



Workers hang dyed jute yarn in the sun in Alamnagar Arongghata area of Khulna. Once dried it will be woven into carpets. A 4-foot-wide carpet sells for Tk 110. These red and green strings of yarn, the colours of our national flag, will certainly contribute to making carpets for the winter. The photo was taken in recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Prisoner ‘dies by suicide’ in B’baria jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

An under-trial prisoner “died by suicide” by hanging from a toilet window in Brahmanbaria district jail on Thursday night. The deceased is Md Jewel, 34, son of Abu Chand Mia of Chor-Chartola village in Ashuganj upazila. He was accused in a case filed over killing his wife in 2020. Jewel had been in the prison since 2020 after a district court sent him to jail, the jail sources said. Ikramul Haque Nahid, acting jail super of Brahmanbaria District Jail, said Jewel was found hanging from the toilet window on Thursday night. He was first taken to the jail hospital and later transferred to Brahmanbaria General Hospital where doctor declared him dead, said Nahid. Later, the body was handed over to the family members after autopsy. Meanwhile, a jail guard named Ripon Barua has been suspended on charge of neglecting his duty in this regard, the jail sources said.

PRAYER TIMING

OCTOBER 26

| | | | | |
|------------|-------|------|---------|------|
| Fazr | Zohr | Asr | Maghrib | Esha |
| AZAN 4:50 | 12:45 | 4:00 | 5:32 | 7:15 |
| JAMAA 5:25 | 1:15 | 4:15 | 5:35 | 7:45 |

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

RATNAI RIVER IN LALMONIRHAT Land acquisition delays bridge work

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Construction works of a bridge on Ratnai river in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila has suffered considerable delays over complications with acquisition of land for the bridge’s approach roads. The Roads and Highways Department initiated construction of the 130-metre-long and 10.5-metre-wide bridge on December 15, 2022 at a cost of Tk 23 crore to connect Lalmonirhat-Phulbari road in Kulaghat area of the upazila. The construction is stipulated to be completed by January 18, 2025. Concrete and Steel Technology, a construction firm, has got the work order for the bridge’s construction. With less than three months left before the project’s deadline expires, only 60 percent of the work has been completed so far. If completed, the bridge would ease commute between Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts. Currently, to communicate between the districts, people are using an old and risky bailey bridge over the river, which is in a vulnerable condition and only allows lighter vehicles like motorcycles and battery-run easy-bikes to ply it.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

SONADANGA BYPASS ROAD IN KHULNA

Abandoned for 11 years



DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

The condition of the Sonadanga Bypass road (from MA Bari Road to the city bypass road), located adjacent to the Sonadanga Bus Terminal in Khulna city, has deteriorated to a deplorable state. The road shows no signs of proper surfacing, with exposed bricks and stones, and numerous potholes covering its surface. During the dry season, dust engulfs the area, while light rain turns the entire road into an uneven mess. This road, essential for inter-district buses and local vehicles, connects Khulna with 18 districts, including Dhaka, Barishal, Bagerhat, and Satkhira. The Khulna Development Authority (KDA) initiated the construction of this bypass road to improve connectivity and expand the city. The 2.16km stretch from Sonadanga Bus Terminal to the city bypass at the Rupsha Bridge highway was completed in June 2013 at a cost of Tk 20.48 crore. In December 2013, the KDA transferred part of the road to the Khulna City Corporation (KCC). However, no basic repairs have been conducted since then. Al Amin Mridha, a local resident of New Town, said, “During the rainy season, the entire path turns to mud, and the constant

swaying of vehicles splashes mud onto passersby.” He added that travelers are often charged extra due to the poor condition of the road. This situation has also caused large vehicles to divert onto the Mayur Bridge in the Gallamari area, leading to traffic congestion. At least 3,000 people use this road daily and face similar obstacles. There isn’t even a footpath, making it dangerous for pedestrians. Lutfar Rahman, a driver for Tungipara Paribahan, said, “After a safe journey from Dhaka to Khulna, the last two kilometers are excruciatingly difficult. Accidents frequently occur, with buses and trucks overturning, putting passengers at risk.”



Abdul Gaffar Biswas, president of the Khulna Inter-District Bus and Minibus Owners Association, expressed concern over the lack of renovations on this busy road, which has remained neglected for the past 10-12 years. Md Mortaza Al Mamun, executive engineer (maintenance) of KDA, said, “We completed the road in June 2013 and handed over a portion to the city corporation in December 2013. KDA does not have funds for road maintenance. However, for the wellbeing of locals, we repaired it by covering it with brick two years ago.” Abirul Jabbar, chief planning officer of KCC, said KDA authorities had sent a letter to them regarding the road, but they refused (to take responsibility) because there was no drainage alongside the road. “Now a project has been approved, but the KDA authority has yet to clearly define the road land. As a result, we are unable to begin work. Once the road boundaries are properly marked, we will start the repair work. Starting it now would only result in a waste of government funds.” “We plan to work on an 800-metre section. A 10-foot drain will be constructed on both sides of the 40-foot-wide main road. A budget of Tk 22 crore has been allocated for the project. Once started, we aim to complete the work within a year,” he added.



Construction of a bridge on Ratnai river continues to be delayed over complications with acquisition of land for the bridge’s approach roads. With three months left before the project’s deadline expires, 60 percent of the work has been completed so far. The photo was taken in the Lalmonirhat-Phulbari road recently.

PHOTO: STAR

HILSA FISHING

Fishermen violating ban amid lax monitoring

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

Taking advantage of lax monitoring by officials concerned, some fishermen have been catching hilsa from the rivers across Barishal division violating the ongoing 22-ban on fishing. Locals and official of Divisional Fisheries Office in Barishal said some fishermen in Hijla, Muladi, Mehendiganj, Babuganj in Barishal district, and some areas in Jhalakathi district have been catching hilsa defying the ban in Meghna, Sugandha, Arial Kha, and Kirtankhola rivers. Some fishermen also allegedly attacked fisheries officials, police and local government officials when they were apprehended during drives. The Fisheries Department, meanwhile, acknowledged that the monitoring has not been adequate due to an acute shortage of manpower and police personnel. “During a drive on October 20, four officials including myself got injured as fishermen hurled brickbats at us, before setting fire to the boat with petrol,” said Jahangir Hossain, upazila nirbahi officer of Hijla. In two similar attacks previously, several people including upazila fisheries officers, Ansar and police personnel were injured, said Nripendranath Biswas, deputy director of divisional fisheries office in Barishal. “Due to shortage of manpower and available police support, alongside deteriorating situation and lack of security,

we are being unable to conduct more drives, while fishermen have continued to defy the ban,” he added. Israel Pandit, president of divisional fishermen’s association, said many fishermen did not get government assistance, while others can hardly survive with their families with 25kg rice they were provided. “Passing their days struggling to remain afloat, some fishermen are being compelled



to go to the rivers for catching fish,” he also said, adding that the government should provide at least 100kg rice as assistance. Meanwhile, a total 252 fishermen have been sentenced to 10 days’ jail each for violating the fishing ban in the division so far between October 13-22, while a total 1,238 drives and 376 mobile courts were conducted, and 459 cases were filed. Also, a total 7,996 tonnes of rice is being distributed to 3,19,830 fishermen in six districts of Barishal division as assistance during the ban, said the Divisional Fisheries Office.

Unite to remove the president and scrap constitution Jatiya Nagorik Committee urges political parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the Jatiya Nagorik Committee yesterday urged political parties to unite and take to the streets to remove President Mohammed Shahabuddin and scrap the 1972 Constitution, instead of getting divided on these issues. “Let us unite in the view of the student and public uprising and work together to remove the president,” Nasiruddin Patwari, convener of the platform, said at a rally. “Leave the roundtable and come to the streets. Let’s come together once again to build a second republic,” he added. A group of former student leaders, activists, lawyers, journalists, and social media influencers gathered for a discussion at the rally in the capital’s Lalbagh area. Nasiruddin said, “Shahabuddin -- who was appointed by Sheikh Hasina -- is conspiring inside Bangabhaban to destabilise the country. He can no longer remain in office.” “Political parties were standing with the students and public on August 5. But now, you have introduced the politics of division by bringing the election issue to the forefront. Stop the charade and join the call to remove the president without creating division,” he added. Akhtar Hossain, member secretary of the committee, said the president has betrayed the people while holding the office. Therefore, political parties must act quickly and agree on his removal, he said. “Without unity, we will fall into the trap of Hasina’s associates who are conspiring against us,” he said. He also said the administrators and teachers who supported the Chhatra League must be brought to trial. Akhtar further said, “The 1972 constitution that brought us fascist Hasina and ‘Mujibism’ will not be tolerated for a moment by the country’s people. This constitution must be scrapped, and the country must be governed by a new proclamation.” Family members of those who died and got injured during the movement called for justice at the rally.

Man dies in mob beating in Rangpur Another hanged from tree and beaten in Jashore

STAR REPORT

A man was killed in a mob beating in Rangpur’s Mithapukur upazila on Thursday night. The deceased, Aynal Islam, 35, of Dhalapara village in Durgapur union, allegedly tried to steal cattle from a farm and stabbed an elderly woman, said Mithapukur Police Station’s OC Ferdous Wahid yesterday. “Subsequently, the villagers caught and beat him, leaving him severely injured. He died on the way to the hospital,” he added. The body was sent to Rangpur Medical College Hospital for autopsy. According to locals and police, a group of thieves attempted to steal cattle from a farm in Bara Mirzapur village around 8:30pm. Sensing their presence, Monjuara Begum, 60, tried to intercept the thieves and got stabbed. Hearing her screams, villagers rushed to her rescue, causing the thieves to flee. Villagers then admitted her to Rangpur Medical College Hospital. When the news spread, Monjuara’s family

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4