



RISKING LIVES to attend classes

Students forced to use boats as schools stay submerged for 5 months

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR
TOPU, back from Gaznar Beel, Pabna

Arifa Khatun, a fourth-grader at Bostal Government Primary School in Sujanagar upazila of Pabna, has to travel to school using a boat every day, leaving her family concerned for her safety.

Her 3-year-old sister, Jamila Khatun, drowned early last month while taking a ride on a boat. Since then, the family has become terrified of the perils of monsoon.

"Since my sister drowned, my parents are always anxious about sending me to school on a boat alone. However, there is no alternative. Otherwise, I'd end up missing a lot of classes," said Arifa.

The school, located in the Gaznar Beel in the upazila, remains submerged for around half a year from monsoon onward, compelling teachers and students to use boats to attend classes.

Visiting the school recently, this correspondent himself had to reach the school building on a boat. He also saw many students rowing boats to go to the school.

Riya Khatun, a student, said she has to pay Tk 150 to a boatman every month to get to the school. Yet, most days she is late as the boat takes time to take her there.



PHOTO: STAR

As a result, the school has long been facing a downturn in class attendance. Of the 65 students, only around half could manage to show up in the classes.

"The government founded this school in 2014 as the first in the village. Since the beginning, we have been struggling to get students," said Md Momin Uddin, headteacher of the school.

Now there are three schools in Gaznar Beel area, all being submerged and facing lack of students due to poor accessibility.

When visiting Sharir Vita Government Primary School in the area, this correspondent saw a

similar scenario. Many students were seen attending classes in wet clothes.

"We commute to school by boat, and it usually rains in the morning. So, we get drenched on our way here," said Rohit Khan, a sixth-grader at the school.

Masura Khatun, a seventh-grader, said, "Sometimes we even fall off the boat and get wet. Thankfully, most of us know how to swim. But our parents are worried for our safety nevertheless."

Headteacher Shahidul Islam said the school has been submerged since the end of June and will likely remain so till mid-November.

Out of 238 students, only 120-150 students manage to attend classes regularly during this period, he added.

Headteachers of both schools demanded permanent boat facilities from the government so that teachers and students can arrive on time and return home safely.

There are around 550 students admitted to the three schools in the area, according to education office sources.

Abdul Zabbar, upazila primary education officer, said, "Three out of 145 primary schools in Sujanagar upazila – Sharir Vita, Bostal, and Paikpara – remain submerged for around five to six months, making it difficult to conduct academic activities."

"Of the three schools, Bostal and Sharir Vita are most affected. We have asked teachers from these schools to encourage parents and students so that academic activities are not disrupted," said Zabbar.

Asked about the demand for arranging boats for the affected schools, the official said they have already submitted a proposal in this regard.

"If we get funds from the government, we will arrange boats for teachers and students of the schools," he added.

ROHINGYA CAMP Tk 1 lakh robbed from NGO workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Masked criminals robbed over Tk 1 lakh intended for an international NGO's beneficiaries in Ukhiya Refugee camp on Wednesday, police said.

The incident occurred at Camp 15, Mizanur Rahman, assistant superintendent of police (ASP) of Armed Police Battalion 8, said yesterday.

No case has yet been filed in connection with the incident, said the ASP, who oversees the law and order situation at Camp 15.

He said the NGO was scheduled to distribute the funds to beneficiaries at the camp-in-charge's office.

However, without prior notice to the CIC and local police, they started distributing funds from the shanty of a sub-majhi (community leader) around 1:30pm when the masked criminals robbed Tk 1 lakh from the aid workers.

"We asked the NGO several times to file a complaint in this regard, but they didn't," he said.

Md Shamsud Douza, additional refugee relief and repatriation commissioner, also requested a report from the NGO regarding the incident. However, the NGO has not submitted the report yet, he added.

CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS GCC to conduct probe against ex-acting mayor

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

An enquiry committee has been formed to probe corruption allegations against former acting mayor of Gazipur Asadur Rahman Kiron.



Jahangir Alam, former mayor, and son and adviser of current Mayor Zaida Khatun, confirmed it to The Daily Star yesterday.

According to a letter signed by GCC Secretary Abdul Hannan on Thursday, as per the decision of a meeting, a five-member probe committee has been formed to investigate the corruption allegations over revenue, electricity charges, and tender manipulation, brought against former councillor (ward 43) Kiron.

Kiron served as the acting mayor from November 21, 2021 to September 10 this year. The probe committee is expected to submit the report within 15 working days.

Kiron could not be contacted for comments.

3rd batch of nuclear fuel reaches Rooppur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

The third batch of nuclear fuel reached the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant yesterday morning.

Ashraful Islam, site director of the plant, said the consignment reached the power plant around 9:30am under special arrangement of the army.

This batch reached Dhaka airport via a special aircraft from Russia on Thursday.

A total of seven fuel consignment for the initial batch of unit-1 is scheduled to arrive at Rooppur within this year. "A total of 163 'assembly fresh fuel' will be needed for operating unit-1 in the initial stage," said Shawkat Akbar, project director of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant.

Meanwhile, traffic movement was restricted when the fuel was being transported from Dhaka airport to Pabna.

OC Ashish Kumar Shannal of Pakshey Highway Police Station said vehicular movement became regular after the consignment arrived at the project site.

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Memo No. BGC/CEDP/2023-24/G-13/19
Date: 13/10/2023

e-Tender Notice: 02/2023-2024

e-Tender is invite in the National e-Gp System portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following package;

Sl. No.	Tender ID. No.	Name of Package	Last Date and Time of Tender Security Submission	Tender Closing Date & Time
01	887585	Procurement of Projector	01- November-2023 01:00 PM	01- November-2023 02:00 PM

This is an on line tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-Gp portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-Gp portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-Gp system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks Branches up to 01- November-2023, 1:00 PM

Further information and guideline are available in the National e-Gp System portal and from e-Gp Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

13-10-2023
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