

PANDITPARA IN MYMENSINGH

Damaged road adds to locals' woes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Locals have been facing difficulties with their commute on Panditpara Road in Mymensingh city as it is lying in dilapidated state for the last six months.

The situation began about half a year ago when the authorities started setting ring culverts to improve the city's sewerage system. The culverts are being deployed from Panditpara to Notun Bazar areas. Though the physical works were completed about a month ago, the workers are yet to repair the road, making it unfit for both vehicles and pedestrians, said Abhijit Pal, a local.

"Only one side of the road somewhat usable, allowing people and vehicles to pass with difficulties. The rest of the road is in a bad shape, with deep potholes and dumped garbage taking up much of it," said Abul Hasan, another resident of the area.

Also, unused ring culverts have been kept for months on both sides of the busy Saheb Ali Road in Notun Bazar area, a road leading to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, creating severe traffic congestion

on a daily basis.

According to locals, the authorities concerned did not respond to their plea for completing the service works on this important road a month ago. The blamed the contractors' negligence and Mymensingh City Corporation's lack of monitoring for the delays.

This road connects several schools, colleges, district and divisional administration offices, Judge's Court, offices of Deputy Inspector General of Police, and Mymensingh Museum at Shashi Lodge and Alexandra Castle (Lohar Kuthir), an archeological site.

With HSC examinations underway, examinees and their guardians are gravely concerned over the condition of the road. The incomplete works will lead to a delay for hundreds of students as they will be unable to reach examination centres across the city on time.

Mohammad Azaharul Haque, assistant engineer of MCC, said they have been monitoring the progress of work regularly.

Contacted, Md Rafiqul Islam Miah, executive engineer of MCC, said the repair works were delayed due to rain.



Dug around six months ago to deploy ring culverts to develop the area's sewerage networks, the Panditpara Road in Mymensingh city is yet to be repaired, leading to locals' woes. PHOTO: STAR

'Conspirators attempting to recreate Aug 15' Deputy education minister tells event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Deputy Minister for Education Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury Nowfel claimed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has become an eyesore to foreign superpowers as she is leading Bangladesh to prosperity.

He made the remark yesterday while speaking at a discussion organised by Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) on the occasion of National Mourning Day at the CMP auditorium in the port city.

"The conspirators are targeting the country's forces by spreading propaganda in a planned way. They are doing that by spending money and motivating external forces," he said.

"There are many good people who understand what the country's situation would be without Sheikh Hasina," Nowfel said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

6 robber gang members held with arms, ammo

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Rab claimed to have busted the hideout of a robber gang in a remote hilly area under Teknal upazila of Cox's Bazar.

Six robbers were detained in this connection alongside recovery of firearms and ammunition.

Maj Syed Sadiqul Haque, acting commander of Rab-15, revealed the developments during a press briefing yesterday afternoon.

Acting on a tip off, Rab-15 members conducted drives in the remote hills of Rangikhali under Hnila union of the upazila from Friday night till early morning yesterday, he said.

During the drive, the robbers opened fire on the Rab personnel and tried to flee the scene. However, the elite force was able to detain them, the Rab official said.

The detainees are Faisal Uddin, 40, Badi Alam, 35, Syed Hossain, 32,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

WATERLOGGING IN PATUAKHALI

Rain ravages Aman seedbeds in low-lying areas

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Heavy rain over the last few days has caused waterlogging in different areas of Patuakhali, severely damaging Aman seedbeds.

Paddy farmers in the district are now passing their days amid uncertainty regarding Aman cultivation this season.

However, the agriculture department has claimed that the seedbeds will be fixed once the water recedes.

Hedayet Ali Howladar, a 65-year-old farmer of Fatehpur village in Kalapara upazila, said that he borrowed money to plant Aman seedlings on 12 bighas of his land. But the inundation caused by heavy rain over the last week has badly damaged his seedbeds.

"Most of the seedlings are rotten. I have suffered a financial loss worth Tk 20,000 while uncertainty looms over his cultivation in the Aman season.

Another farmer, Yasin Ali, of Paschim Sonatala village, planted Aman saplings on 10 bighas of land. The field, along with the newly planted seedlings, has remained submerged for a week, causing the saplings to rot.

"How will I collect saplings and cultivate my land again," he said.

About 80 percent of farmers in 12 unions of the upazila have lost their Aman seedbeds, said local farmers.

Sultan Gazi, a farmer of Kumirmara village, informed that most of them do not have enough seeds to prepare new seedbed. They also do not have the financial support to buy seeds again, he added.

"It rained continuously for 90 hours last week, which does not happen often," he said.

Kalapara Upazila Agriculture Extension Officer ARM Saifullah said, "The farmers' seedbeds of Bri-51, 52, 76 varieties were damaged due to rain water. However, there is no shortage of seeds. There is enough stock



PHOTO: STAR

Farmers in Patuakhali in distress as heavy rainfall in the last few days inundated Aman seedbeds before planting season.

of the Bri-22, 23, 33, 62 and 75 varieties. Farmers have no reason to panic."

He also said that the assistant agricultural officers at the field level will assess the damage and provide necessary advice to the farmers.

Meanwhile, Abul Kalam, a farmer of Nayavanguni village of Rangabali upazila, alleged that influential people have also blocked the canal for their fish farming operation, further aggravating the waterlogging situation.

This has caused damage to the seedbeds in the area. As there is no time to prepare new seedbeds, the farmers are worried if they would be able to plant Aman saplings on

time, he added.

Contacted, Deputy Director of Patuakhali Department of Agricultural Extension Md Nazrul Islam said that some seedbeds have been badly damaged in various areas of the district, especially in the low-lying areas.

According to his office, Aman seedbeds had been prepared on 12,000 hectares of land in the district. Of this, 165 hectares have been damaged, incurring a loss of around Tk 30 lakh.

Nazrul Islam also mentioned that 153 hectares of saplings have been damaged in the district.

Field level DAE officials have been instructed to provide necessary advice to the affected farmers, he added.

'Nothing will be done outside the constitution' Liberation war affairs minister tells discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nothing will be done outside the constitution during the national elections, said Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque said yesterday.

He made the remark during a discussion programme commemorating Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's 48th death anniversary. The event was organised by Bangladesh Bharat Maitri Samiti organised at National Museum in the capital.

The government has made it clear that nothing related to the election will be done outside the constitution. This constitution was forged in the blood of 3 million martyrs. Not only the election but also people's futures will be shaped according to the constitution, he said.

"Bangladesh has been led towards communal politics before by assassinating the Father of the Nation. Now is the time to stop it," he added.

He also urged foreign countries to hand over the self-confessed killers of Bangabandhu, showing respect for Bangladesh's laws.

Present as special guest, Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma highlighted Bangabandhu's contributions to the liberation and building of this nation.

"Bangabandhu's life and ideals continue to guide special relations between India and Bangladesh as the two countries work together towards a brighter and more prosperous future," he said.

Eminent journalist Abed Khan, Prime Minister's former information advisor Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, lawmaker Aroma Dutta and Narayan Saha Moni, general secretary of Bangladesh Bharat Maitri Samiti also attended the meeting, presided over by Rashidul Alam, president of the organisation.

Bangladesh has been led towards communal politics before by assassinating the Father of the Nation. Now is the time to stop it.

AKM Mozammel Haque
Liberation War
Affairs Minister

'School feeding programme in 150 upazilas soon'

UNB, Dhaka

Primary and Mass Education Secretary Farid Ahmed on yesterday said that the school feeding programme will be launched in 150 upazilas of the country in a new way within a short time.

He came up with the announcement while addressing the "National Dissemination Workshop" on Findings & Factors of National Students Assessment 2022, organised by Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), at a hotel in Cox's Bazar.

The secretary hoped that a new door will usher in the primary education sector through the school feeding and it will script a base for building a developed and prosperous Bangladesh.

Farid Ahmed said the children will be provided nutrition-rich biscuits along with other foods which will be attractive to them and play a special role in fulfilling demand and forming the body.

Addressing the government's initiatives to ensure quality education, he said dropping out the children from the school will reduce and



Shoti and Shilpi Das are busy weaving baskets in Rishipara in Jashore's Abhaynagar upazila. They said they make around 25-30 baskets each every day, which are sold for Tk 30 apiece. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

PRAYER
TIMING
AUGUST 20

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-25 12-45 4-45 6-38 8-00
JAMAAT 5-00 1-15 5-00 6-41 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2