River erosion halts ferry movement at Daulatdia terminal

UNB- The Daulatdia Ferry Terminal No-4 in Rajbari has been closed since midnight Friday due to sudden erosion of the Padma River causing suffering for the terminal users.

Currently, out of the four ferry terminals at Daulatdia, only two are operational, causing disruption in ferrying vehicles.

Sources at Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) said around 25 meters of the terminal and nearby residential areas have eroded, making the area risky.

Locals said that erosion began suddenly around 1:15am on Friday, with the riverbank on the eastern side of the terminal collapsing. This caused panic among locals, prompting the authorities to shut down the terminal. Earlier a ferry carrying vehicles had departed for Paturia around 1am.

Laskar Shamsul Alam, an official of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) in charge of the terminal's pontoon, said that the ferry "Shah Mokhdum" left for Paturia at 1am. Shortly after, erosion began on the eastern side of the pontoon, causing the ground to collapse rapidly and the water level to rise. The terminal was closed around 2am as a precautionary measure, and a recovery vehicle was brought in to lift the pontoon.

By Saturday afternoon, a recovery vehicle from BIWTC was seen on the connecting road of Terminal No-4, with the pontoon secured by thick ropes to prevent it from drifting away. Approximately 100 feet of the ramp has fallen into the river, leaving it in a hazardous state. Additionally, ten local families are at risk due to the ongoing erosion.

Local tea-staller Monir Fakir said that he had just closed his shop and returned home when he heard about the terminal's collapse and expressed concern for his tea stall and residence, located just 10 yards from the terminal, fearing that they may be destroyed if the erosion continues.



Local residents Hossain Fakir and Nuru Sheikh also shared that the river water level has been falling over the past few days, leading to a collapse of sand-filled geo-bags placed to prevent erosion. They warned that if the erosion is not halted quickly, it will be impossible to protect the terminal and surrounding homes.

Assistant General Manager of BIWTC's Daulatdia office, Md. Salah Uddin, said that Terminals No. 3, 4, and 7 were operational before the erosion, but the 6th terminal has been closed due to heavy river currents during the monsoon. With Terminal No. 4 now closed, Terminals No. 3 and 7 are currently operational. BIWTC has requested BIWTA to expedite the reopening of Terminal No. 4.

Nepal Chandra Devnath, executive engineer at BIWTA's Aricha office, mentioned that urgent repairs will be carried out by

bringing in sand and geo-bags by truck. It may take two to three days to restore the terminal to operational status.