



THE GOLDEN HOUR... As the sun sets below the horizon, the Shitalakkhya River captures its ethereal presence in its waters and takes the look of a vast container filled with liquid gold. The scenic beauty would make any spectator stare in awe, as a boat cuts through the gold, returning to shore at the end of a busy day. This photo was taken at Muktapur in Narayanganj yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Two bikers killed in road accidents

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Thakurgaon*

Two motorcyclists were killed in separate road accidents in Thakurgaon and Panchagarh during the last two days.

In Thakurgaon, Abdul Momin (35) was killed and two of his pillion passengers were injured as their bike hit a tractor parked beside Thakurgaon-Panchagarh highway at Bhulli village in Sadar upazila early yesterday, said fire service.

The injured -- Arman (16) and Ranjan (19) -- were taken to Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital. Later, they were transferred to Rangpur

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Workers protest gas crisis in Savar, Ashulia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Workers of Savar and Ashulia industrial areas yesterday demanded end of acute gas crisis.

Workers' association leaders formed a human chain in front of Ashulia Press Club in Baipail area on Nabinagar-Chandra highway around 11:00am.

They said thousands of workers live in the areas and for several days they have been suffering from SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Once there was a river

Bangshi turns into narrow canal due to pollution, encroachment

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Once upon a time, the turbulent Bangshi river used to be one of the important rivers in central Bangladesh. However, the river is rapidly losing all its might and glory due to the filling up of its banks, mindless pollution and illegal grabbing.

Only four decades ago, large boats used to ply the river — loaded with different crops as well as fruits like jackfruit and pineapple from the hills. The boats would anchor at different markets, including those in Madhupur, according to locals.

During that time, the easiest means of communication was the river, which has ceased to be nothing but a memory.

According to Water Development Board (WDB), the 238-kilometre-long Bangshi originates in Jamalpur, from the course of the old Brahmaputra, and flows past Madhupur.

During a recent visit, this correspondent saw multiple illegal

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establishments on the riverbanks, which fall under Madhupur municipal area, and from Kaitkai to Charaljani.

The establishments include buildings, which have occupied the river to the point of turning it into a narrow canal.

Due to waste dumping, the river has become unusable for both humans and cattle. There is not much fish left in there. Pollution has left a permanent mark on



Rampant encroachment and indiscriminate dumping of waste have turned Bangshi river into a narrow stream. This photo was taken in Madhupur Bus Stand area recently.

the river through the ever-present stench coming from its stagnant, polluted water.

Several residents of the riverbank said both sides of the bridge over the river adjacent to Madhupur bus stand — have turned into a garbage dumping zone. At night, hotel workers dump all sorts of garbage into the river. The same is done by road sweepers as well.

The river is not only the source of pungent odour but also one of germs and diseases, said Shahidul Islam, a resident.

Habibur Rahman, a local activist, said although grabbing and polluting any river is a punishable offence according to law, some unscrupulous people are involved with such activities.

The authorities have turned a blind eye to the issue as well, alleged Habibur.
"But the Bangshi is the lung of

Madhupur. We have to keep this river alive for our own good," told Sumon Karmakar, a green activist.

Earlier at a seminar, zila parishad panel chair and upazila Awami League president Khandaker Shafi Uddin Moni expressed his disappointment at WDB over the issue.

Contacted, Md Sirajul Islam, executive engineer of WDB in Tangail, said they are unable to prevent the occupation and pollution of rivers as they have no magistracy power.

"The matter is under jurisdiction of the local administration. What we can do is inform them about the matter," he said.

Shamima Yasmin, UNO of Madhupur, said they are identifying the occupiers through a survey. She also warned those involved in activities such as dumping garbage in the river.

RU flip-flops over admission process

Authorities unable to follow uniform system for exams



We abolished the second-try opportunity for the first time to ensure quality education. Afterwards, we saw so many changes in the rules, which were for various purposes. The authorities need to stay neutral while introducing any rule.

PROF MUHAMMAD MIZANUDDIN Former VC of RU

ARAFAT RAHMAN

The authorities of Rajshahi University (RU) have failed to follow a standard and uniform admission system for years, creating a scope for education quality to deteriorate.

Some of its former administrators opined that allowing admission seekers to sit for entrance exam for the second time tarnished the image of the 68-year-old institution.

Whoever takes charge of the administration, they bring changes in the admission-test rules that are in their interest, they alleged.

For example, in the upcoming entry test, the new administration, led by Vice Chancellor Prof Golam Shabbir Sattar, kept the option for admission seekers to reapply, reversing last year's order.

The authorities claimed that the latest decision is only for the next session, to compensate for students who went through academic losses during the pandemic.

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RANGPUR-DHAKA ROUTE Bus service resumes after three days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Plying of buses on Rangpur-Dhaka route resumed early yesterday after a three-day suspension due to a strike by district transport workers. Rangpur transport workers called off the strike on Thursday night after a meeting with district administration, metropolitan police and bus owners, with Rangpur Deputy Commissioner Asib Ahsan in the chair, said AWM Raihan Shah, additional deputy commissioner (education and ICT) of Rangpur.

The decision to call off the strike was taken following a discussion on the demands of the workers, the ADC said. The workers, including drivers, helpers and supervisors of all buses, started the strike without any prior notice on Tuesday morning (April 5, 2022) which left commuters in a helpless state.

Their five-point demand included disbursement of unpaid salaries.



Plying of buses on Rangpur-Dhaka route resumed early yesterday after a three-day suspension. This photo was taken at Kamarpara bus stand in Rangpur city.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

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Garbage from canal left on road for days

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

The pile of waste that the authorities had lifted from Chaktai canal has just been lying on the road at Chawkbazar Phooltola area for around a week, making locals and pedestrians suffer.

Locals said the waste was lifted around a week ago, but the authorities are yet to take it away.

Yesterday, many were seen covering their nose to save themselves from the stench.

"I don't get why city corporation workers left the pile here for so many days," said Md Shamsuddin, a local. Tunu Das, another local, said after the garbage was lifted and piled on the road, the whole area became muddy with the canal's filthy, black water mixed with waste.

Asked whether residents contacted CCC, Abdus Shukkur, a resident, said they asked the local supervisor of CCC's conservancy team to remove the garbage some three days ago, but no action was taken till yesterday.

Contacted, CCC Ward-17 Councillor (West Bakalia)

Shahidul Alam said when he noticed that the road had become slippery because of the waste, he instructed conservancy workers to remove the garbage immediately.

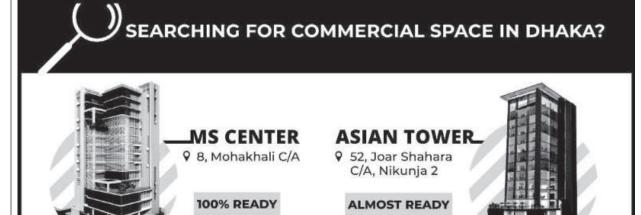
"Actually, the canal was cleaned by Chattogram Development Authority (CDA) under a mega-project to address waterlogging, and it is responsible for removing the waste," he said. "Yet, I

will look into it."

Contacted, CCC Deputy Chief
Conservancy Officer Morshedul
Alam Chowdhury echoed him.

People think the city corporation is cleaning the canal, but that is not true. CDA is doing that, and it is responsible for removing waste from the road, he said. "We will contact them to remove the garbage."

Lt Col Shah Ali, director of CDA's mega-project, said, "We will remove it immediately. Actually, the garbage was kept there so that it dries under the sun, as local councillors allege that when we carry just-collected, wet garbage in vehicles, roads on the way become dirty and muddy. So, we keep it on the road for two to three days."



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