

NEWS

Bamboo bridge only means for 10,000 people

SDILIP ROY

For more than three years, over 10,000 residents of eight villages in Phulbari upazila of Kurigram have been risking their lives daily by crossing the Nilkomol River on a single bamboo bridge.

The bridge connects Balatari and Chandrakhana villages under Phulbari Sadar union. Once, a wooden bridge stood there, but after it collapsed, no permanent structure has been built.

For 60-year-old farmer Ehsan Ali, the bamboo bridge is a reminder of heartbreak. His son Atikur Rahman, 36, fell from the bridge a year ago, was severely injured, and died after nearly a month of treatment.

"I myself have fallen twice and been hurt," Ehsan said. "All we get are promises. Nobody can say when a real bridge will be built."

Local college student Faruk Hossain, 19, also fell just a week ago. "I was injured, and my mobile phone was ruined. Accidents happen here almost every week. When the wooden bridge was here, it was safe."

Farmer Aktar Ali, 58, said, "For the past three years, we've been



building this bridge ourselves. Every year I provide around 50 bamboos, and others give labour. Even though I cross daily, it feels like I could fall any moment."

The bamboo bridge is the only route for people from Balatari, Chandrakhana, Jelepra, Kumarpara, Banamati, Abashon, Bairagipara, and Dashiari Chhara villages.

Contacted, Mamunur Rahman, Phulbari upazila engineer of the Local Government Engineering Department, said, "I visited the

site and have already submitted a proposal to build a 120-metre bridge over the river. I am pursuing approval from the higher authorities."

Phulbari UNO Rehema Tarannum said, "For the villagers' temporary movement, allocation has been made to build a bamboo-and-wood bridge. Work will start very soon."

She said at the same time, LGED has been requested to build a permanent concrete bridge. The project proposal is awaiting approval and funding.

Govt must focus on urgent reforms

FROM PAGE 3

government's progress in promoting and protecting rights and democratic values in its first year in office.

During the visit, the delegation met the chief adviser, several advisers, and a cross-section of people, including students and rights activists.

"There is a sense of uncertainty and insecurity among many in Bangladesh," SAHR Co-chairperson Roshmi Goswami told the press conference.

It is a unique moment in the history of Bangladesh. The uprising

was transformative, with a lot of aspirations and hopes for immediate change and a better future for all," she said.

Reading out a statement, SAHR Executive Director Deeksha Illangasinghe applauded the courage and energy of the youth who led the uprising against an authoritarian regime.

She also commended the interim government's swift formation of reform and consensus commissions.

However, she stressed the need for caution during this period of transitional justice, warning of possible residual influence from the

past.

She said the establishment of a truly egalitarian society will ensure that the vulnerable groups are protected.

She also said both the National Human Rights Commission and the Information Commission of Bangladesh remain "dormant" and must be urgently made functional to protect rights during the democratic transition.

Regretting reports of killings, arbitrary arrests, and intimidation of journalists over the past year, Deeksha said the right to information is a cornerstone of democracy and cannot be curtailed.

She also expressed concern over the interim government's use of draconian laws enacted by the previous regime.

She

also

expressed

concern

over

the

interim

gov-

ern-

ment's

use

of

dra-

con-

cern-

ing

laws

enacted

by

the

pre-

vi-

re-

gime-

nt

regime

and

cannot

be

cur-

tailed

She

also

expressed

concern

over

the

interim

gov-

ern-

ment's

use

of

dra-

con-

cern-

ing

laws

enacted

by

the

pre-

vi-

re-

gime-

nt

regime

and

cannot

be

cur-

tailed

She

also

expressed

concern

over

the

interim

gov-

ern-

ment's

use

of

dra-

con-

cern-

ing

laws

enacted

by

the

pre-

vi-

re-

gime-

nt

regime

and

cannot

be

cur-

tailed

She

also

expressed

concern

over

the

interim

gov-

ern-

ment's

use

of

dra-

con-

cern-

ing

laws

enacted

by

the

pre-

vi-

re-

gime-

nt

regime

and

cannot

be

cur-

tailed

She

also

expressed

concern

over

the

interim

gov-

ern-

ment's

use

of

dra-

con-

cern-

ing

laws

enacted

by

the

pre-

vi-

re-

gime-

nt

regime

and

cannot

be

cur-

tailed

She

also

expressed

concern

over

the

interim

gov-

ern-

ment's

</