

Seismograph at PSTU inactive for over 14yrs

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

The seismograph at Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) has remained inoperative for nearly 14 years. Installed in 2010 at a cost of around Tk 50 lakh, the instrument failed to record Friday's earthquake due to its non-functional status.

Experts believe round-the-clock monitoring could provide crucial earthquake warnings and mitigate potential damage.

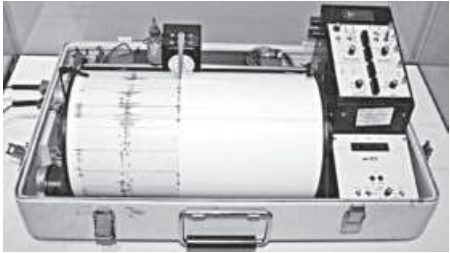
Set up as part of an initiative by Columbia University, USA, and the Department of Geology at Dhaka University, the seismograph encountered operational issues in January 2011. Though initially reconnected with full internet access to the underground chamber of an academic building, it ceased functioning within a year and has remained non-operational since.

Prof Dr Md Nurul Amin, Dean of the faculty of Environmental Science and Disaster Management at PSTU, said the device was maintained under the supervision of the Electrical and Electronic Engineering Department, the Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation Department, and the Agricultural Engineering Department.

Prof Dr Sheikh Abdullah Al Mamun

Hossain, chairman of the Agricultural Engineering Department, said the device was installed under a specific project. However, from the outset, keeping it operational proved challenging. Eventually, the project ended, and no funds were allocated for its maintenance.

Prof Dr SM Tawhidul Islam of the Electrical and Electronic Engineering



The seismograph at Patuakhali Science and Technology University remains inoperative for over 14 years. PHOTO: STAR

Department explained that earthquakes generate primary, secondary, and surface waves. While surface waves carry the main energy of an earthquake, primary waves travel faster and reach the surface first. Modern sensors detect these waves and issue early warnings.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7



With the sun gradually setting in the late afternoon, herders return home with their cattle from the fields. During the dry season, the local wetlands remain empty, allowing cattle owners to hire herders to graze their cattle in those areas. A herder earns a monthly wage of Tk 250-350 per cow for this work. The photo was taken from the Moukhali village of Dacope upazila in Khulna recently. PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Four JCD men among six hurt in clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

At least six persons, including four leaders and activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal were injured in a clash in Pirojpur's Kawkhali upazila on Friday night.

The injured are: Tarikul Islam Sumon, 30; Jubayer Hossain, 25; Nayeem Akan, 18; and Bellal, 28, from Shialkathi village; Ferdous Hossain, 26, and Kawsar Hossain, 22, from Saturaia village in the upazila.

The incident took place near Shialkathi union parishad at Rarir Haat at around 9:30pm on Friday.

Sumon, a former leader of Dhaka North unit JCD, said they went to hang posters on Eid greetings in favour of Jasim Uddin, joint general secretary of Swetchchasebak Dal's central unit, at Rarir Haat when some 7-8 youths led by Rasel Rari, vice president of Kawkhali upazila unit Chhatra League, attacked them with shar weapons, leaving them injured.

Sumon alleged that Rasel has been running a fake Facebook account to spread misinformation against BNP men to instigate the attack.

After the incident, Rasel's house in Rarir Haat was set on fire.

Rasel's brother Rafikul Islam Rari claimed they had returned from Dhaka on Thursday night to celebrate Eid.

"Sumon and some youths came to Rarir Haat to pick up my brothers Rasel and Rahmat over prior conflict regarding

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

HPV VACCINATION FOR CERVICAL CANCER

Overcoming stigmas, girls get vaccinated

TAHIRA SHAMSI UTSA, back from Sylhet

Monowara Mubasshira Chowdhury, a seventh grader at Government Agragami Girls High School and College in Sylhet, suffered a head injury and was unconscious for 45 days before undergoing surgery. Currently, she is on various medications, which has left her mother worried about whether the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine would be suitable for her.

"I spoke to the doctors before she received the HPV vaccine to check for any complications. Many people say the vaccine causes problems with menstruation and conceiving children. Initially, I was concerned, but later I took both my daughters to be vaccinated," said Monowara's mother, Hasina Azha Chowdhury.

"Since then, four months have passed, but none of my daughters have faced any complications so far," she added.

Monowara said, "I got vaccinated around four months ago in 2024. I felt a little pain, and my arm remained sore for two days. Then the pain went away after the third day. I am not worried anymore."

The government launched the final phase of its HPV vaccination campaign in Barishal, Chattogram, Khulna, Mymensingh, Rajshahi, Sylhet, and Rangpur divisions on October 24 last year, with the support of Gavi -- the Vaccine Alliance, UNICEF, and WHO -- to protect 6.2 million girls aged 10-14 against cervical cancer.

In 2023, the programme's first phase was conducted only in Dhaka division. This year, the

vaccine is being provided free of charge to school students and out-of-school girls aged 10-14 in the remaining seven divisions. The campaign, run by the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) of the Department of Health, continued until November 28.

An HPV vaccination camp was arranged at Government Agragami Girls High School and College in Sylhet, where 946 out of a total of 1,121 students at the institution received the vaccine.

The campaign faced various social stigmas and obstacles

Happy Begum, the school's headteacher, said, "Many people lack awareness regarding this vaccine. Parents came to us and expressed their concerns. We worked to raise awareness among the students and their parents about this vaccine from the very beginning. The campaign was quite successful."

Many children of tea garden workers and sex workers were also vaccinated during the campaign.

Tahmina Ahmed, whose parents work in a tea garden, said, "My friends and I learned about

workers encouraged their daughters to get vaccinated to protect them from cervical cancer.

According to Unicef, cervical cancer is the second most common cancer among women in Bangladesh and is responsible for most cancer-related deaths in the country.

It is estimated that approximately 8,300 new cases of cervical cancer are diagnosed annually, resulting in about 4,900 deaths.

The target population for the vaccination campaign in Sylhet division was 583,241, of which 544,975 (around 94 percent) were vaccinated.

"We visited many remote villages to inform parents and teenagers about this vaccine's proven effectiveness in reducing the rate of cervical cancer. UNICEF is working with the Bangladesh government to ensure all girls receive the vaccine before they are infected with this deadly virus," said Kazi Dil Afroza Islam, chief of field office for Sylhet division.

Dr Manisar Chowdhury, civil surgeon of Sylhet, emphasised the need to simplify the online registration system for vaccination, as many people find it difficult.

"So far, we haven't found any complaints of side effects or complications from the vaccine four months after the campaign. While there was misleading information on social media, we managed to address it effectively," he said.

"Community-based initiatives and awareness-building efforts are essential to make the campaign more effective," he added.



during its implementation.

Aha Pragma, a ninth-grader from the same institution, said, "There were rumours from Bhola about the vaccine, but our teachers informed us that in some places, girls received the vaccine on an empty stomach in the morning and fell ill due to a lack of glucose. In addition, vaccination can cause dizziness, weakness, and fainting. Apart from that, there is no real risk. So, my father later allowed me to get vaccinated, even though my mother was scared."

this campaign and went to find out more. The nurse informed us about the vaccine's significance. Then I told my parents, and they allowed me to get vaccinated."

Amina Akhter (pseudonym), a sex worker, said, "Due to our profession, we have the highest risk of cervical cancer and thus need this vaccine the most. However, many in our community don't know this. No one ever informed us when we were young, so we didn't have the opportunity to get the vaccine."

Amina and a few other sex

17-year-old killed over 'laughter emoji' on FB post

UNB, Sherpur

A 17-year-old boy was hacked to death allegedly by another teenager in Sherpur's Nalitabari upazila yesterday following a dispute over a reaction on a Facebook post.

The victim was identified as Abu Naim, son of Ismail Hossain from the Nayabil area, said Sohel Rana, officer-in-charge of Nalitabari Police Station. The incident occurred around 11:45am.

Naim was declared dead at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, the OC said.

Locals caught the suspect, Sabuj Mia, 18, of Andharupara and handed him over to police, he added.

According to police and locals, Sabuj, who had been living in Gazipur, returned home for the Eid holiday. The altercation between the two teens began about a month ago when Naim reacted with a "laughter emoji" on one of Sabuj's posts on Facebook, leading to a heated argument over messenger.

When Sabuj saw Naim at Nayabil Bazar yesterday, he attacked him with a knife, stabbing him in the chest. Legal proceedings were underway, said the OC.

Woman 'beaten to death'

UNB, Chapainawabganj

A woman was beaten to death allegedly by her husband and his second wife over a dispute in Shibganj upazila of Chapainawabganj yesterday.

The victim is Ruliara Begum, a mother of five children. Police detained her husband Shariful Islam of Shyampur Sahapara Nuresh More village.

According to locals, Shariful returned home from Dhaka with various gifts for his second wife. However, he did not bring anything special for Ruliara. This angered Ruliara and soon an altercation broke out between them.

At one stage, Shariful, along with his second wife Khirsha Begum and his brother, beat Ruliara to death and left her body hanging from a tree behind their house, claimed neighbours.

Inspector (Investigation) SM Shakil Hasan at Shibganj Police Station said police recovered the body and sent it to the district hospital's morgue for autopsy. They are looking into the incident, he said.

4 children rescued after abduction in Rangpur

Woman held in connection

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

Police rescued four children after they were abducted from their home in Rangpur city, and detained a woman in this connection from near Rangpur Railway Station on Friday night.

The detainee, Aduri Begum, 28, is wife of Mansur Ali from Fakirchar village in Ulipur upazila of Kurigram.

Shankar Ganguly, superintendent of Rangpur Railway Station, said they suspect that the children were being taken to be trafficked.

According to the victims' family, on Thursday, Aduri Begum arrived at a house in Tapodhan village under Ward-7 of Rangpur city, seeking shelter. The homeowner, Ashikul Islam, accommodated her.

She stayed overnight, had sehi, and remained at the house throughout Friday.

After iftar on Friday evening, she disappeared with four children, aged 6-10 years.

The children's guardians immediately informed the police upon realising their absence.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

UTTAR PINGORIA SCHOOL

Dilapidated building puts students at risk

PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY, Bagerhat

Students at Uttar Pingoria Government Primary School in Bagerhat's Kachua upazila are enduring dire learning conditions due to the lack of a proper building.

Currently closed for Ramadan vacation, the school operates from a dilapidated abandoned structure and a few tin-roofed rooms resembling a warehouse, leaving both students and teachers in distress.

Despite being a government institution, the school has never received any official allocation for infrastructure development. Compounding the issue, the land available for constructing a new building is a 10-foot deep pond, rendering it unsuitable for development.

Locals have long demanded proper

facilities, particularly a permanent, elevated school building that could also serve as a shelter during floods. Villagers often struggle with rising water levels, as



the area lacks a nearby cyclone or flood shelter, leaving them vulnerable during natural disasters.

"I have been seeing this school in the same condition for years," said Mahitul

Islam Nakib, a local politician. "Our children deserve a proper learning environment. During the monsoon, water seeps into the tin rooms, and in summer, it becomes very hot, making it almost impossible for them to study," he said.

Another resident, Mizan Nakib, a local reporter, said, "When floods hit, the people have nowhere to go. If a proper school building is constructed, it could also serve as a shelter for villagers in emergencies."

Contacted, Kachua UNO KM Abu Nawshad said the upazila administration is working towards a solution.

"We are taking steps to make the pond-like land suitable for construction. Once that is done, we will push for a new building to address both the students' needs and the local population's demand for a flood shelter," he said.

Indians 'beat up' farmer at Lalmonirhat border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A Bangladeshi farmer has allegedly been beaten up by Indian nationals at the Lohakuchi border in Kaliganj upazila of Lalmonirhat.

The incident took place on the bank of Malda river near border pillar-919 in Dulali area yesterday morning.

The victim, Madhab Chandra Barman, 38, is a resident of Dulali area.

Locals said Madhab had set up a fishing trap in the river along the Lohakuchi border. The Indian nationals tried to take away the trap. When Madhab protested, the Indians beat him up.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6