

Bridge without approach roads

CHT development board built the 60-metre-long bridge spending Tk 2.85 crore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

A newly constructed bridge over a canal in Lama upazila has remained unfit for vehicular movements for over a year due to lack of approach roads on either side of the structure.

As there is no approach roads, people of over 30 villages under four wards of the upazila are deprived of getting any benefits from the bridge, Lama Upazila Chairman Mostafa Jamal said.

Local people use a bamboo ladder to get into the bridge first and then cross it to reach their destinations, including the upazila headquarters, risking their lives.

Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) constructed the bridge over Popa Canal at Paharpara village spending Tk 2.85 crore in 2020.

The approach roads to the bridge is urgently needed to ease the sufferings of over 2,000 inhabitants of different villages on either side of the canal, the chairman said, adding that without connecting roads it will bring nothing but waste of money.

One of the local residents Shajahan Mia said about a year ago villagers put a bamboo ladder on one side of the bridge so that people can get into the bridge and cross it.

"Pedestrians, especially elderly ones, often fall from the bridge and suffer injuries while using the ladder," Shajahan added.

Another resident Mohammad Afsar said after repeated appeals from the locals the contractor concerned recently started the road construction work, but in a slow pace.

Ching Thoai Marma, one of the contractors of the construction work, said they started the bridge construction work in 2019, but there was no allocation for the approach roads.

The construction work remained stalled for over a year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but according to the CHTDB's directives they started the road construction work recently, he said.

Contacted, Bandarban CHTDB Executive Engineer Abu Bin Mohammad Yeasen Arafat said construction of the 60-metre-long bridge was completed about a year ago and recently we directed the contractor concern to construct the approach roads in soonest possible time.



Villagers use a bamboo ladder to get into this bridge in Bandarban's Lama upazila as there is no approach road on either side of the structure. PHOTO: COLLECTED



A man carrying a stack of cow dung sticks conventionally used as fuel in kitchens in rural areas in the country. The photo was taken from Teeta river basin Char Gobordhan village in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila. PHOTO: STAR

LALMONIRHAT, KURIGRAM

Cow dung as fuel: Farmland losing essential manure

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A huge amount of cow dung is being used as fuel especially for cooking purposes in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts, thanks to lack of awareness and government move to motivate people to utilise it as manure.

Although there is no exact figure on the amount of cow dung being spent as fuel, according to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) and various non-government organisations, about 15,000 tonnes of cow dung are being used as fuel in the two districts every year.

It needs half a kg cow dung for making each cow dung stick and around one lakh sticks are being made every day except for the rainy season, sources said.

Although a good number of farmers use cow dung as organic fertiliser, almost all the landless families in villages use cow dung as fuel.

Shukla Rani, 35, a landless woman of Karimbazar village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, said they have three cows but no land and they get 15 kg to 18 kg of dung every day. This dung is used to make 30 to 32 cow dung sticks for fuel.

"Everyone in our village makes cow dung sticks

and uses it as fuel," she added.

Nowshed Ali, 67, a farmer, said cow dung is the main and best ingredient for producing organic fertiliser.

Only due to lack of awareness and initiative, organic manure is being used for cooking, he said.

"If cow dung is stored following certain rules, it becomes organic manure," he said.

"The organic fertiliser produced by cow dung is better than chemical fertilizer. Using this type of fertiliser helps to have the desired yield of crops," said Manjurul Haque, 55, another farmer from Thanahat village of Chilmari upazila in Kurigram.

Rezaul Karim, an NGO representative in Chilmari area of Kurigram, said by conserving cow dung, organic fertilisers are produced.

The fertility of the land will increase and the use of chemical fertilisers will also decrease if cow dung is used alternatively, he added.

Shamim Ashraf, deputy director (DD) of DAE in Lalmonirhat, said the agriculture department officials have been advising people to use cow dung as organic manure.

"Organic manure is an indispensable factor for land. The use of organic fertilisers increases crop production," said the DD.

Indian national found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Police yesterday recovered the body of a helper of a goods-laden truck from India at Benapole Port. The deceased was identified as Lingala Rajamallah, 43.

Rajamallah was from Andhra Pradesh in India, Deputy Director at Benapole Port Abdul Jalil said. Benapole Port Police recovered his body from a truck in transshipment yard under shed 31 of the land port yesterday morning and detained the truck's driver Gurugu Pochaya, he said.

The truck was among 11 that on January 15 carried explosives used in mines, he said, adding that police were investigating the matter and looking into how Rajamallah was killed inside the cabin of the explosive-loaded truck.

Officer in Charge of Benapole Port Police Station Mamun Khan said the body was sent to Jashore General Hospital for autopsy.

They will take the next course of action once the autopsy report is available.

Arsa commander's brother carried Bangladeshi ID Police find

MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAT, COX'S BAZAR

Police have found that Mohammad Shah Ali, the brother of Ataullah Abu Amar Jununi, commander of Myanmar's banned militant organisation Arakan Rohingya Solidarity Army (Arsa), bears a Bangladeshi national identity card.

Shah Ali is a permanent resident of the Joynob Colony of the Dewanbazar area under Kotwali Police station in Chattogram city.

His temporary address is Bloc C, Rohingya Camp 6 of Cox's Bazar's Ukhiya upazila, according to the statement of a case filed by Md. Ruhul Azam, sub-inspector of Armed Police Battalion (APBn) against Shah Ali.

The case was filed with Ukhiya Police Station on Sunday, about 14 hours after Shah Ali was arrested from a Rohingya refugee camp. Arms and narcotics were recovered during the drive.

"It has been known locally that the arrestee is a member of Arsa. He is also an armed criminal and kingpin of a gang that is involved with abduction and runs drug trading. In interrogation, the accused has admitted that he used to keep firearms in possession for self-security while trading drugs," read the case statement.

Arsa members were allegedly behind the murder of popular Rohingya leader Mohib Ullah killed in a brushfire at the camp on September 29 last year and the killing of six Rohingya men in October.

However, the law enforcers repeatedly denied any existence of Arsa activities at the Refugee camp.

Contacted, Ukhiya Police Station's officer-in-charge Ahmed Sanjur Morshed said three cases have been filed against Shah Ali and his associate, Mohammad Zobayer, also a Rohingya refugee.

Shah Ali was sent to jail yesterday through a court, Morshed said.

Theatre icon Shaoli Mitra

FROM PAGE 14 always kept herself and her health issues away from the limelight.

Daughter of legendary theatre personalities Sambhu Mitra and Tripti Mitra, Shaoli was a recipient of the prestigious Sangeet Natak Akademi in 2003, the Padma Shri in 2009, and Banga Bibhusan in 2012.

She would be remembered most by her admirers for her solo performance as Draupadi in "Naathvati Anaathbat", which she also wrote and directed, and as Sita in "Sitakatha" or "Bitata Bitangso".

Shaoli also played the role of "Bangabala" in Ritwik Ghatak's film "Jukti Takko Aar Gappo".

After spending her youth with "Bohurupi", a theatre group founded by her parents, she immortalised the character of Amal when she performed in Rabindranath Tagore's play "Dakghar".

Shaoli later founded "Pancham Baidik", which established a trail-blazer theatre repertoire.

Considered one of the most powerful actors of Indian theatre, she also performed in critically-acclaimed plays, including "Pagla Ghora", "Nothoboti Onathbot", "Putul Khela", and "Ekki Rajnaitik Hotya" among others.

Shaoli was a former chairperson of Bangla Academy.

Rituals for her funeral were done at a crematorium in Kolkata, as the cultural world mourned her demise.

Sciatica in winter

FROM PAGE 14

Health issues include spinal stenosis, ankylosing spondylitis, degenerative disk disease, or a problem with one's piriformis muscle. For some people, sciatica is caused by a slipped disk, which in turn is caused by the shortening of ligaments and tendons around the spine. This causes a change in posture and can be found by doing an X-ray or MRI. Why is sciatica worse in winter?

Colder temperatures cause muscles to tighten and when this happens, it can irritate the sciatic nerve which is close to the surface of the skin. The nerves are being irritated because they are being compressed into a smaller space due to muscle tightening.

A large study conducted by the Research Institute of Work and Health in Sweden and published in the International Archives of Occupational and

Environmental Health surveyed approximately 135,000 male construction workers. The researchers discovered that those who worked in lower temperatures reported a higher rate of neck and back pain than those working in higher temperatures. The survey in Finland yielded the same result.

Sciatica requires exercises for therapy, which involves the use of stretching and strengthening exercises to alleviate pain along the sciatic nerve. Because exercise can help with decreasing inflammation, it is one of the most effective treatments for patients experiencing chronic pain. Common exercises include muscle relaxation, warm baths, and pelvic floor muscle exercises. These are just some of the common exercises that may be prescribed to relieve chronic pain that has been attributed to sciatica.

It's down to her

FROM PAGE 14

leads one in the city area, Md Giasuddin in Siddhirganj and Abul Kalam Azad in Bandar.

They said as BNP did not nominate Taimur, neither Giasuddin nor Azad campaigned for him and their supporters also stayed away from electioneering. "Some BNP leaders accompanied Taimur at the beginning of the polls campaign. But once he was relieved of party posts, they were not with him," Nur Uddin said.

According to voters, roads in Narayanganj, an

industrial hub, improved significantly in the last 10 years as Ivy got full support from the ruling AL.

Although there was a rumor that Shamim Osman will not extend his support to Ivy, the lawmaker publicly announced his support for her just a few days before the polls and asked his supporters to work for the party candidate.

Rafiur Rabbi, senior vice president of Nagorik Committee of Narayanganj, said Ivy's development work and her long fight against criminalisation of

Important tips

1. Wear warm, comfortable clothing, and dress in multiple layers. A few thin layers of clothing will keep you warmer than a single thick layer.

2. Tuck your shirt into your pants so your back doesn't get a cold draft when you pick up something and put on a sweater over it.

3. At night, an electric blanket on your mattress can prevent your muscle tissues from becoming excessively tight.

4. You should keep your house as warm as you can. 5. It is important that you remain in shape during the winter season so that it isn't difficult for your condition, such as sciatica. Think about creating an exercise routine through winter in order to stop gaining weight.

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local politics are the two major factors that earned her the victory.

"Ivy is popular among the supporters of all political parties because she took a firm stance against an evil force in Narayanganj. Supporters of Awami League and other political parties voted for her. Her courageous role in politics is well known in the city," he said.

Rabbi said Taimur contested the election with the blessings of a quarter and it backfired on him as the people of Narayanganj did not like it.

Hospitals

FROM PAGE 1 ministries to implement it." He also presented a short analysis on the Covid-19 deceased recently.

As many as 80 percent of the Covid-19 deaths were of unvaccinated individuals, he said, adding it is not possible to state yet whether there were any deaths caused by the Omicron variant.

The variant has undergone 50 genetic changes, making it more transmissible than the dominant Delta variant and more likely to evade the immune protection provided by vaccines or previous infection.

Vaccinated patients are more likely to experience milder disease if infected by the Omicron variant, while a booster dose is said to provide bigger and broader protection against the rogue variant.

In Bangladesh, the booster dose campaign began on December 28 last year for frontline workers and those aged 60 years and above.

And yesterday, the government lowered the eligibility for booster dose to those 50 years and above, for which an additional 70 lakh doses would be required, according to Maleque.

At present, 9.3 crore doses are in hand after 14.5 crore shots were administered.

"We have sufficient vaccines," Maleque said, adding that Russia wants to supply the one-shot "Sputnik Light" vaccine instead of the double-dose "Sputnik V" procured by the government.

DC now want

FROM PAGE 1 for projects that are big and sophisticated in nature, like nuclear power plants, the proposal will not be applicable as they do not have the technical knowledge."

A public administration ministry official, preferring anonymity, said having the DCs supervise projects may increase bureaucratic complexities and hinder work progress.

The proposal will be

AL proposes passing law

FROM PAGE 1 those he deems suitable for the positions.

In its proposal, AL said article 118 empowers the president to appoint the CEC and election commissioners through a process he would find appropriate.

The party also proposed increasing the use of technology, including EVM system, to make every election free and fair.

A 10-member AL delegation, led by party president and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, put forward the proposals during talks with the president at his official residence Bangabhaban.

After the meeting, president's Press Secretary Md Joynal Abedin said the AL delegation discussed the formation of an independent and effective EC, the poll-time responsibilities of the executive branch, the code of conduct of responsible persons at the EC, ensuring an accurate voters list and overall security on the election day and before and

placed at the three-day DC conference, which will begin today at the capital's Osmani Smriti Auditorium.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will virtually inaugurate the conference, in which 55 ministries and departments will participate and at least 263 proposals will be placed by the DCs.

At a press briefing yesterday, Cabinet Secretary Khandker

Anwarul Islam said the main agendas of the conference are related to land management, improvement of law and order, strengthening local government institutions, disaster management and poverty alleviation.

Other agendas include implementation of social safety net, use of ICT and e-governance, improvement of education and health services, prevention of pollution.

after the election.

He also said the AL proposed appointing only the officers and employees of the republic as presiding and polling officers instead of those from the private sector for conducting the elections, and ensuring responsible and impartial role of the individuals tasked with maintaining law and order, reports BSS. At the dialogue, Sheikh Hasina thanked the president for taking the initiative to hold talks with the political parties on EC's formation.

She informed him about her government's move on approving the draft of a law in this regard, adds UNB.

Thanking the AL delegation for giving opinion on EC's formation, President Hamid said it should be formed soon as per the constitution. He also thanked the government for approving the law on formation of EC at the cabinet meeting. After the meeting, AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader briefed reporters at the party headquarter on

Bangabandhu Avenue.

He said his party proposed enacting a law to constitute the EC and hoped that formulation of the law would be possible within a short time.

AL leaders Amir Hossain Amu, Tofail Ahmed, Matia Chowdhury, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Obaidul Quader, Muhammad Abdur Razaque, Lt Col (ret'd) Muhammad Faruq Khan, Jahangir Kabir Nanak and Abdur Rahman were among the party delegation.

With the meeting with the AL, the president wrapped up the dialogue he opened on December 20.

Palestinian shot dead in W Bank stabbing bid

AFP, JERUSALEM

Israeli forces yesterday shot dead a Palestinian man who was trying to stab a soldier in the West Bank, Israel's army said, in the latest unrest in the occupied territory.