

BAGERHAT MUNICIPALITY

Waterlogging, potholes plague bus terminal

PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY, Bagerhat

The central bus terminal in Bagerhat has been in a poor condition for over 20 years, with large potholes and craters damaging vehicles and causing suffering for drivers and passengers.

Transport workers and bus owners allege that no repair or maintenance work has been done since the terminal was built in 2004.

"There are potholes all over the terminal. Vehicle parts are frequently damaged when buses go through them," said Narayan Das, a transport worker.

According to the bus owners' association, each bus pays a daily toll of Tk 50 to use the terminal.

"We have been paying tolls every day, but not a single major renovation has taken place since the terminal's construction," said Jasim Uddin, a bus owner.

During rainfall, the entire area becomes waterlogged, making it nearly impossible to walk or operate vehicles within the terminal premises.

"The condition of the central bus terminal is very poor. In the rainy season,



we have to wade through dirty water just to get tickets. Sometimes, passing buses splash water and ruin our clothes," said Bellal Sheikh, a resident of Bagerhat town.

Rahim Sheikh, a commuter from Basabati area, said, "I have been travelling through this terminal for nearly ten years. The situation has remained unchanged. There are potholes everywhere, making it difficult to walk. Vehicles also get damaged when they sink into these craters."

The terminal, built on two acres of land, accommodates at least 200 vehicles and operates buses to 16 local routes and several inter-district destinations including Khulna, Barishal, Pirojpur, and Gopalganj. Around 100 buses use the terminal daily, transporting thousands of passengers.

Transport workers and bus owners also raised concerns over the lack of basic facilities.

"There's no proper passenger shed either. The lights are broken and lying unused," said Fuad Hasan, another bus owner.

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Children play football in a Kishoreganj haor. This entire area will be submerged in just a day or two, but until then, children continue to play and cattle graze on the dry land. The photo was taken in the embankment area of Nikli Sadar recently.

PHOTO: TAFSILUL AZIZ

Bypassroad turns dumping ground amid landfill crisis
Locals blame RCC, officials deny

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Garbage is being dumped in the open along the bypass road connecting Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj, causing nuisance to local residents and passersby.

Locals alleged that the waste is being dumped by the Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) itself. RCC officials, however, denied the allegation.

According to sources, the city's only landfill, which is about 15.95 acres in size, has largely run out of space. Even though garbage is still being dumped there using excavators, it is not enough. As such, some garbage is being dumped along both sides of the city bypass regularly.

"We have to use this road daily. The bad odour makes it very hard for us to move around here. Also, leaving garbage in the open like this can proliferate pests and spread diseases," said Md Raihan Ali, a shopkeeper at a city market.



"The situation is only getting worse every day. The authorities should take action quickly," said Md Shwapon, a local college student.

However, RCC officials gave a different explanation.

"We always dump waste in the designated landfill. The garbage along the bypass road was not from city institutions. People from outside the city are dumping waste there illegally at night. We've tried to nab them and taken action several times," said Selim Reza Ronju, deputy chief cleaning officer of RCC.

When told that garbage trucks from the city corporation were seen dumping waste there, Selim Reza admitted, "Yes, before Eid-ul Azha, some city waste was dumped there because a livestock market was set up near

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SHYAMASUNDARI CANAL IN RANGPUR

Once a lifeline, now on death bed



S DILIP ROY

Once hailed as the lifeline of Rangpur city, the historic Shyamasundari Canal has been reduced to a mere drain due to rampant encroachment and pollution.

The 16-kilometre-long canal was excavated under the initiative of Maharaja Janaki Ballav Sen in 1890 for vital urban drainage.

It used to be a scenic waterway spanning 60 to 120 feet in width, with boats navigating its clear waters to connect rural areas.

However, its heydays are long gone. At present, it has become a dumping ground, narrowed down to around 15 feet in width.

Both banks of the canal have been heavily encroached upon by numerous residential and commercial structures. Households and shops routinely discard garbage, kitchen scraps, plastic waste, and sewage directly into

the water, choking the canal with filth and turning it into a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

"During monsoon, filthy water from the overflowing canal submerges our homes. Mosquito infestation has become unbearable. Urgent measures are needed to improve the situation," said Jahid Uddin Bepari, a resident of Munshipara area.

Over the past two decades, around Tk 150 crore has been spent on various restoration projects by the district administration, municipality, and city corporation. Yet, residents say the canal's condition has only worsened.

The Bangladesh Water Development Board has recently taken up a new project worth Tk 15 crore to clean and excavate the canal, along with tree plantation and beautification work along its banks.

The project, however, has yet to

commence.

"The project has been approved. Work will begin in the upcoming fiscal year. We'll implement it in three phases in collaboration with Rangpur City Corporation and the Forest Department," said Rabiul Islam, executive engineer of BWDB in Rangpur.

Dr Tuhin Wadud, director of Riverine People and a faculty member of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur, stressed the need for coordinated efforts involving the district administration, city corporation, BWDB, and local residents to bring the canal back to life.

Md Rabiul Faisal, deputy commissioner of Rangpur, said, "We've already prepared a list of illegal occupants of the canal and they will be evicted through drives in phases. Once implemented, the BWDB's project will revive the canal."

BSF pushes in 31 people thru Sylhet border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

India's Border Security Force (BSF) pushed 17 Bangladeshi nationals into the Minatila area in Jaintiapur upazila of Sylhet early yesterday, according to Border Guard Bangladesh.

A patrol team of the Minatila Border Outpost under the Sylhet BGB Battalion detained them approximately 200 yards inside Bangladesh territory.

Lt Col Mohammad Nazmul Haque, commanding officer of Sylhet BGB-48 Battalion, said the group consists of five men, five women, and seven children.

The detainees are residents of Kurigram district. They will be handed over to the Jaintiapur Police Station.

Legal procedures are underway, he said.

Earlier on Thursday, BSF pushed 14 Rohingyas and 17 Bangladeshis into Bangladesh through the

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One killed, another hurt in road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

A man was killed and another injured in a road accident on the Dhaka-Mawa Expressway in Sreenagar upazila of Munshiganj early yesterday, after a motorcycle collided with a pickup van.

The deceased was identified as Rakib, 24.

His friend, Sajal Ahmed, who was riding pillion, sustained injuries in the crash.

The accident occurred around 4:00am on the Kuchiamora Bridge, said Dewan Azad Hossain, station officer of Sreenagar Fire Service.

According to fire service officials, four friends were travelling towards Mawa Ghat on two motorcycles. As they crossed Kuchiamora Bridge, one of the motorcycles collided with a pickup van from behind, killing Rakib on the spot.

The pickup van fled the scene, confirmed Sub-Inspector Shahidul Islam, duty officer at Hasara Highway Police Station.

"Legal proceedings are underway," the SI added.



In Rajshahi, breeding geese is a popular livelihood for many villagers. They sell a pair of goose eggs for around Tk 1,000. The photo was taken in Darshanpara area of Paba upazila recently.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

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