



This two temporary bridges in Bagerhat's Mollahat upazila lie unrepaired for years, posing risk of accidents as well as disrupting vehicular movements.

PHOTOS: COLLECTED

## Risky bailey bridges in Bagerhat need urgent renovation

All the 14 temporary bridges on two important roads become severely damaged, accident-prone

PARTHA CHAKRABORTY

Fourteen bailey bridges over different canals on two important roads in the district have become very risky and severely dilapidated, causing frequent accidents and disrupting vehicular movements.

Locals said almost all the 14 temporary bridges, on Khulna-Mawa old highway and a regional highway connecting three upazilas with the district headquarters, have become unfit for use due to lack of renovation for long and are at risk of collapse that could cause accidents and loss of lives.

Demanding urgent renovation or reconstruction of the dilapidated bridges, they said sometimes pedestrians and light vehicles ply the bridges risking their lives. Moreover, the cost of carrying goods has also increased for the traders and local

farmers. According to Bagerhat Roads and Highways Department (RHD), there are 14 bailey bridges on Khulna-Mawa old highway and signboard-bogie regional highway that connect Mollahat, Morrelgonj and Sharankhola upazilas with the district headquarters.

Condition of most of the bridges have become awfully risky as those were built over half a century ago, sources said.

Of those, the bridges near Nashukhali Bazar and Paglar Bazar, Charkulia Bridge and Haridah Bridge in Mollahat upazila, Teligati Bailey Bridge in Morrelgonj upazila and Nalbunia Bridge in Sharankhola upazila are in worst conditions and may collapse anytime.

Although, the authorities concerned have put warning signboards on either side of the risky

bridges, heavy and light vehicles are constantly using the bridges risking lives.

Trader Mizanur Rahman of Charkulia Bridge area said Charkulia is one of the biggest markets in Mollahat and thousands of people go there every day to buy and sell their products.

But, they are facing serious trouble in carrying their goods as the bridge lies in dilapidated condition for long, he said.

Tariqul Islam, who lives near the Haridah Bridge, said "Every day, from dawn to dusk, we witness many small accidents on the vulnerable bridge."

For the benefits of pedestrians and motorcyclists, they also renovated the bridge once, by collecting donations from the local people, he said, adding, but that didn't last long.

Requesting urgent repair of the unfit bridge, van-puller Maruf of Teligati area in Morrelgonj said the bridge itself is a problem now as neither can they pull a van or rickshaw, nor local people can walk on it.

Rezaul Karim, chairman of Gaola union Parishad (UP) under Mollahat Upazila, said there are four bailey bridges under his union and all of those are posing risk of accidents.

Thousands of people from nearby areas use the bridge, taking risk of accidents, he added.

He also urged the authorities concerned to reconstruct or repair the bridge in soonest possible time. Contacted, Bagerhat RHD Executive Engineer Mohammad Farid Uddin said they have already visited the sites and issued work orders for the 14 bailey bridges.

## 300-foot-long Kumar river land grabbed in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

An influential youth has allegedly grabbed around a 300-foot-long area of Kumar river land for cultivation in Hatfadilpur bazar area under Shailakupa upazila of Jhenidah.

Sohel Rana, 25, son of Nekbar Ali of Hatfadilpur village, is a farmer by profession.

Visiting the spot on Wednesday (October 6), this correspondent found that Soheli had already excavated the river bank covering an area of 300 feet in length and 80 feet in width. The spot is half a kilometer away from the bazar.

Kumar river's course is 124-kilometre-long ranging from Mathabhanga area in Chuadanga district to the Madhumati river in Magura. Most of the markets, bazars and establishments have been built on the bank of the Kumar river occupying the river land illegally, locals said.

Alamgir Hossain, a shopkeeper of Hatfadilpur Bazar, said that it seems that there is nobody to take care of the river. Consequently, the local influential are building brick-built shops and establishments occupying the river bank.

He added that for some days Soheli has been excavating the river bank by hiring an

Kumar river's course is 124-kilometre-long ranging from Mathabhanga area in Chuadanga district to the Madhumati river in Magura.

excavator.

Another villager seeking anonymity said that Soheli has been occupying the river land illegally. As nobody visits this area, such dishonest men take the opportunity.

He added that most of the portion of the Kumar river has been occupied by the local influential in the area.

Asked about the matter, Soheli Rana said that he has just prepared this land for making a seedbed.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Shailakupa Kanij Fatema Liza said that she was not aware of the matter. She will look into the matter and take the necessary steps.



Kumar river's bank covering an area of 300 feet in length and 80 feet in width has been excavated by a local influential youth in Hatfadilpur bazar area under Shailakupa upazila of Jhenidah.

PHOTO: STAR

## Yahya accepts US proposal

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an East Pakistan majority, Yahya opined.

Yahya urged the consulate general to take the "strongest" position with the Government of India that it should restrict cross-border operations by Mukti Bahini.

As to the trial of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Yahya noted that Bangabandhu's trial was still going on. If he is convicted, the court would sentence him to punishment which would conceivably be death. The matter would then come before Yahya who had presidential power to modify the court's judgement. Yahya did not intend to permit any death sentence to be carried out. With early formation of civilian government, that government (which would presumably have East Pakistan majority) would then have the task of dealing with Bangabandhu's future, reported the consulate general.

### PPP DELEGATION IN DHAKA

A delegation of the Pakistan People's Party today arrived in Dhaka to assess the prospects of the party's chances in the upcoming by-elections in the province. The party Vice-president Mahmud Ali Kasuri, who was heading the delegation, told newsmen in Dhaka that people of both

East and West Pakistan should "cooperate in solving their economic and political problems".

It was reported that a leading PPP official, Meraj Muhammad Khan, dropped out of the delegation hours before it left for East Pakistan, alleging that power in the eastern wing had been handed to "reactionary and anti-people parties" who had massacred political opponents.

### ON THE WAR FRONT

In the Mymensingh-Sylhet-Moulvibazar sector, Mukti Bahini today raided Debalchara area. In this operation, they killed two enemy soldiers. They also ambushed enemy troops in Muriachara and inflicted three casualties on them. In another ambush in the same area on occupying troops freedom fighters killed three Pakistani soldiers.

In the Rangpur-Dinajpur-Rajshahi sector, Mukti Bahini encountered the occupation troops at Hatibanda and killed five enemy soldiers. During this action three of the valiant freedom fighters received minor injuries.

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## Forest dept bends rules

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tender opened on June 10, 2019, the report said, adding that dealers of Nissan, Toyota and Mitsubishi were unable to compete.

This violated the Public Procurement Act 2006.

AG Automobiles won the contract with a quoted price of about Tk 2.4 crore.

"If it were an open competition, the government could have saved money," the IMED report said.

In case of submission of lone tenders, the tender evaluation committee will reasonably consider the single tender and submit their tender evaluation report to the approving authority as per Rule 36 of the act.

However, no explanation has been found in the evaluation report, the IMED report said.

The four vehicles were purchased under

a Tk 1,502.6 crore-project of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change funded by the World Bank and the government. Of the total project cost, Tk 2.4 crore has been earmarked for pickups in the project proposal.

Contacted, project director Gobinda Roy said, "The purchase has been done following the procurement rules. The internal audit has been conducted. The World Bank has conducted an audit. Everything is okay. Why and how does the question arise?" he asked.

The government has prepared the specification and AG Automobiles participated in the e-tender accordingly, said an official of the company.

"It is completely unreasonable if anyone says that the specification was made only for us," he added.

## Mother, daughter gang-raped

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the Osman's house, where they violated the mother and daughter repeatedly, the OC said.

The victims were left curbside in the village and threatened with dire consequences if the matter was disclosed.

The mother, aged 40, called 999 and sought the help of the police, who rushed to the spot to rescue them.

She lodged a case with the police station

accusing seven persons.

So far, the police arrested Abdus Sattar and Sadek Mia, both of whom were named in the first information report, for their alleged involvement in the rape incident. The arrestees were being interrogated at the police station at the time of filing the report.

The victims were sent to the Sherpur General Hospital yesterday for the medical test.

## One of five

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Rohingyas.

Official, who is investigating Mohib Ullah murder case, told The Daily Star that the four other accused, who are on remand, gave important information to the police.

"But they are yet to give any confessional statements," he said.

Armed Police Battalion arrested Elias on last Sunday.

Mohib Ullah, who led the Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights, was shot dead at Kutupalong camp around 8:30pm on September 29.

His brother Habib Ullah filed the case with Ukhiya Police Station on September 30. The complainant gave details of the murder but did not accuse any individual.

## Permanent

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Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka on August 31 granted her bail till submission of the police report.

On August 4, members of Rapid Action Battalion detained Pori Moni and Dipu. They seized alcohol and narcotics from Pori Moni's residence.

## RMG export

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The BGMEA leaders yesterday met Mokammel Hossain, secretary to the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, and requested that EDSSs are kept operational at all times.

Group Captain AHM Touhid-ul-Ahsan, executive director at the HSLA, said the EDSSs were being fixed.

He also called for increasing the number of scanners to speed up the process of scanning export cargoes, according to a statement from the BGMEA.

The BGMEA leaders yesterday requested the authorities to ensure enough space at the scanning area so that cargoes could be scanned in an orderly manner and shipped timely.

The current arrangement lacks order and is time-consuming, they added.

## Enacting law is a must

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"Although the formation of a law was mandatory, all the successive governments had violated it."

Article 118 (1) of the constitution says, "There shall be an Election Commission for Bangladesh consisting of [the chief election commissioner and not more than four election commissioners] and the appointment of the chief election commissioner and other election commissioners [if any] shall, subject to the provisions of any law made on that behalf, be made by the president."

The EC's tenure is five years and the current commissioners is set to end its tenure in mid-February 2022.

"But only framing the law is not enough, it must be accepted by all parties. If there is no consensus on the formation of the election commission, the election process and management, I fear there will be anarchy..." Mahub added.

He said that democracy was a prerequisite for the country's independence. It is among the four principles of the constitution.

"Five decades after independence, democracy is still like a black cat in a dark room. How much more tragic could it be? A voter going safely to the polling station without any problem and returning home safely after casting their vote -- can't the state make this much possible?"

## 'Father' of Pak atomic bomb

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Prime Minister Imran Khan tweeted. "For the people of Pakistan he was a national icon."

But AQ Khan, no relation to the prime minister, also confessed to being at the core of an operation that sold nuclear secrets to North Korea, Iran and Libya.

Analysts and United Nations officials have said his illicit network, which specialised in helping countries skirt international sanctions, created the greatest nuclear proliferation crisis of the atomic age.

After a confession on national television to his involvement in selling nuclear secrets, Khan was pardoned by then-president Pervez Musharraf.

He remained under house arrest for years in his palatial Islamabad home, overlooking the foothills to the Himalayas, surrounded by armed guards and wildlife such as monkeys who spill over into the upmarket area from the nearby forested hill range.

In his confession, Khan said he acted alone without the knowledge of the state officials. Later he said he had been scapegoated.

Musharraf once described Khan's admission of guilt, following a tip-off from the CIA, as the most embarrassing moment

About recent elections, Mahub said that a number of complex issues now plague the elections. "As a side effect, the state of democracy is in crisis... It is essential to bring democracy back to normal. We have to decide whether we want a [democratic or] non-democratic election."

Mahub said that while he was visiting the ward councillor by-election for ward-73 under Dhaka South City Corporation on October 7, he found a 20 percent voter turnout. He was frustrated with people's disinterest in voting.

Meanwhile, there was a 70 percent voter turnout for ward-9 under the Rajshahi City Corporation that same day.

"It is necessary to analyse the reasons behind this inequality. Every effort should be made to increase the number of voters. However, if the obstacles [for voters] are not removed, we will never get the desired result."

He said it was unprecedented that the security deposit of all candidates, including who won the October 7 by-election for ward-16 under Chattogram City Corporation, were lost.

Under the election law, candidates have to deposit a certain amount of money to the government exchequer to contest. To get the money back, candidates must obtain at least one-eighth of the total votes cast.

of his presidency.

Pakistan never let foreign investigators question Khan, saying it had passed on all relevant information about his nuclear proliferation, despite repeated calls for access by Western officials and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Domestically, Khan is celebrated for helping the country catch up to archival India in the nuclear sweepstakes.

Nine years ago Khan, who had a brief foray into politics, fondly recalled to Reuters working on Pakistan's nuclear programme in the 1980s and how then military ruler General Zia ul-Haq kissed him on his forehead when significant progress was made.

"I want to bring change and help the people of Pakistan, like I did back in 1974, when India test fired its nukes," he said.

Pakistani President Arif Alvi tweeted yesterday that Khan "helped us develop nation-saving nuclear deterrence, and a grateful nation will never forget his services in this regard."

Prime Minister Imran Khan said the scientist would be buried at Islamabad's Faisal mosque, according to his wishes. Armed forces chiefs and political leaders would attend his funeral, the country's interior minister said.

## Scientists

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don't move, and is the coldest temperature it is theoretically possible to reach.

To get as close to this point as possible, the team manipulated a cloud of atoms to a point where it was at a "virtual standstill".

For a few seconds these particles were so still the temperature lowered to 38 picokelvins (pK), which is 38 trillionth of a degree above absolute zero.

The team says this could have significant ramifications for our understanding of quantum mechanics, as the colder the temperature, the more peculiar matter acts.

To achieve the remarkably low temperature, the German team developed a process that lowered a system's temperature by slowing particles to the point they came to a near total standstill.

This is such a low temperature there are no thermometers that can detect it, so they base the measurement on the lack of kinetic movement of the observed particles.

The mechanism used to detect the temperature is known as a "time-domain matter-wave lens system", and can see matter behaving like a wave.

To study these waves the team used a magnetic lens that allowed them to shape a quantum gas and used it to make a focused matter wave they could control and ensure behaved in a specific way.

Unlike regular gas, made of a loose arrangement of particles, quantum gas is much less predictable, also known as a Bose-Einstein condensate.

"By combining an excitation of a Bose-Einstein condensate (BEC) with a magnetic lens, we form a time-domain matter-wave lens system," the researchers wrote.

"The focus is tuned by the strength of the lensing potential. By placing the focus at infinity, we lower the total internal kinetic energy of a BEC to 38 pK."