



People of different villages under Mokna union in Tangail's Nagarpur upazila often have to wade through knee deep water to cross this small branch of the Dhaleshwari river as there is no permanent bridge.

PHOTO: STAR

People of 7 villages suffer for lack of a permanent bridge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Several thousands people of at least seven villages under Nagarpur upazila of the district have been suffering for long due to lack of a concrete bridge on a branch of the Dhaleshwari river.

Villagers have been crossing the canal like river branch using a shaky bamboo bridge, they constructed on voluntary basis about three years ago.

Besides, the Pongbajjora-Deilla road is the only road that connects the upazila headquarter with the seven villages of Ward No under Mokna union.

Thousands of people, including students of different local schools and colleges, of Pongbajjora,

Ladugram, Deilla, Swalpa Ladugram, New Chowhalipara, Pongborotia and Ghuni villages under Nagarpur upazila have to use the shaky bamboo bridge to go to their destinations every day.

But, as there is no permanent bridge, villagers have to cross it on small boats risking their lives.

On the other hand, local farmers have to struggle a lot while carrying their produce to nearby markets.

Locals alleged that before every elections politicians seek their votes and assure them to construct a bridge, but forget it immediately after the elections.

Joru Khan of Pongbajjora village said they have been suffering for decades due to lack of a bridge on the branch of the Dhaleshwari

river.

Although, many developments have been done in the adjacent areas, their area remained behind for not having a bridge for communication, he said.

Riaz Uddin Khan, a member of Ward No 2 under Mokna union parishad (UP), said locals constructed the bamboo bridge over the narrow river branch about three years ago and repair it every year.

Tara Miah of Deilla village said they have to face difficulties while carrying emergency patients, especially pregnant women, to the upazila health complex.

Accident often occurred when people cross the shaky bamboo bridge, he added.

Contacted, Chairman of Mokna UP Mohammad Aatur Rahman said he has raised the problem on the upazila development coordination meetings on many occasions.

Although, Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) engineers took measures of the 150-foot-long bridge, no further development has been done in this regard yet, the chairman added.

Mainul Islam, sub-assistant engineer of Nagarpur LGED said they have a plan to construct a permanent bridge there, and already sent a project proposal to the higher authorities in this regard.

Birganj town sees spike in mysterious burglaries

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Residents in and around Birganj municipality are passing days in anxiety as burglaries and thefts have increased alarmingly in the area over the last four months.

Before breaking into a house and stealing valuables, the burglars, in most cases, rendered all inhabitants of the house unconscious by spraying some sort of anaesthetic agent inside the house, speculated the victims.

Theft of motorbikes as well as rickshaws and auto-rickshaws, run on batteries, also rose significantly in the area. On many occasions, only the batteries were stolen out of the vehicles, said many victims.

Mayor Mosharraf Hossain of Birganj municipality said his motorbike was stolen from his own house while a motorbike belonging to a sub-inspector of police was also stolen from the area recently.

While Birganj police confirmed both incidents, Mayor Mosharraf and many locals this correspondent spoke with said lax security measures by police and other law enforcers gave rise to the situation.

A gang of thieves made away with Tk 5.5 lakh worth of valuables from a house in his neighbourhood when all members of the household were out to get vaccinated, he said, adding that he had been getting complaints that police were not accepting general diaries (GD) or cases from many of the victims.

On October 10, this correspondent visited three such houses that were burglarised in the last one month.

Ramprasad Saha, a fruit wholesaler, said he and his family members went to bed early in the evening of October 4, after they all started to feel unusually sleepy.

They all were in deep sleep till 5:00am the next morning. But after they woke up, they realised that thieves had entered their house by breaking open the main door

and looted Tk 7 lakh in cash and gold jewellery weighing a couple of bhoris.

A formal complaint was filed with Birganj Police Station the same day, but "nothing was recovered yet," said Ramprasad.

Another victim, Mohammad Nurul Islam, who is a government prosecutor (GP) at the District and Sessions Judge's Court in Dinajpur, said on the night of July 19, all his family members lapsed into unconsciousness after thieves somehow contaminated his house, in Birganj town, with anaesthetic gas.

"All that day we were smelling something in the house," said Waris Ul Islam, his son.

The thieves entered the house through a window and stole valuables including a laptop and a smart television, valued at total Tk 3.5 lakh, the GP said, adding that none of the items were recovered after filing of a case with the police station.

Meanwhile, Birganj Upazila Rickshaw O Van Chalok Union has filed a written complaint with Birganj Police Station after at least 20 battery-run rickshaws and rickshaw-vans were stolen in Birganj upazila in a span of only one month, said Khairul Islam, president of the organisation.

But the police were turning down the victims' attempts of filing GDs or cases with the police station, he also alleged.

Battery-run autorickshaw driver Abdur Rahman said he had to loan money to buy a new set of batteries for his vehicle after thieves stole its batteries, worth Tk 52,000. "I filed a complaint, but no result yet."

When requested for data on burglaries and thefts around the town over the last four months, Birganj Circle Additional Superintendent of Police Abdul Wares said they would need some time to gather the information for the particular period.

So far, they recovered a stolen motorbike and several batteries, he said, adding that they were investigating into all recent burglaries and thefts in the area.

Rich nations must

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effects of climate change -- as opposed to adaptation measures.

"We have been asking countries to split the money equally [between adaptation and mitigation measures]. One reason why there is more money for mitigation measures is because they can be given as loans. Mitigation measures -- for example renewable energy -- have income streams. Loans can be repaid," said Dr Huq.

Helping a country adapt to floods will not generate any returns, he added.

Dr Rubana Huq, director of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), pointed out that unless the big corporations change their behaviour, it is literally impossible for the supply chains to change. "We have

a distinctive gap between sourcing and sustainability. For example, when they buy organic cotton but then fly out the goods -- there is a hypocrisy."

CPD Chairman Professor Rehman Sobhan said Bangladesh has serious existential problems which it has to address autonomously at the national level, regardless of what happens at COP.

Ambassador Charles Whiteley of the Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh, Md Ziaul Haque, director (Dhaka) at the Department of Environment, and Enamul Huque, managing director, head of corporate, Commercial and Institutional Banking at Standard Chartered Bangladesh, also spoke at the event moderated by rights activist Khushi Kabir.

Clemency for Bangabandhu

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concern, and I am pleased to be able to announce that in response to U Thant's recent appeals, and to Prince Sadruddin Khan's appeal of October 11, HM Government are making available a further £7.5 million for relief among the refugees in India and a further £1 million for relief in East Pakistan," added Douglas-Home.

ON THE WAR FRONT

Mukti Bahini today fired on Pakistani troops in Baoramari of Mymensingh district in which 18 enemy soldiers including one JCO were killed.

The fight at Saldanadi started on October 16 and continued till October 18 when the enemy was repelled. Pakistan troops attacked the Mukti Bahini positions with the entire 33 Baluch Battalion supported by artillery fire and air strafing. The valiant Mukti Bahini fighters withstood the attack and inflicted 70 casualties on the enemy. Many more were injured.

The Pakistan army recovered their dead

bodies under cover of artillery fire at night but still they had to leave behind 18 dead bodies which were collected by the Mukti Bahini. Three prisoners including an officer, second Lt Pervez, were captured. Two of them later on succumbed to their injuries. The enemy left behind huge quantity of arms and ammunition including six MMGs.

Mukti Bahini today engaged Pakistani troops near Lalmonirhat. In this action they killed four enemy soldiers.

Mukti Bahini conducted mortar attacks on the enemy troops' position in Guthuma river area on October 18. Five Pakistani soldiers were wounded in this action. On the same day freedom fighters raided the Pakistani army position in Paglirkul area of Noakhali district and exchanged fire with them. In this action, eight enemy soldiers were killed.

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Macron condemns 'inexcusable' Paris massacre of Algerians

AFP, Paris

French President Emmanuel Macron on Saturday condemned as "inexcusable" a deadly crackdown by Paris police on a 1961 protest by Algerians whose scale was covered up for decades, disappointing activists who hoped for an even stronger recognition of responsibility.

Macron told relatives of victims on the 60th anniversary of the bloodshed that "crimes" were committed on the night of October 17, 1961 under the command of the notorious Paris police chief Maurice Papon.

He acknowledged that several dozen protesters had been killed, "their bodies thrown into the River Seine" and paid tribute to their memory.

The precise number of victims has never been made clear and some activists fear several hundred could have been killed.

Macron "recognised the facts: that the crimes committed that night under Maurice Papon are inexcusable for the Republic", the Elysee said.

"This tragedy was long hushed-up, denied or concealed," it added in a statement.

Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune said there was "strong concern for treating issues of history and memory without complacency or compromising principles, and with a sharp sense of responsibility", free from "the dominance of arrogant colonialist thought", his office said in a statement.

The deadly 1961 crackdown revealed the horror of "massacres and crimes against humanity that will remain engraved in the collective memory", he said in a statement released by his office.

"There were bodies on all sides, I was very afraid", recalled Bachir Ben-Aissa Saadi, who took part in the rally and was 14 years old at the time.

The rally was called in the final year of France's increasingly violent attempt to retain Algeria as a north African colony, and in the middle of a bombing campaign targeting mainland France by pro-independence militants.

Papon was in the 1980s revealed to have been a collaborator with the occupying Nazis in World War II and complicit in the deportation of Jews. He was convicted of crimes against humanity but later released.

Darwin family

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letter that he writes to his eldest son saying young Lenny was dissecting at his microscope and he said 'Oh Papa, I should be so glad of this for my whole life'. It's wonderful to have that family connexion of Charles Darwin just before he becomes internationally famous."

Darwin published his groundbreaking work "On the Origin of Species" in 1859.

The microscope will be offered at Christie's Valuable Books & Manuscripts auction on December 15, and has a price estimate of 250,000 - 350,000 pounds (\$343,050 - \$480,270).

Youth dies

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"Sensing police presence, Munna and two others took position on a sun shed of the building. At one point, they jumped off to avert arrest."

Although two landed safely, Munna got an injury on his head. He breathed his last while receiving treatment at Chattogram Medical College Hospital, he added.

Police would file unnatural death and narcotics cases in connection with this.

The law enforcers recovered 622 yaba pills and tools to consume yaba pills from the building, he said, adding that Munna was not accused in any drug-related case before.

AL leader

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"In fear, Nethoai had been out of his house for the last 14 months and stayed in a rest house at the upazila town," he said.

"He went home yesterday [Saturday] after submitting his nomination paper, but the criminals shot him dead."

Aungswatthelamed Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) for the killing.

Meanwhile, Nipon Tripura, general secretary of Parbatya Chattogram Pahari Chhatra Parishad, the student wing of PCJSS, said, "AL men killed Nethoai over internal conflict."

Besides Nethoai, several people were killed in Kaptai in the last three years over inter-party conflicts between regional political parties.

'Don't exploit the situation'

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price of key cooking ingredient came down by Tk 15 per kilogram right after the import duty was withdrawn.

Before the duty was withdrawn, each kg of onion sold between Tk 80 and Tk 85. But soon after the 5 percent import duty was withdrawn on Thursday, the prices came down to Tk 60 to Tk 65.

Jashim Uddin said it takes at least four to five days to bring onion through the land port from India.

"How was it possible to sell the onions at Tk 15 per kg less -- immediately?"

The sudden price fall of onion indicates that there was some secret pact among the onion traders and the low production and rainfall in major onion producing states of India, the main source of onion for Bangladesh, was not the reason behind the price spiral in the first place, he said.

He went on to ask why there was a difference of Tk 10 per kg in the price of onion at the wholesale level in the same market in Dhaka.

"As businessmen, we will make a profit but not to such an extent that you bring disgrace and raise suspicion against the entire community. Of course, you can do business, but don't do it by putting consumers in difficulty," he said.

Hazi Mohammad Mazed, vice-president of Shyambazar Krishi Pono Arat Bonik Samity, said the price of onion was not lowered immediately after the withdrawal of the duty.

Some 80 onion importers at Shyambazar

are selling the root vegetable at market price, he said.

The prices of onion went up in the market due to supply and production disruption of the widely consumed vegetable in India, said Hazi Shamsul Alam Baten, general secretary of Shyambazar Krishi Pono Arat Malik Babosayee Samity, and Helal Uddin, a former FBCCI vice-president.

Businessmen at the meeting also blamed higher electricity costs, higher trade licence fees and toll collection by a section of police force on the highways for price hike of onion in the local markets.

The businessmen will turn to the FBCCI for help if the government takes actions against those who are making an unusual profit by exploiting the situation, Jasim Uddin said.

"The FBCCI will not extend its helping hands to those businessmen. So, make a reasonable profit."

Jashim Uddin said he will activate all the standing committees of the FBCCI within the next week for closely monitoring the prices of basic commodities in the domestic markets.

Meanwhile, at an event of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi said there is a 20 percent deficit in onion supply every year.

About 90 percent of the deficit is met with imports from India and fill it, he said.

"It is only when India raises the prices that it has an impact on our country," Munshi added.

25 cases filed, 143 arrested

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those filed in Cumilla, reported our correspondents.

At least 143 people have been arrested in these cases.

Meanwhile, Rana Dasgupta, general secretary of Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad, yesterday visited some of the temples that were attacked in Noakhali on Friday.

He demanded removal of Noakhali's deputy commissioner, superintendent of police, Begumganj upazila nirbahi officer and the local police station's officer-in-charge for their "failure" to take precautionary measures to prevent the attacks.

Our correspondents from different districts reported on the cases and overall situations following the violence.

In Cumilla, of the five cases, four were filed by police and one by Rab.

Around 41 people have so far been arrested in these cases till yesterday, said law enforcers.

Harunur Rashid, sub-inspector of Kotwali Model Police Station, filed a case against some 8 to 10 unnamed people on charges of "demeaning religious sentiment", while SI Mofizul filed a case under the DSA against Mohammad Foyez and multiple unnamed persons.

SI Abdul Alim Khan filed a case against 32 named and some 200 to 250 unnamed people on charges of attacking Chanmoni Kalibari Mandir.

Another case was filed by SI Alamgir against 28 named and some 230 to 250 unnamed people on charges of attacking Thakurpara's Sree Sree Rakha Kali Mondir.

All four cases were filed in the early hours of Thursday with Kotwali Model Police Station.

Another case was filed by Rab under the DSA on Friday with the station, against Golam Mawla, 26, a resident of Burichang upazila's Kalikapur Dakkhin para, who was arrested on Thursday evening.

In Sylhet, police yesterday filed a case

against 42 named and 250 unnamed people in connection with the attacks on Bhati Bangla Durga Temple and some Hindu houses in the city's Halder Para on Friday.

Police Inspector Kazi Jamal Uddin filed the case with Jalalabad Police Station under several sections of the Penal Code and the Special Powers Act.

The charges against them include attacking temples and Hindu homes, said Md Nazmul Huda Khan, OC of Jalalabad police.

Police have so far arrested 12 of them, who were later sent to jail yesterday through a court, he added.

In Feni, police filed two cases accusing around 400 unnamed people on charges of attacking, vandalising and looting temples and business institutions on Saturday night.

However, no one was arrested till yesterday evening, said Monir Hossain, inspector of Feni Model Police Station.

On Saturday night, mobs attacked and vandalised at least two Hindu temples, 17 business institutions owned by Hindus, according to locals and witnesses.

In Noakhali, 18 cases have been filed in connection with attacks on minorities in three upazilas -- Begumganj, Hatiya and Sonaimuri -- over the last couple of days.

A total of 432 named and around 5,000 people have been made accused in these cases, and 90 people have so far been arrested in this connection, said Syed Fazle Rabbi, district intelligence officer (DIO-1) of Noakhali.

Meanwhile, in Chandpur, a team led by Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Dr Zafullah Chowdhury yesterday visited temples that were attacked in Chandpur's Haziganj upazila on Wednesday night.

Speaking to journalists there, he demanded the resignation of the home minister, saying the latter had failed to ensure the security of Hindu temples.

[Our correspondents from respective districts contributed to the report]

Erdogan says talks under way with US to buy F-16s

AFP, Istanbul

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday said Turkey was in talks with the United States to buy F-16 fighters after it was kicked off the F-35 programme for purchasing a Russian missile defence system.

Washington excluded Ankara from Nato's F-35 stealth fighter jet programme in 2019 after Turkey purchased Russian S-400 defence air systems in defiance of warnings from its Western allies.

The acquisition has imperilled Turkish-US relations and blocked Turkey's plans to purchase about 100 of the F-35 fighters.

Turkey is now seeking compensation for its ouster from the US-led programme, including for a \$1.4 billion payment it had made before its removal.

Turkey's purchase of F-16 jets from America is "of course linked to the F-35s issue", Erdogan told reporters at an Istanbul airport before embarking on an Africa tour.

He said the US had offered Turkey in return to sell F-16s to upgrade its air force fleet.

"We have said we'll take whatever step is needed to meet our country's defence needs," Erdogan said, adding that Turkey was working to modernise its warplane fleet.

Any such sale by the Americans however would need to be approved by Congress -- where anti-Turkey sentiments are on the rise.

Last month, Erdogan said Turkey still planned to buy a second batch of S-400 missile defence systems from Russia.

The US warned Turkey of further risks to bilateral ties if it bought more weapons from Russia.

Erdogan yesterday said Washington needed to compensate Turkey for its \$1.4 billion payment.

Govt cancels

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the Gono Bhaban marking the birthday of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

SSC and its equivalent exams would begin on November 14 and end on November 23. HSC exams would start on December 2 and end on December 30.