

MIRZARCHAR IN NARSINGDI 6 years on, flood shelter remains incomplete

JAHIDUL ISLAM, Narsingdi

The long awaited shelter centre for river erosion and flood affected residents in the char areas of Narsingdi's Mirzarchar under Raipura upazila remains incomplete, six years after the work began.

Construction of the Tk 3.5 crore building started in 2019 under the "Flood Shelter Construction Project." It was intended to serve as additional classrooms for Mirzarchar High School and provide shelter for flood victims during natural disasters.

But despite the passage of time, the project remains unfinished.

An on-site visit shows the doorless, windowless structure standing abandoned next to the Mirzarchar High School ground.

"We have tried to find the contractor several times, but he is nowhere to be found. If the work were completed, it would have been a great help to us. Now, it has become a safe haven for drug addicts," said Abdullah Al Mamun, 36, a local resident.



Kabir Hossain, union parishad member of Mirzarchar, said, "Although work started in 2019, it still remains incomplete. If finished, people could take shelter here, and livestock could also be saved."

Md Billal Hossain, headteacher at Mirzarchar High School, said, "Although the roof and walls have been built up to the third floor, many works are still pending. Once completed, the building will be extremely useful for classroom activities as well as for people during disasters."

Md Minhaj Khan, owner of the contracting firm Mamun Enterprise, said, "Since construction workers came from outside the area, local disputes caused problems in continuing the work. However, efforts will be made to complete it very soon."

"The project began in 2019 and was supposed to be completed by 2021. But despite repeated communications, the contractor did not respond. After sending written letters, they assured us that the work would be finished soon," said Jahangir Alam, upazila project implementation officer.

Contacted, Raipura UNO Md Masud Rana said the contractor has been instructed to finish the remaining work as soon as possible.



PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Farmers stack and dry jute sticks after soaking and stripping them of fibre. Once dried, the sticks are sold to middlemen. The photo was taken in the Char Majhardia area of Paba upazila, Rajshahi yesterday.

KUAKATA'S CHAR GANGAMATI

Red crab, turtle conservation effort falters in four years

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

A conservation initiative to protect red crabs and sea turtles at Kuakata's Char Gangamati beach has virtually vanished within four years of its launch, owing to poor monitoring and lack of enforcement.

On May 8, 2021, development organisation WorldFish established the sanctuary under the Ecofish-II project, declaring half a kilometre of Char Gongamati beach on the east side of Kuakata and another half kilometre at the confluence of three rivers on the west side as "red zones" to protect biodiversity.

The initiative, jointly supported by the Kalapara upazila administration, Tourist Police Kuakata Zone, and the Tour Operators' Association of Kuakata (TOAK), aimed to ensure safe breeding for red crabs and turtle nesting while reducing noise and

human interference. Motorbikes and tourist movement in the protected zone were restricted, and boundary markers with signboards were installed to make the area visibly distinct.

However, within a year, the



boundary fences and signboards disappeared. Without monitoring, motorbikes and tourists soon reclaimed the space, leaving no trace of the sanctuary.

This was a commendable initiative to conserve biodiversity and balance the coastal ecosystem.

But now, there is no sign of it -- no fencing, no signage, said locals, adding that the entire plan has faded away within four years.

At the time of the launch, Ecofish-II's assistant researcher in Patuakhali, Sagarika Smriti, said the sanctuary would allow red crabs and marine turtles to flourish while offering tourists a rare glimpse of nature up close.

"Red crabs enrich soil quality and help maintain environmental balance. Protecting them is our duty," she said.

Speaking recently about the project's disappearance, Sagarika said, "I am no longer with the project, but we established the sanctuary to conserve biodiversity. Had the Department of Fisheries taken charge, it could have lasted longer. The main reason it failed was the absence of monitoring."

TOAK president Ruman Imtiaz

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Potato, papaya now only choice

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Her husband does a small job, and most of their income goes to their children's education. "That's why we cannot buy much else."

For families like Kamala's and Munni's, survival now means relying on the cheapest food they can find. "We are just filling stomachs, not eating healthy meals anymore," Munni added with a sigh.

A visit to Shewrapara, Karipara, Mirpur 11, Ibrahimpur and Karwan Bazar found many low-income families opting

for potatoes and papaya instead of other vegetables due to the soaring prices.

Mohammad Sabuj, a potato wholesaler at Karwan Bazar, said demand has increased because vegetables are too expensive. Potato prices have gone up slightly in recent days, selling at Tk 16-18 a kg in wholesale.

Meanwhile, papaya is becoming cheaper thanks to a good supply from Jashore and Manikganj, with wholesale prices now at Tk 13-17 a kg.

But while potatoes and papaya are still affordable, the prices of

other vegetables and daily essentials are shooting up.

Local onions rose to Tk 80-90 a kg after Indian imports stopped. Most vegetables, except potatoes and papaya, now cost Tk 70-120 a kg.

Protein sources remain out of reach for many. Beef sells at Tk 750-800 a kg, Sonali chicken at Tk 320-330, broiler chicken at Tk 170-190, and eggs at Tk 130-150 a dozen.

Fish prices are also high, with small indigenous varieties selling at Tk 800-1,200 a kg. Even in peak season, hilsa costs Tk 2,200-2,400 a kg.

Kurigram

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said. "It hurts to see the palace die like this."

Locals said despite its historical significance, no official steps have been taken to protect the site. Repeated appeals to the Department of Archaeology have gone unanswered.

"If preserved, this palace could be a major heritage tourism site," said Hrishikesh Roy, a teacher at Naodanga School and College. "It would give our youth a sense of history."

Visitor Meher Jamal from Rangpur added, "We travel to Mahasthangarh and Puthia for heritage. Naodanga is equally rich in story. If it vanishes, we lose memory itself."

Since the abolition of the zamindari system, influential locals have grabbed parts of the estate, further hastening its decline, he said.

Contacted, Kurigram Deputy Commissioner Nusrat Sulatan said, "A letter has been sent to the Department of Archaeology seeking preservation of the zamindar palace."

Waiting for a country

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rights. Since a path has now been opened to establish that right, we must not put any obstacles in it."

"Now that the election roadmap has been announced, we believe the nation's expectations have been fulfilled. At this point, instead of welcoming it, showing any doubt about it will not be right," he continued.

"If there is any doubt, it should be resolved through discussion so the democratic journey becomes smoother and stronger," he said.

At the programme, Barrister Sara Hossain said, "A new law is being drafted regarding enforced disappearances. Hopefully, victims will now be able to seek justice under the law. This is an opportunity to expose injustices and crimes against humanity committed through enforced disappearances."

On the inclusion of the death penalty in the draft law, she urged the authorities to reconsider.

"Our experience with capital punishment has been very difficult. Many times, we have failed to

ensure sufficient legal grounds for awarding the death penalty. People often cannot rely on the system or be confident that the accused received adequate legal assistance. At times, the highest punishment was applied unjustly, leading to further injustice. That is why I urge the authorities to rethink its inclusion," she said.

Nur Khan Liton, a member of the inquiry commission, said, "We want to speak without disclosing the names of the perpetrators behind enforced disappearances. Meanwhile, over 300 victims have still not returned."

"We have found specific clues about who abducted the victims. There are indications of where the victims were kept. But after being kept there, who took them away remains unclear," he said.

"We hope that by this December we can deliver a full report on some of the victims of enforced disappearance. We will be able to show who abducted them, when and why they were abducted, and where they were taken," he added.

JP, Gono Odhikar Parishad clash in Kakrail



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders and workers of Jatiya Party and Gono Odhikar Parishad clashed in front of the Jatiya Party central office in Dhaka's Kakrail area yesterday evening.

The incident occurred between 6:15pm and 7:30pm, Golam Faruk, officer-in-charge of Ramna Police Station, told The Daily Star.

During the clash, both sides threw brick chips at each other, amid chase and counter-chase, he said.

"Following the clash, police and other agencies were deployed at the scene," he added.

Both groups blamed each other for the attack.

Gono Odhikar Parishad General Secretary Rashed Khan, among four, were taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment, said Inspector Md Faruk, in-charge of DMCH police outpost.

Abu Haniif, media coordinator of Gono Odhikar Parishad, in a press release said they staged a demonstration yesterday demanding a ban on the activities of Awami League's accomplices.

"After the protest at the central office, we were marching from Paltan towards the Nightingale intersection when bricks and stones were thrown at us from behind while passing by the office of Jatiya Party. At that time, there were about 300-400 people in front of the Jatiya Party office. We suspect that there were also Awami League and Jubo League men present there."

Meanwhile, Jatiya Party organised an emergency press conference after the incident at its central office.

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RAJNAGAR IN MOULVIBAZAR

Bamboo trade thrives at Kalarbazar

MINTU DESHWARA

Nestled on the edge of Kawadighi Haor in Rajnagar upazila of Moulvibazar, the Kalarbazar bamboo market has carried on a centuries-old tradition that continues to shape the region's rural economy and cultural identity.

Like any typical haat, the market offers a variety of goods, but bamboo remains its undisputed specialty, drawing traders, craftsmen, and contractors from across Moulvibazar and the greater Sylhet region.

On a recent visit, this correspondent found rows of long, medium, and short bamboo poles laid out in lowlands beside the Chandnighat-Haldigul road.

Abu Taher, a contractor from Moulvibazar town, said the market dates back over a hundred years, originally established to capitalise on waterborne trade along the Kushiara River and Kawadighi Haor.

Though roads have replaced much of the waterway traffic, water transport is still used, especially for larger hauls of bamboo.

Currently, around 25 to 30 bamboo traders operate in Kalarbazar year-round, with numbers rising to about 50 during peak season, from early winter to the start of the monsoon.

Bamboo trader Basit Mia, who has been running his business at the market for the past 35 years, said bamboo is brought in from nearby upazilas such as Srimangal, Kamalganj, and Kulaura.

"Bamboo is sold here daily, but the main haat days are Monday and Friday. On those days, the market sees transactions worth Tk 2-3 lakh, and even up to Tk 5-6 lakh on Fridays," he added.

However, supply has been declining in recent years.

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Disband Rab, ensure justice

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there is a provision for the death penalty. As a human rights activist, I believe capital punishment is not a solution. It should be removed. Justice must be ensured, and perpetrators should instead face life imprisonment," she said.

Nabila Idris, a member of the inquiry commission on

enforced disappearances, said the commission has received over 1,800 complaints and found strong evidence in 250 cases in its second interim report, which has already been submitted.

She said disappearances occur due to systemic flaws and political use of law enforcement, and unless

these are addressed, the problem will persist.

Odhikar Director ASM Nasiruddin Elan, International Crimes Tribunal Prosecutor SM Tasmirul Islam, Amar Desh Executive Editor Syed Abdal Ahmed, and family members of victims were also present at the event.

Expanded dengue syndrome

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kidney damage. Then he was admitted here and diagnosed with dengue."

Some patients, however, showed signs of recovery. Hasanuzzaman Antu, 25, of Mirpur-1, said, "I was admitted in critical condition with vomiting and bloody stools. But after three days of treatment, I am feeling better."

Similarly, Nabir Hossain said his fever had gone after five days in hospital, though he still felt weak. His wife, however, had just developed a fever on Wednesday. "I don't have fever anymore, but I feel very weak," he said.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), 30,376 dengue cases and 23,102 hospitalisations

have been recorded across the country till August 28 this year.

Suhrawardy hospital alone has treated 231 patients, with two deaths reported.

Dr HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Suhrawardy, said while the total number of dengue patients in Dhaka is lower this year, the death rate is higher.

He linked this to a rise in expanded dengue syndrome (EDS), a severe form of the disease that damages vital organs such as the liver, kidneys, lungs, heart, brain, and central nervous system.

"These patients can deteriorate rapidly and die suddenly due to severe complications," Dr Ahsan warned, noting that

people with hypertension, diabetes, or chronic lung and kidney disease are especially at risk.

He said many patients fail to recognise early warning signs -- such as severe abdominal pain, breathing difficulty, bleeding, extreme weakness, or a sharp drop in urination and platelet count -- and only seek hospital care when it is too late.

Dr Ahsan recommended immediate hospitalisation for anyone with these symptoms, and early admission for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, pregnant women, and those with underlying health conditions.

"Patients with kidney or lung complications can recover in a few weeks if treated early," he said.

প্রেস ইনস্টিটিউট বাংলাদেশ (পিআইবি)
৩ সার্কিট হাউস রোড, ঢাকা-১০০০

গবেষণা প্রস্তাব আধ্বান

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Khulna University, Khulna
Office of the Project Director
"Further Infrastructural Development of Khulna University (2nd Revised)" Project

Memo No : KU/FIDP-117/2024-176 Date : 28.08.2025

e-Tender Notice No. 04/2025-2026

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Name of the Works	Online Tender Closing and Opening date
1137583	KU/FIDP-117/2025	Decorative Works with Landscaping at Central Mosque of Khulna University	15.09.2025 12:30

This is an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://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 bank branches upto banking hours on e-GP system. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Signed
(Dr. Md. Hasanuzzaman)
Project Director
"KUFID (2nd Revised)" Project

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