

400km of Lalmonirhat roads left in disrepair

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Around 400km of roads under the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) in Lalmonirhat have become almost unusable due to years of neglect. Large potholes and broken surfaces have made travel perilous, causing frequent accidents and hampering trade, transportation and emergency services. According to LGED sources, the district has a total of 3,435km of roads, of which 1,348km are paved and 2,037km are earthen. Among the paved roads, around 400km are in urgent need of repair. Sultan Ahmed, a businessman from Dewdoba village in Aditmari upazila, said the Aditmari-Mahishkhocha road is riddled with potholes, with several large craters making travel dangerous. “No measures have been taken regarding the situation



by LGED for the past six months. Our business activities are being terribly affected,” he said. Ashok Chandra Barman, a Bhelabari resident, said the Durakuti-Chapahat road has remained unusable for over a year, leaving patients and commuters constantly at risk of accidents. “Patients suffer even more as ambulances shake violently on this road,” he added. Mansur Ali, an easy-bike driver, said his vehicle overturned on a pothole last week, injuring himself and five passengers. Sirajul Haque from Guriyadah in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila said farmers have also been struggling with transportation, as some village roads collapsed last year. Rainfall makes them impassable, as water accumulates in the potholes. LGED Executive Engineer Kawsar Alam said repairing one kilometre of road costs around Tk 25 lakh. “We sought Tk 93 crore for road repairs in the current fiscal year, but received only Tk 35 crore,” he said, adding that the most damaged roads and bridge-culverts are being prioritised.

Political decentralisation

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estimated at 6–10 percent. He attributed these challenges to the absence of a national policy on urbanisation, the lack of a dedicated ministry, and central agencies, and line ministries. This, he said, has left plans ineffective or ignored. Ahsan stressed the need for unified, decentralised city governments with authority and resources to operate transparently and accountably. The programme was chaired by Dr Khurshid Alam, executive director of PRL. Among others, Dr Imran Matin, executive director of BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, also spoke.

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CTG-COX'S BAZAR LINE

Makeshift markets put trains at risk

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

At least nine makeshift markets have been built dangerously close to the tracks along the Chattogram-Cox's Bazar rail line while the Bangladesh Railway authorities have turned a blind eye to the menace. The markets are located from Ambagan Rail Gate to Dohazari on a 45-km stretch. Among the nine illegal markets, Jhautala, Sholoshohor, Jan Ali Hat, Gomdondi and Patiya have become permanent structures, according to BR documents. Jamal Uddin, a senior loco master of BR who regularly operates trains on the route, said, “These illegal markets often block our view, making it extremely difficult to judge signals and distances. We are forced to run trains at lower-than-normal speeds in these areas, which significantly extends overall journey time.” Currently, four pairs of intercity and eight

pairs of shuttle trains operate regularly on the lines. Two run on the Cox's Bazar–Chattogram–Dhaka route, while the other two operate between Cox's Bazar and Chattogram. In addition, eight pairs of shuttle and local trains operate from the port city to Chittagong University and other destinations, alongside two pairs of oil-carrying wagons that also travel the route. A recent visit to Jan Ali Hat station revealed several structures close to the rail track, while floating shops were seen at Sholoshohor 2 gate area. Rubel Hossain, a gateman of the Kaptai Rastar Matha gate near Jan Ali Hat station, said the market on the track frequently blocked their view, complicating the process of showing signals to loco masters. The station authorities wrote to the divisional railway office on June 22, requesting immediate action to restore visibility and

ensure safe train operations. As per BR rules, the main responsibility for keeping railway tracks free from encroachment lies with the Railway Nirapatta Bahini (RNB) and Government Railway Police (GRP) under the directives of the Divisional Railway Manager (DRM). However, despite the longstanding presence of illegal occupiers along the tracks, railway authorities have failed to take effective action. Asked why action has not been taken, Divisional Railway Manager Kamruzzaman admitted that they had failed to prevent the encroachment. Claiming that eviction drives are conducted regularly, he said, “We evict them, but the encroachers keep coming back. However, a project is currently underway to expand the rail line from Chattogram to Dohazari. Under this project, we are working toward a permanent solution in high-risk encroachment zones.”



Locals use bamboo poles to support a banyan tree near Mahishal Bari Ghat in Godagari upazila of Rajshahi, protecting it from the Padma's strong current. Planted as a resting spot for char dwellers, the tree now stands vulnerable amid ongoing erosion. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

JCD, Shibir announce full panels for Cucsu

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from minority communities and a visually impaired student. For the top three positions, Ibrahim Hossain Rony, a central executive member, was nominated for VP; CU Shibir literature secretary Saeed Bin Habib for GS; and Shahjalal Hall unit president Sajjad Hossain Munna for AGS. “Our panel includes not only members of the organisation but also students with diverse experiences of working in different fields,” said Mohammad Ali, president of Shibir's CU unit. Both JCD and Shibir clarified that while full panels were announced for the 26 Cucsu posts, they would not contest hall union elections with full slates. Islami Chhatra Andolon also announced its panel, named “Sochoton Shikkharthi Songshod”, with Abdur Rahman Robin as the VP candidate, Abdur Rahman as GS candidate, and Aminul Islam Rakib as AGS candidate. A coalition of around 10 left-leaning organisations came together under the banner “Boichittir Oikko,” nominating Dhrubo Barua, president of Ganotantrik

Chhatra Council, for VP; Sudarshan Chakma of Pahari Chhatra Parishad for GS; and Jashad Zakir of Biplobi Chhatra Moitri for AGS. A joint panel of Bangladesh Chhatra Union and Socialist Students' Front, under the banner “Droho Parishad”, nominated Rijulakkhi Abarodh for VP, Ifaz Uddin Ahmed Imu for GS, and Sheikh Junaid Kabir for AGS. Chhatra Odhikar Parishad declared its panel under the banner “Cucusu for Rapid Change”, with Tamjid Uddin for VP, Sakib Mahmud Rumi for GS, and Roman Rahman for AGS. Student activists from the July uprising announced an independent panel named “Shwadhini Shikkharthi Shommilon”, with Mahfuzur Rahman as VP candidate, Rashid Dinar as GS, and Jannatul Ferdous as AGS. Another independent slate, “Shwadhini Shikkharthi Jote,” announced Abir Bin Javed as VP, Chowdhury Tasnim Jahan Shraban as GS, and Palash Dey as AGS. Comprising non-partisan students, the “Sharbabhoum Shikkharthi Oikko” panel features Tawseef Muttaki Chowdhury for VP, Sajjad Hossain for GS, and Sayed Mohammad Mushfiq Hasan for AGS. The “Ohingsho Shikkhar Oikko” panel nominated Forhadul Islam for VP, Yasin Uddin Sakib for GS, and Shahidul Islam Shahed for AGS. The nomination paper submission deadline ended yesterday at 8:00pm. A total of 1,162 nomination papers were collected, of which 931 were submitted. The remainder were not filed within the deadline, said Cucsu Election Commission Member Secretary Prof Aritul Haque. The preliminary list of candidates will be published on September 21, while the final list will be released on September 25. discussion, CGS President Zillur Rahman said it was not possible to end corruption, as government actors themselves were found to be involved in corruption despite a “zero tolerance” stance. Rastro Sangskar Andolan Chief Coordinator Hasnat Kaiyum, Prof Niloy Ranjan Biswas of International Relations at Dhaka University, AB Party Chairman Mojibur Rahman Monju, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal General Secretary Nazmul Haque Pradhan, Gonoforum Executive President Subrata Chowdhury, and Gono Odhikar Parishad Senior Vice President Faruk Hasan also spoke, among others.

BNP punished over

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“Just as you place your trust in me, I place my trust in each of you for this task. Together, we will prove that Bangladesh can have accountable governance, stable institutions, and a hopeful future,” he said. Looking ahead to the February 2026 election, he said BNP is reorganising from the grassroots, embedding transparency and accountability, so the party reflects the aspirations of a new generation. “We know the youth want opportunity, not empty rhetoric; citizens want stability, not chaos; and the world wants to see Bangladesh as a democracy that is credible and respected. We are determined to meet these expectations,” Tarique said. “We are working to ensure our image reflects service, fairness, and competence, not division or entitlement,” he said.

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