

Senior lawyer  
MI Farooqui  
no more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Senior lawyer MI Farooqui passed away in Dhaka last night. He was 86.

He had been suffering from lung cancer.

He is survived by his wife, one son, and two daughters.

Barrister Farooqui was an accomplished lawyer and authored three law books: Law of Abandoned Property, Citizenship and Nationalities in Bangladesh, and Interpreting Vested Property Law in Bangladesh-A Comprehensive Review, said a source close to him while talking to The Daily Star.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held on the Supreme Court premises after Zohr prayers today, said SC spokesperson Muajjem Hussain.

## PRAYER TIMING

MAY 4

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-15	12-45	4-45	6-31	8-00
JAMAAT 4-50	1-15	5-00	6-35	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

# Padma erosion threatens embankment

Locals fear major damage if preventive measures delayed

JAHID HASAN, Shariatpur

New erosion has been reported in the Padma Bridge project area, putting the main protection embankment at Naowdoba in Shariatpur's Jajira end at risk.

The nearly two-kilometre-long embankment was constructed at a cost of Tk 110 crore.

According to Bangladesh Water Development Board, the formation of sandbars and the increase in riverbed depth near the embankment have triggered the erosion.

In November last year, approximately 100 metres of the protection embankment at the Naowdoba zero point on the Jajira side collapsed into the river. However, BWDB could not initiate repair work immediately. After four months, on April 24 this year, they began repair work involving the placement of sand-filled geo-bags and CC blocks at a cost of around Tk 2.87 crore.

When asked why repair work was not started promptly despite knowing about the erosion, the BWDB Executive Engineer of Shariatpur Tarek Hasan could not provide any answer.

"About 12 to 13 years ago, the Bridge Division constructed this embankment to protect the Padma Bridge project area. After the collapse of a 100-metre section at Naowdoba Zero Point, a joint survey was conducted by BWDB and the Bangladesh Bridge Authority," he said.

He said the survey revealed that in about one-kilometre stretch, the riverbed near the embankment has deepened, and soil erosion is taking place from the bottom. In the remaining one-kilometre stretch, the river has moved very close to the embankment, causing continuous soil erosion. As a result, the entire embankment is now classified as vulnerable.

He said a Development Project Proposal



(DPP) has been prepared and submitted to the relevant ministry for strengthening the embankment.

If the embankment is not reinforced, several critical infrastructures within 500 metres of the Padma Bridge's Jajira end and four surrounding villages could come under severe threat from the erosion," he added.

An on-site visit revealed that due to the strong currents of the Padma river, soil from the river training structures adjacent to the embankment is collapsing into the river. Rows of geo-bags placed for embankment protection have come loose and are falling into the water. Similar erosion was spotted in at least 5-6 different locations.

Meanwhile, fear has gripped local residents living near the embankment.

Shubho Tara, 45, wife of Rashid Talukder from Achim Uddin Madbor's Kandi, said, "I've lost so many bighas of land that I can't even remember. At night, when the winds howl, I can't sleep; my heart races in fear, thinking the river might take away whatever little we have left."

When asked whether repair work could start before the monsoon, BWDB Sub-Assistant Engineer Suman Kumar Bonik said, "A project proposal to prevent erosion has been sent to the ministry. We are hopeful that it will be approved soon. Once approved, we can begin the work."

"However, it will not be possible to complete the entire project within this monsoon season. We will try our best to complete the work before the next monsoon," he added.

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was submitted to the relevant ministry for strengthening the embankment.

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