

1 killed, 3 hurt as covered-van, easy bike collide

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A man was killed and three others were injured in a collision between a covered-van and an easy bike in Tangail yesterday.

The accident happened on Nagarpur-Chowhali regional road at Nordohi in Nagarpur upazila around 9:00am, said police.

All the victims were passengers of the battery-run auto-rickshaw.

Ajit Ghosh alias Bhombol Ghosh (72) from Singjora village in Goyhata union died on the spot, said Sazzad Hossain, officer-in-charge of Nagarpur Police Station.

The injured -- Ashish Ghosh, Rani Akter and Rasel Miah -- were rushed to Nagarpur Upazila Health Complex. Of them, Ashish was referred to Tangail General Hospital.

OC Sazzad said they seized the covered-van but its driver managed to flee.



PHOTO: STAR

While the bridge is being repaired, with iron beam being installed beside the pillars, passengers fear a potential accident because of the structure's condition. Many are also upset about delays, as all trains halt before getting on the bridge, and then move slowly till they get off.

The journey goes on, but with risks

Trains still plying century-old under renovation bridge in Pabna

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

Those who travel by train between Dhaka and northern or southern districts of the country have to prepare for an ordeal when they reach a century-old rail bridge in Pabna's Bhangura upazila.

Due to their battered condition, the authorities started fortifying the pillars of this bridge, situated at Baunjan, with iron beams around five months ago.

After the work started, all trains halt before getting on the bridge, and then go at 8 km/h on the structure, as per the direction of the authorities, said Abdul Malek, station master of Bhangura rail station.

This leads to the trouble passengers have to go through. Some fear a potential accident because of the bridge's condition, while others are just upset about the delays.

"Around 60,000 to 70,000 train passengers move through the bridge daily, because this is the only rail link between Dhaka and northern, southern districts," Malek said.

Repair works are currently halted, due to the high water level underneath the bridge.

Train movement, however, is normal. Around 35 trains, including goods-carrying ones and the international train (Maitree Express), pass by every day.

Abdur Rahim, a college teacher who regularly travels

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Nilphamari farmers worried over cattle virus Over 1,000 animals infected with lumpy skin disease

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

For the last two weeks, Mosharrar Hossain (35), a farmer at Nilahati village in Nilphamari, is passing days in worry as two of his six cattle have been suffering from high fever, and had marble-like small lumps throughout their skins.

"Initially I didn't pay proper attention and took consultations from a village quack. But the condition of my cows deteriorated further as I continued spending more money for the wrong treatments," he said.

Being informed, livestock department officials from the district visited his residence and under their treatment the cows are improving now.

Cattle farmer Ferdous Mia of Uttor Durakuthi village shared similar stories.

He said at first one of his ten cows got infected, which gradually spread among three more.

"They are now recovering, but are very weak," he said.

Two Australian variety cows of Ranu Agro Ltd in Saidpur municipality

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'Whom do we complain to?'

Vehicles paying three to ten times the fare while crossing Joukura ferry terminal

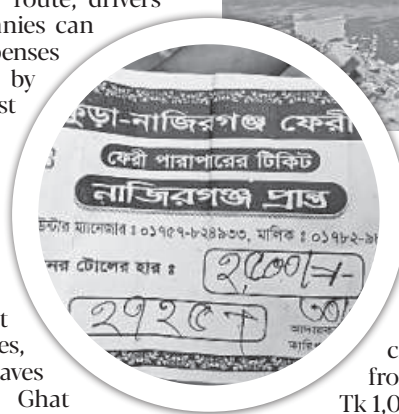
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Buses and trucks from Rajbari and surrounding districts use the Joukura ferry terminal every day to cross the Padma. In 2021, one Mostafizur Rahman Sharif got the lease of this ghat for three years from the Roads and Highway Department (RHD).

By using the Joukura-Nazirganj ferry route, drivers and bus companies can save travel expenses and time by avoiding at least 120km of road.

The ferry service on this route starts at 8:00am from Joukura Ghat and the last ferry leaves at 4:30pm. Besides, the first trip leaves from Nazirganj Ghat at 11:00am and the last trip at 6:00pm.

According to the lease agreement, the fare for each trailer truck crossing the Joukura-Nazirganj waterway was fixed at Tk 625, heavy truck at Tk 500, medium truck at Tk 250, mini truck at Tk 190, big bus at Tk 225, minibus at Tk 125, microbus at Tk 100, agricultural vehicles at Tk 100, four wheelers at Tk 100,



Sedan car at Tk 65 and bikes at Tk 15.

However, drivers alleged that the current management charges Tk 1,300 from heavy trucks, Tk 1,000 from medium trucks, Tk 800 from mini trucks, Tk 1,200 from big buses, Tk 800 from minibuses, Tk 700 from microbuses and Tk 150 from motorcycles.

The charge climbs further up to Tk 2,000-2,500 if there is sand, stone or coal in the truck, they added.

This correspondent found the allegations to be true after visiting the ghat recently.

Ujjal Barai, a truck driver who was carrying stones from Bhurangamari to Rajbari, showed this reporter a slip of Tk 2,500, which he was forced to pay.

Abir Hossain, a biker, said, "I don't know what's the actual fare for boarding a ferry with my bike. A month ago, it was Tk 100. Now it's Tk 150, and that too after the recent fuel hikes. Who will I complain to? Who will listen?"

Mehedi Hossain, a driver of a Pabna-bound bus from Faridpur, echoed the same.

Mostafizur Rahman Sharif could not be contacted for comments, despite repeated attempts.

However, ghat manager Sohail Rana said, "The fare was fixed a

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Two dead, 344 hospitalised in 24hrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least two dengue patients died and 344 were admitted to different hospitals across



the country in the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

This year's death toll has now risen to 63.

Thirty-one have died in Dhaka, 20 in Cox's Bazar, six in Chattogram, five in Barishal and one in Narayanganj, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Of the 344 new patients, 74 are from outside Dhaka. The total number of dengue cases this year is now 18,646.

A total of 2,156 dengue patients, 555 from outside Dhaka, are being treated; 16,427 have been released from hospitals so far.

A monsoon survey of the DGHS, conducted between August 11 and 23, found the presence of Aedes mosquitoes in 13.4 percent of houses under Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) and 11.75 percent of homes under Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC).

The survey also found 13 wards in DNCC and 14 in DSCC to be at risk of dengue, as the density of Aedes mosquitoes was high there.

Over 20km of embankments damaged

Farmers fear loss of Aman yields as salt water entering fields

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

A total of 20.45 kilometres of flood-control embankments have been damaged in eight upazilas of Patuakhali due to downpour and tidal surge, triggered by depression over the Bay.

Five-hundred metres of the embankments was washed away totally and the remaining 19.05 km partially, said Md Arif Hossain, executive engineer of Water Development Board (WDB) in Patuakhali.

Officials said due to the recent depression in the Bay, the coastal areas including Patuakhali faced heavy rain and tidal surge from September 11 to 13.



Farmers fear that salt water from the sea and nearby rivers will enter the whole agricultural land in the district through the broken parts and damage Aman paddy fields.

Abdur Razzak, a farmer from Ranipur village in Mirzaganj upazila, said, "The dykes have collapsed at several places. Many houses and Aman fields have submerged, and the fish are gone with the current from many ponds."

Sobahan Mia, another farmer of the same village, said, "The salt water is entering the Aman field through the embankments' broken parts. We are at risk of losing yields."

Anwar Hossain Khan, chairman of Deuli

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Waste of money or lack of awareness?

Foot overbridges remain unused in Sylhet city

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, SYLHET

Why do we need foot overbridges? The answer is simple. They are built to prevent accidents, on roads which are usually broad and difficult to cross.

But foot overbridges built on Sylhet were set up on narrow roads, where there is not even a divider to begin with. These roads never had a record of any accidents prior to these bridges, and the city dwellers are more comfortable crossing it without those, as it saves time, said locals.

Yet the Sylhet City Corporation has spent Tk 6.59 crore in the last seven years to build 3 such bridges, without consulting with the experts and city dwellers, they alleged.

On September 3, 2015, Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) inaugurated the city's first foot overbridge over the narrow yet busy Bandarbarazar road at a cost of Tk 1.63 crore. But till this date, the overbridge remains unused.

The second one was constructed last year at Tilagarh, right at the entrance of the Sylhet-Tamabil highway, spending Tk 1.79 crore.

The foot overbridge at Humayun Rashid Chattar, at the entrance of the Sylhet-Dhaka National highway, was constructed

this year spending Tk 2.75 crore.

Another foot overbridge is being constructed near the main gate of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology in Akhaila area, over Sylhet-Sunamganj highway, spending Tk 3.17 crore.

These foot overbridges are made of steel and were constructed by Chittagong Dry Dock Limited and Dockyard and Engineering Works Limited in Narayanganj.

Advocate Monir Helal, a member of Sachetan Nagorik Committee (Sanak) Sylhet chapter, said, "Such projects are nothing but an eyewash, undertaken to convince citizens that notable development works are progressing."

"But in reality, the city corporation is wasting money, officials are getting benefited, and these overbridges are becoming a burden to the city."

When the first foot overbridge was being constructed, businessmen of Madhuban Market and Hasan Market opposed it as this structure would narrow the access to the road.

"After all these years, the bridge turned out to be useless. The point (Bandarbarazar) is always in gridlock due

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Firefighters trying to douse the blaze at Boro Bazar in Khulna Sadar upazila yesterday. At least 16 shops were gutted in the incident. Locals said the fire broke out at a shop there around 1:00pm and soon engulfed adjoining shops. The firefighters brought the situation under control in an hour. No casualties were reported as most shops were closed because of Durga Puja.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN