

## Students suffer for unfinished school building

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A tin-shed building hosts a primary school. Inside its walls lie classrooms which are completely submerged in knee-length water, leaving the little ones struggling to carry out their educational activities.

The recent tidal surge, caused by a depression over the Bay, has inundated at least 30 villages and shoals in Patuakhali.

But these children wouldn't have suffered if the school building promised to them was completed within the deadline.

Poor communication and contractor's negligence halted the construction work of the new academic building of Uttar Char Borhan Government Primary School in Patuakhali.

The school, established in 2005 by locals in a tin-shed structure in the remote Char Borhan island under Dashmina upazila of Patuakhali, has 130 students, including 65 girls, and four teachers at present.

The school was nationalised in 2013. Later, the Local Government Engineering Department took a Tk 1.19 crore project to construct the school's new four-storey academic building.

A contractor named Pancham Ali Mridha got the construction work of

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With water reaching up to their knees and books on their heads, students of Uttar Char Borhan Government Primary School try to reach the school gate following class. The children currently have to sit in the old tin-shed building for classes as their permanent school building remains under construction. The photos were taken in Patuakhali's Dasmina upazila after a tidal surge inundated around 30 villages in the district recently.

PHOTO: STAR

## TIDAL SURGE IN PATUAKHALI

### 30 villages, district town under water

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

At least 30 villages and shoals in Patuakhali have been inundated due to tidal surge caused by depression over the Bay.

The district's Mohipur and Alipur of Kalapara upazila, Char Montaj of Rangabali upazila, Charborhan of Dasmina upazila, and Piprakhal of Mirzaganj upazila are under 2-3 feet water.

Water also entered the district town on Thursday afternoon, flooding the Post Office, Mahila College, Jubilee School, Old Hospital, and Fire Service roads.

Besides, Munsef Para, Mother and Child Welfare Center; and Civil Surgeon Office, New Market, and Medical College Hospital squares were also inundated.

According to Water Development Board sources, the district's rivers and streams are flowing 20cm above the danger level.

The low-pressure over the Bay has caused a rise of 2-4 feet in the sea's water level. Rainfall added to the crisis, mentioned Patuakhali Meteorological Office observer Joydeep Kabiraj.

The flood has disrupted the activities of locals, especially students, said Sohag

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## Man kills himself after stabbing wife to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A man allegedly took his own life after killing his wife over a family dispute in Kaunia upazila of Rangpur early yesterday.

He also attacked his two brothers when they tried to resist him, said police.

The deceased were identified as Rabindra Chandra Barman, 55, and his wife Shova Rani Roy, 45, from Dharmeshwar (Meerbagh) village.

The couple went to bed after taking dinner on Friday night and their family members woke up around 1:00am hearing screams, police quoted the family as saying.

At one stage, the husband threw the mattress out of his room and set afire. Later, he started stabbing his wife with a sharp weapon, they added.

When Rabindra's two brothers -- Chetan and Gopal -- went to rescue Shova, he also stabbed them.

The family members took Shova to Rangpur Medical College Hospital in a critical state. Later, she died at the hospital.

Meanwhile, Rabindra hanged himself from the ceiling, said police.

Being informed, police recovered the bodies and sent those to Rangpur Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy, said Hossain Muhammad Raihan, additional superintendent of police (A-circle) in Rangpur.

## NARSINGDI SADAR HOSPITAL

# Limping along on limited facilities

JAHIDUL ISLAM, Narsingdi

"I have been waiting for four hours for my test since I arrived here at 9:00am with a stomach ache. However, by the time my turn arrived, the doctor had already left the hospital," said Sonia Akter while talking to this correspondent recently.

The 28-year-old mother of three had to travel from Alokali in Sadar upazila to reach Narsingdi Sadar Hospital.

Sonia is not the only one. Other patients too shared similar experiences.

Hundreds of patients went there every day from different upazilas of Narsingdi, Brahmanbaria and Kishoreganj.

While patients have been suffering due to a shortage of doctors and facilities, illegal local brokers, promising patients to make the process a little easier, have taken over the hospital's alleys, adding to the menace.

Established in 1962, the hospital currently has seven units -- outpatient, emergency, pathology, X-ray, blood bank, ultrasonography, and ECG. Ambulance facilities are available on a limited scale, and most tests are done with old machines.

According to hospital sources, limited staff and a shortage of modern, residential, and technological facilities are to blame for the hospital's condition.

### SHORTAGE OF STAFF, BEDS

A total of 21 doctors are supposed to be employed at this hospital; however, only 14, including consultants, are currently serving patients. There are no consultants in cardiology, surgery, physical medicine, or ophthalmology departments.

During a recent visit, this correspondent found patients waiting in the emergency room while there were no doctors or trained paramedics to tend to them.

"I have to attend to around 120-150 patients every day, which makes it difficult for me to properly diagnose them," said Rozi Sarkar, a medical officer at the hospital.

According to hospital sources, around 2,000 patients visit the centre every day for treatment, including 500-600 at the



Patients continue to suffer as limited beds, resources and lack of cleaning initiatives plague the hospital.

PHOTO: STAR

emergency unit alone. At least 80-85 patients are admitted to the hospital on a daily basis. However, it also has only 100 seats -- 15 for children, 23 for women, 42 for men, 20 for gynaecology, and 10 for diarrhoea units.

Thus, a large number of patients have to stay on the floors, corridors, and balconies. The shortage of manpower further exacerbates their sufferings, informed Mahmudul Kabir Basar, resident medical officer.

"The authority knows that we have been short-staffed since 2014. I had also asked them to appoint at least 50 doctors, including consultants, here, but to no avail," he added.

While talking to this correspondent, multiple patients at the hospital said they

had to wait for at least an hour in line to get a ticket and another 3-5 hours just to access the outdoor facilities. The wait is even longer when it comes to meeting doctors, taking tests, and accessing necessary medicines.

Many patients and their attendants alleged that unplanned garbage dumping in 7-8 adjacent open drains not only increases the risk of dengue infections but also compromises the overall cleanliness of the hospital, located near Narsingdi Municipality.

The overgrown bushes on the hospital compound due to a lack of mowing further worsen the hospital's hygiene.

Furthermore, only 12 beds in four wards are

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## SUSPENSION OF CUMILLA UNIVERSITY REPORTER

### Former campus journo demand VC's resignation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former campus journalists yesterday demanded immediate resignation of Cumilla University Vice-Chancellor Prof AFM Abdul Moyeen for suspending a student for a news report on him.

The demand was raised from a human chain organised in front of Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka.

The suspended student, Mohammad Iqbal Monwar, is a masters student at the English department. He is also a reporter of Bangla daily Jajaidin.



PHOTO: STAR

On July 31, a report titled "Corruption is the reason for development in Bangladesh: CoU VC" was published in the daily, detailing some remarks made by the VC during a university programme.

In the suspension order, it was mentioned that Monwar was suspended for "violating university discipline".

According to the order, Monwar allegedly distorted a statement made by the VC and intentionally circulated it with misleading information to tarnish the university's image.

Monwar refuted the allegations and claimed that he only reported the statement made by the VC during a programme.

Addressing today's event, Ali Younus Hridoy, a former campus journalist from Rajshahi University, said, "By making these remarks, Cumilla University VC has lost the moral right to hold the office. He should resign immediately."

Rabiul Alam, former campus journalist at Jagannath University, said if a journalist can be suspended on charge of "violating university

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## Eight Jamaat, Shibir men detained in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Police yesterday detained eight Jamaat-Shibir men for trying to bring out a procession in Rangpur without prior permission from the authorities.

Police also charged batons to disperse them.

Around noon, the leaders and activists of Jamaat Shibir started the march from near Jummapara Bhanga Mosque in Rangpur city.

Police intercepted them and detained eight people, said OC Mahfuzar Rahman, of Kotwali Police Station.

Jamaat-Shibir bring out processions in the city without permission, said the OC. The detainees could not be identified.



Animals living in the Lawachhara National Park continue to become victim of speeding vehicles and trains as they ply the Sreemangal-Kamalaganj road and Dhaka-Sylhet rail tracks inside the forest, defying a 20km speed limit.

PHOTO: STAR

## LAWACHHARA NATIONAL PARK

### Where wildlife falls victim to speeding trains, vehicles

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Lawachhara National Park is an important sanctuary, buzzing with rare and endangered animals. However, its wildlife is facing a significant challenge when it comes to co-existing with the railway and regional road that passes through it.

The 1,250-hectare forest is home to numerous species of animals including owls, monkeys, pythons, wild fowl, pangolins, barking deer, fishing cats, and wild boars.

According to the wildlife conservation department, over 50 animals fall victim to fatal railway and road accidents annually.

However, local conservationists claim the number to be much higher in reality.

The accidents are mostly caused on Sreemangal-Kamalaganj road and Dhaka Sylhet railway park pass. The wildlife in the area is also disrupted due to the noise pollution caused by speeding trains and vehicles.

For example, on May 20, Sylhet-bound Udayan Express met with an accident after a tree fell in the park. The subsequent rescue and public gathering caused a lot of disruption to the wildlife movement.

Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, former divisional forest officer, sent a letter to the forest conservator on November 14, 2021, proposing the maximum train speed be reduced to 20km per hour while crossing the 7.5km stretch of park to protect the

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