tied up the girl and raped her. He warned her that if she spoke of the incident to anyone, he would unleash the jinns to kill her father.

Sabur later came to her house and used the same tactic to rape her again.

Recently, when the girl's aunt, the tenth grader, came to visit their house, Sabur duped her into going to his house on the night of June 1 to meet a jinn. He used the same scheme to rape her that night.

On June 10, Sabur raped her again at her sister's house and he also raped her niece there that same night, the tenth grader said, adding that she disclosed everything to her sister after she fell sick later.

Arshed Ali, a local union parishad member, said, "Sabur, father of two children, runs a grocery store beside his house in the area. He was also a Kobiraj. He has disappeared after the incident."

Pangsha Police Station Officer-in-Charge Masudur Rahman said he has heard about the filing of the case at the court and he would take all necessary steps in this connection after receiving copies of the necessary documents from the court.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Superintending Engineer Roads and Highways Department Bridge Construction and Maintenance Circle Sarak Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka- 1208, Bangladesh



Memo No. 35.01.0000.152.14.058.2021-226.

Date.16.06.2021

Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI)

Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) for Consultancy Services for Feasibility Study and Detailed Design of Construction of 2nd Sultana Kamal Bridge over the river Shitalakshya on Tarabo-Demra Regional Highway (R201) including Upgrading of Tarabo Intersection on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway (N2) and Kanchpur Intersection on Dhaka-Chottogram Highway (N1) under the Roads and Highways Department, Bangladesh.

- The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GOB) will provide fund from operating budget (all payments regarding consultancy services will be made in Bangladeshi Taka) towards the cost of consultancy services for "Feasibility Study and Detailed Design of Construction of 2nd Sultana Kamal Bridge over the river Shitalakshya on Tarabo-Demra Regional Highway (R201) including Upgrading of Tarabo Intersection on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway (N2) and Kanchpur Intersection on Dhaka-Chottogram Highway (N1) under the Roads and Highways Department, Bangladesh" by engaging consulting firm(s).
- The scope of the Consultancy services primarily includes preparing the feasibility study, the detailed engineering design, traffic study, hydro-morphology study, geotechnical investigation, environmental and social impact assessment, land acquisition plan, resettlement plan, economic study and the bidding documents for above mentioned services. The proposed 2nd Sultana Kamal Bridge will be an aesthetically pleasing bridge (4-Lane or more) with a length more than 1000 meter, preferably having longer span to minimize interference with water flow and water traffic. The scope will also include advanced highway interchanges to ensure seamless traffic movement at the two intersections. Hence, the consulting services comprise the following components:
 - Task-1.** Conduct all studies including Traffic Survey, Topographic Survey, Geotechnical Investigation, Road Condition Survey, Bridge Condition Survey, Meteorology, Hydrology & Morphology Study, Environmental & Socio-Economic Survey, Video Survey, Road Safety Audit, Economic and Financial Analysis and other related surveys that are required for the project.
 - Task-2.** Prepare detailed analysis, plan and assessment for Financial and Economic Analysis, Mathematical Modeling based on Hydrology and Morphology Study, Environmental Assessment, Socio-Economic Assessment, Environmental Management Plan (EMP), Environmental Monitoring Plan (EMoP), Land Acquisition Plan, Resettlement Action Plan, Traffic Model, and other related studies as per requirement of Procuring Entity.
 - Task-3.** Prepare Detailed Design such as Geometric/Structural Design of the Road and Bridge Alignment, Pavement Design, Bridge Design, Interchange and Intersection Design, Toll Plaza Design, Road and Bridge Furniture Design, Bank Protection Design, Drainage System Design, Axle Load Control Station Design and other related designs based on study as per requirement of the Procuring Entity.
 - Task-4.** Prepare bidding documents and provide supports to the procurement for civil works upon the request of the Procuring Entity.
- The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) (Executing Agency) under the Road Transport and Highways Division (RTHD), Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges (MRTB) now invites Expressions of Interest (EOI) in English from reputed consulting firm(s) either as individual firm or in Joint Venture/Association for short listing of Firm(s) for the captioned services.
- Consultants will be selected under Quality and Cost Based Selection Method (QCBS) in accordance with the procedures set out in the Public Procurement Rules, 2008 (PPR 2008) considering all subsequent Amendments.
- The interested consultants must have following experiences of rendering consulting services within last 10 years:
 - Experience of at least 01 (one) detailed design of multi-span 4-lane pre-stressed concrete/steel, cable-stayed/suspension/arch river or sea bridge(s) not less than 1000 meter in length with the largest span not less than 120 meter;
 - Experience of detailed design of at least 01 (one) grade separated interchange (such as trumpet, cloverleaf, diamond, directional, etc.);
 - Satisfactory completion of study and design consultancy services at least 5 kilometer road section including Traffic Survey, Topographic Survey, Hydrology Survey, Axle Load Survey, Geotechnical Investigation, Socio-Economic Survey and Economic and Financial Assessment etc.
- The EOI should especially include (along with certified English Translation if not in English):
 - The firm's registration certificate, Legal Entitlements of the Firm (Trade License, TIN, VAT, Registration, etc.);
 - Company profile: including management, personnel (especially key personnel regarding consultancy services), firm's specialty, performance;
 - The latest annual report;
 - General and overall experience of firm(s) (limited to 3 pages) and Experience of similar nature of services in last 10 years including procuring entity's name, nature of services, contract amount, person-months, duration of the services with commencement and completion date;
 - Summary of permanent professional employees with key qualifications;
 - Audited financial statement (Balance sheet, Profit & Loss Account and Cash Flow Statement) for last 3 (three) years; and
 - Average annual turnover in last 3 (three) years.
- Interested applicants may obtain further information by applying to the undersigned during normal office hour or through email.
- With all supporting documents, the EOI must be submitted to the signatory addressed at or before 2.00 pm (BST) on 20.07.2021 in sealed envelopes (One original and One copy) marked with "Consultancy Services for Feasibility Study and Detailed Design of Construction of 2nd Sultana Kamal Bridge over the river Shitalakshya on Tarabo-Demra Regional Highway (R201) including Upgrading of Tarabo Intersection on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway (N2) and Kanchpur Intersection on Dhaka-Chottogram Highway (N1) under the Roads and Highways Department, Bangladesh". Any late submission will be rejected.
- The Procuring Entity shall not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by the firm(s) in connection with the preparation or submission of the EOI. The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject all the Expressions of Interest (EOI) without assigning any reason.

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16.06.2021
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