



In this recent photo, local children are seen negotiating a payment for carrying a motorbike on the under-construction flood bypass of Teesta barrage in Doani area of Lalmonirhat.

PHOTO: EAM ASADUZZAMAN

NILPHAMARI-LALMONIRHAT ROAD

Sufferings unbounded

As road communications between the two districts remain snapped for a month

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Thousands have been suffering immensely since October 20 when flash floods washed away a 610-meter-long section of flood bypass in Doani area of Lalmonirhat.

The bypass is an integral part of the Teesta barrage and direct road link between Nilphamari and Burimari land port in Lalmonirhat.

While visiting the site recently, different contractors, engaged by the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), were seen conducting repair work on the bypass.

As dredgers were being used to fill up five to six feet depth of the site with sand, locals including children and elderly were seen struggling to wade in watery sand.

Many local children were seen carrying people's belongings or pushing their motorbikes in exchange for money.

Atiar Rahman, a government employee from Borokhata village in Lalmonirhat, has to use the road every day to commute between his house and workplace in Dimla upazila.

With the scorching sun above, people have been falling sick all the time, while passing through the sand and mud on the road, he said.

With the scorching sun above, people have been falling sick all the time, while passing through the sand and mud on the road.

Because not even the lightest of vehicles can pass through the place easily, valuable time is being wasted and money being spent to carry commodities, said Shafuiddin, a trader from Sadhur Bazar in Hatibandha upazila.

Farhanul Haque, vice president of Nilphamari Chamber of Commerce and Industries, said highest priority should be given to repair the Nilphamari-Burimari-Lalmonirhat road via the Teesta barrage, as this is the shortest road to transport goods to and from the Burimari land port.

Contacted, Asfauddoula, BWDB's executive engineer for Dalia Division, said they already started urgent repair work on the flood bypass in order to restore road communications.

A Tk 1.5-crore proposal to reconstruct the bypass is also pending with the higher authorities, he also said.

Some MPs violating codes

FROM PAGE 12

At the meeting, the EC also asked the law enforcers to step up security measures and advance intelligence surveillance at the pockets where usually election violence takes place to prevent any untoward incident, according to meeting participants.

Until yesterday noon, at least 40 people were killed across the country in violence centring on the staggered UP polls, which began in June.

A notice has been issued informing that members of the parliament and ministers cannot stay in the area, Huda said while talking to media after the meeting.

"At the meeting, we agreed that there should be steps such that they [MPs] cannot violate the electoral code of conduct," he said, adding that allegations of throwing weight have surfaced against only a few MPs and ministers.

The EC is investigating the matter, Huda said.

"If they are found guilty, we will take action," he said, while urging the magistrates to stay vigilant during the polls.

The EC have no official data on how many people were killed in polls violence; the commission did not get first-hand information, so they need to depend on secondary data, said a member of the

commission requesting anonymity.

"This creates scope for confusion," he said, adding that it was tough for returning officers who are upazila fisheries, agriculture or bank officials to bring allegations of "violation of electoral code of conduct" against influential people, let alone MPs.

It is impossible to stop the violence by guarding every neighbourhood, Huda said.

The police headquarters have asked all police force to remain on alert so that no untoward incident takes place centring on the third phase of the UP polls, said Md Kamruzzaman, assistant inspector general of police headquarter.

"We do not want a repeat of the incident in Cumilla," he said, adding that putting police on alert is a "continuous process".

Meanwhile, the fourth phase of the UP election slated for December 23 is likely to be deferred to December 26 due to the Higher Secondary Certificate exams, said an EC member.

A total of 840 UPs were set to go to the polls for the fourth phase.

The decision of deferral of election will be finalised after holding discussions with the commissioner, Huda said.

The first phase of elections was held in June and September and the second phase was on November 11.

Bangladesh not invited

FROM PAGE 12

has long been condemned for his far-right views and was a staunch supporter of controversial former US president Donald Trump.

Rights groups have questioned whether the summit can push those invited world leaders, some of whom accused of harbouring authoritarian tendencies, to take meaningful action, Reuters reports.

The Summit for Democracy is a flagship presidential initiative that illustrates the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to putting democracy and human rights at the heart of US foreign policy.

A broad and diverse group of world leaders from government, civil society, and the private sector will be joining

the summit that will focus on three themes: strengthening democracy and countering authoritarianism, fighting corruption, and promoting respect for human rights.

A top US official last week told The Daily Star: "We couldn't invite all the democracies in the world. So, we used a UN index of some sort. How the UN categorised democracies... A few democracies are going to gather and say what we have done and we need to do."

US South and Central Asian Affairs Bureau Deputy Assistant Secretary Ambassador Kelly Keiderling during her visit to Bangladesh said, "In the next summit, which will be in two years, we can expand that and hopefully Bangladesh can participate in it."

EU considers booster shots

FROM PAGE 12

Ammon said that boosters will increase protection against infections caused by waning immunity and "could potentially reduce the transmission in the population and prevent additional hospitalisations and deaths".

She advised countries with low levels of vaccinations to speed up their rollouts and warned of high risks of a further spike in deaths and hospitalisations in Europe in December and January if the recommended measures were not introduced.

The European Commission is expected to take the advice on boosters into

consideration when proposing changes to the use of Covid-19 certificates later this week, officials said.

Many EU countries have already begun giving booster doses to their populations but are using different criteria to select groups that are prioritised and using different intervals between primary vaccinations and boosters.

Austria, which has this week reintroduced a lockdown amid a spike in cases, has decided to give boosters after four months, whereas in Italy the additional dose can be administered after five months.

BANGABANDHU MURAL

Katakhali mayor loses AL post

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Paba upazila unit of the Awami League in an emergency meeting yesterday revoked the post of Abbas Ali as the convener of the party's Katakhali municipality unit.

The action against Abbas Ali, the mayor of Katakhali municipality in Rajshahi's Paba upazila, came after his controversial remarks about a mural of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman went viral in social media.

The Paba upazila AL also issued a notice to Abbas, asking him to show cause within three days as to why he would not be expelled from the party.

The audio clip of Abbas that had been doing rounds on social media since Sunday night has been drawing widespread criticism and produced outpourings of protests on the streets of Rajshahi city, Paba and Katakhali towns.

Meanwhile, Abdul Momin, a ward councillor of Rajshahi City Corporation, in a complaint filed under the Digital Security Act with Boalia Police Station, accused Abbas Ali of making demeaning comments.

Two other complaints, filed with Rajpara and Chandrima police stations, are currently under preliminary investigation, said police.

In a 1.51-minute audio clip, Mayor Abbas was heard saying, "I'm not allowing construction of the Bangabandhu mural... it is not right as per the Islamic Shariah laws. I will do whatever it takes to stop it."

In another clip, 12 minutes in length, he was heard making demeaning comments about AL Presidium Member and Rajshahi city Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton.

Freedom fighter and Paba upazila AL President Yeasin Ali said they would wait for Abbas' reply to the show cause notice before making their recommendations to the AL central committee.

Claiming that the audio clips were not his, Mayor Abbas Ali said, "It's a conspiracy against me."

Rape accused gets boat symbol in UP polls

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Mir Liaquat Ali, accused in a rape case, has become the candidate with Awami League's (AL) boat symbol in upcoming union parishad (UP) polls in Sirajdikhan's Kola union.

Liaquat is currently in Dhaka Central Jail.

Earlier on Tuesday, AL published the list of party candidates for the fourth phase of UP election. The list contains the name of Liaquat, chairman of Kola UP, also an accused in a case filed for raping an adolescent in 2019.

Victim's mother lodged a complaint against him with Munshiganj Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal.

Sirajdikhan Upazila AL President and Upazila Parishad Chairman Mohiuddin Ahmed said four candidates had applied for the nomination with boat symbol from Kola union in the upcoming UP polls.

Of them, incumbent Chairman Liaquat, who applied for the nomination from jail, has been nominated by the party as the chairman candidate.

Voting in 14 unions of Sirajdikhan upazila is scheduled to be held on December 26.

The HC has turned

FROM PAGE 12

cases were being moved, heard and disposed of at the HC.

On November 2, Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain questioned the HC orders that granted anticipatory bail in cases involving serious offences, including murder and rape.

"If the High Court grants anticipatory bail even in murder, rape, and heroin [drugs] related cases, then what should we [the Appellate Division] do? Will not we stay those orders? We must protect the country," he said.

"Around 1,000 orders of bail are passed by the High Court in a week. But the state appeals against only 50 to 100 of such orders before the Appellate Division."

Point of no return

FROM PAGE 12

Mukti Bahini attacked a razakar camp in Mirsharai area today. They killed three razakars and recovered a number of rifles and some ammunition.

Mukti Bahini raided Gara area of Sylhet district today and cleared up to Goyainghat-Radhanagar. During the raid, Mukti Bahini killed 10 enemy soldiers and captured large quantity of ammunitions.

Mukti Bahini encircled Mohanganj Police Station and Panihata camp of the occupation troops in Mymensingh district.

Mukti Bahini ambushed Pakistani irregular forces in Monakhali area in Kushtia district. In the action 12 Rangers were killed, 12 others were injured. On the same day, Mukti Bahini attacked with mortars on the occupation troops in Amanganda area killing two and injuring four enemy soldiers.

During the night of November 25, 1971, Mukti Bahini raided Kazipur Police Station and killed 16 West Pakistani Policemen and enemy irregular soldiers.

On the same date, Mukti Bahini raided Pakistani troops position at Madhupur killing six enemy troops.

Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com.

Zahangir now faces

FROM PAGE 12

capital's Gulshan area.

Other three people, against whom the contempt of court rule was issued, are Alfaz from Painshal village under Joydebpur Police Station in Gazipur, Harunur Rashid alias Thandu of Paschim Dogori village and Fazlul Huq of BK Bari village under the same police station.

Following a writ petition filed by Ashraf, the HC on October 8, 2018 asked the respondents, including Zahangir, to refrain from entering the land of the petitioner in BK Bari Mouza under Joydevpur Police Station or doing mutation of the land in the name of others or anyway and not to disturb the peaceful possession of the petitioner for three months.

Later, the HC directive was extended. On June 21 this year, the court asked the respondents not to disturb the peaceful possession of the petitioner.

Despite the HC orders, the respondents, including Zahangir, prevented Ashraf from entering the land. Being helpless, Ashraf filed a case with Joydebpur Police Station on August 18 this year.

Even then, Zahangir and three other accused were threatening Ashraf, petitioner's counsel Abul Kalam Azad told The Daily Star.

Amid such a situation, Ashraf filed the contempt of court petition with the HC against the four three weeks ago, the lawyer added.

'I don't want anything from anyone'

Born with congenital deformity, Shukur Ali defies the odds grabbing the handlebar of a rickshaw

MOHSIN MILON

"Begging is disgraceful and I feel ashamed of begging," said Shukur Ali, 30, who was born with congenital deformity which does not let him walk. Despite having a pair of deformed legs, he runs a four-member family with his own income.

Shukur, son of Abdur Rashid of Balia Vekutia village in Arabpur union under Sadar upazila, runs a battery-powered rickshaw in Jashore town for earning his bread. In addition to bearing the family expenses, Shukur also has to pay Tk 1600 loan installment every week.

This correspondent found him in Daratana area of the town recently. He was busy asking pedestrians whether they needed a rickshaw. Donning a blue T-shirt and a cap, Shukur Ali unlike others with the same condition, did not want to be a burden to his family or society.

"I find it disrespectful asking people for money that's why I grasped the handlebar of the rickshaw," he said. His father Abdur Rashid is also physically challenged and he also pulls a motorised rickshaw.

"I never thought of my physical disability as a burden. I always wanted to move forward defying my odds," said a confident Shukur Ali.

He started earning his bread from a very early age. He started selling shoes setting up a makeshift shop on the banks of

'Laldighi' in Jashore town.

Shukur Ali got married 12 years ago as the business was quite good.

He is now the father of two children. They are Sohana Khatun, 10, and one year and two months old son Abdul Hakim. His children are also physically challenged.

Shukur Ali said that his business was doing well but it had to be shut since the municipal authorities started the construction of a building on 'Laldighi' a few years ago. He didn't have any choice but to beg. But his conscience did not let him do so.

He then bought a battery-run rickshaw taking a loan of Tk 60,000 from two NGOs.

Shukur Ali earns Tk 500 to Tk 600 every day by driving the rickshaw from morning to late night.

"If any other vehicle collides with the rickshaw in a congested road, I am likely to fall down," he said adding that the streets of the town are congested during the day but empty at night.

So, he is more comfortable driving his rickshaw at night. Despite seeing my disability, the patrol police held my rickshaw for a few days, he alleged.

He gets an allowance of Tk 4500 from the government twice a year.

"I don't want anything from anyone. I want to spend the rest of days working hard," he said.



Born with congenital deformity, Shukur Ali struggles to stay afloat on the tumultuous journey of life defying the odds.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

RMG workers' demo turns

FROM PAGE 12

they added.

Asked, Hafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Kafrul Police Station, admitted that the AL office was ransacked.

There were a few policemen at the station when the attack took place, he said, adding that additional police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control later.

The OC, however, said no worker was beaten up.

The clash between the workers and the ruling party activists and leaders took place as the party men protested when the workers tore off some posters, he said.

None was arrested over the incident as of yesterday evening, the OC said, adding that three cases would be filed in connection with the incident.

Billal Hossain, who runs the restaurant that was vandalised, said the workers left their workplace and started protesting around 9:00am.

Around 11:00am, they attacked the party office and his restaurant.

Some party men stood nearby but they could not stop them, he said.

The protestors blocked several roads during their three-hour protest, causing traffic congestion in the area.

The workers said they would take to the streets again with the demand for salary hike as their house rent and daily expenditures have gone up recently.

Workers demanded that the factory owners introduce night allowances and increase their wages.

Shariful Islam, a garment worker, said the landlord of his house in Pallabi increased the rent by Tk 1,000 from January next year.

Besides, prices of daily essentials and transport costs have also increased.

"As a result, it has become quite difficult to run my four-member family with my present income of Tk 13,000 to Tk 14,000 a month, including overtime bill," he added.

Visiting some garment factories in Mirpur-10, -13, -14 and Senpara areas, it was seen that most of those were closed.

'We want safe road'

FROM PAGE 1

Hasan's father, told the gathered media personnel at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Around 11:30 am, while crossing the road in front of the Gulistan Hall Market, a compactor vehicle of the Dhaka South City Corporation rammed into Hasan, a second-year student.

While he was rushed to the DMCH, the thrust of the vehicle was too much for the 17-year-old. Doctors declared him dead around 12:15 pm, according to Salahuddin Mia, officer-in-charge of Paltan Police Station.

"Reckless driving took his life," said Alam, a bookstore proprietor at Nilkhet.

Police seized the vehicle and detained its driver Russel Khan from the spot.

As the word spread of Hasan's accident, students of Notre Dame College combusted into a street protest demanding justice.

They thronged to the Nagar Bhaban and attempted to enter the compound but failed. Later, they blocked the road in Gulistan where Hasan died.

"We want justice. We want to live. We want safe roads," they chanted. There were placards with the same slogans, while some inscribed the demands in their clothes.

Meanwhile, the DSCC formed a three-member committee headed by its Chief Waste Management Officer to determine how the accident took place and identify those responsible and make recommendations for averting such accidents in future.

The committee has been asked to submit the report within seven working days. It will also provide recommendations to avoid any accidents in future.

Hasan's body was sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Nasa launches spacecraft

FROM PAGE 12

Tuesday (0621 GMT Wednesday) from Vandenberg Space Force Base.

"Asteroid Dimorphos: we're coming for you!" Nasa tweeted after the launch, adding later the DART spacecraft had successfully separated from the rocket's second stage.

"We've received our first signals from #DARTMission, which will continue to roll out its solar arrays in the coming hours and prepare for its 10-month, one-way trip to the asteroid," it added.

Dimorphos is a "moonlet" around 525 feet (160 meters, or two Statues of Liberty) wide, that circles a much larger asteroid

called Didymos (2,500 feet in diameter). The pair orbit the Sun together.

Impact should take place in the fall of 2022, when the binary asteroid system is 6.8 million miles (11 million kilometers) from Earth, almost the nearest point they ever get.

"What we're trying to learn is how to deflect a threat," Nasa's top scientist Thomas Zurburchen said of the \$330-million project, the first of its kind.

To be clear, the asteroids in question pose no risk to our planet. But they belong to a class of bodies known as Near-Earth Objects (NEOs), which approach within 30 million miles.