

## CCC plan to set up power plants uncertain

**SHAHIDUL ISLAM**  
The decision of the Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) to set up small power plants in the port city becomes uncertain due to the authorities' indifference. The plan aimed at reducing the erratic power supply and ensuring uninterrupted supply to the industrial units of the city, sources said. A project was taken in this regard in 2000 to provide some solace to the city dwellers living under 'unpredictable' power supply, CCC Executive Engineer (Electrical) Md Shahidullah told The Daily Star. And it was taken with the consent of the then energy secretary, Shahidullah said. Till date, about 13 to 14 com-

panies from home and abroad have shown interest to invest in setting up power plants, he said. Our study reveals that the city had long been reeling under 50 to 80 MW power shortage daily against average demand of around 230MW, he said. One of our main objectives was to fill this deficit and make Chittagong a power-outage-free city, he added. We would provide the companies all infrastructural facilities including land. But, it is upto them to collect and obtain necessary permission from the authorities concerned such as Bakhrabad Gas System Ltd (BGSL), Environment, Explosives and NBR, he said. However, sources said the companies have been facing dilly-

dallying and even being harassed by some officials concerned. When contacted one official of the Department of Environment here denied the charges saying the interested companies lack some basic requirements. "If they fulfil the preconditions then we will not hesitate to issue necessary license or give permission to set up the power plants," the official said on condition of anonymity. The city corporation has so far signed memorandum of understanding (MOU) with 13 companies to set up power plants having 10 MW capacity each at a cost of Tk 30 to Tk 40 lakh. According to MOU, the proposed power plants are to be built on BOT (Built-Operate-Transfer)

basis, sources said. Eleven of the 13 companies are Hosaf Meter Agency, Cultimax Energy, Power Generation & Equipment Co, M/S Asian Marketing Corporation, AIE Engineering, Noorpur Power Limited, Z & Z Distribution Limited, Dakib Corporation, M/S Del Forest and Global Infrastructural Corporation. The CCC executive engineer could not give the names of two other firms rather suggested this correspondent to come to him through proper channel for 'details' after return of the mayor from abroad. Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury is now in Bangkok for treatment and will back home later this month.



A number of potholes have developed on the east end of Kalurghat Bridge at Boalkhali, worsening its dilapidated state further. Commuting over the century-old rail and road bridge on the river Karnaphuli has become risky nowadays.

## CMC project tangled in red tape

**NURUL ALAM**  
A project of Tk 38 crore for construction of a new academic building at Chittagong Medical College (CMC) remained shelved for over six years due to bureaucratic tangles, sources said. As a result, uncertainty looms large over implementation of the project. The CMC authorities lobbied with the government many times for implementation of the project but failed. CMC Principal Chowdhury B. Mahmud said the project was taken for construction of new academic building in 1997, somehow had remained shelved. "But we are trying to revive the project with a fresh proposal as

prices of construction materials went up," Mahmud said. A committee has been formed headed by myself to review the total project for its implementation, he added. "The committee will hold a meeting shortly in this regard" he said. A new academic building is a must to cope with the situation as the number of students increased and some new post graduate courses were introduced, he added. "Fund constraint is the main problem on the way to implementation of the project though we are badly in need of another academic building," a senior CMC teacher said. "Though education is concerned, but Chittagong Medical College is to operate under the ministry of health with poor allocation. Our medical colleges do not get fund from the

ministry of education as the ministry of health controls them. "I think the medical colleges should be brought under the ministry of education to help them flourish with better performance" he added. An official said post graduate courses on MD, MS and M Phil were introduced recently. "So it is difficult to hold classes," he said. CMC is the second biggest medical college in the country with over 1,000 students. The academic building was constructed in 957 while only LMF course was introduced. Later, MBBS course was introduced and LMF system was abolished. The students also attend classes at hospital adjacent to the CMC.

## Gas spewing danger at Sitakunda yard

**MOHIT UL ALAM**  
Last week, in a minor Chernobyl fashion, a gas chamber blasted at a ship-breaking yard at Sitakunda, causing highly injurious toxic gas to float in the air and terminating the lives of a number of workers, of many poultry fowls, and generally impacting people's vision and spreading all sorts of skin itching. A Star report carried an in-depth coverage of the incident and held the security lax responsible for the accident. Over 30 ship-breaking yards are located at Sitakunda beach-head, employing about 2,00,000 workers. None of these ship-breaking bases, however, are

adequately equipped with accident-prevention devices; though, many of them have at their disposal very sophisticated ship-breaking instrument. The accident is actually an index of how dangerously life is being lived in and around Sitakunda. A ship for grounding is bought at Tk. 20,000 per 1000 tonnes, which comes to Chittagong to be dismantled, with, presumably, having all its gas cylinders and chambers already exhausted. Sometimes some gas residue may yet be found, which needs to be taken out through extreme caution. Herein fails our local technology. What they try to do is simply engage the local unskilled

labourers to handle the gas tubes and open them in their own peculiar method. It's like playing with a live bomb. It's like a Tokai toying with a cracker transformed from a betel-leaf can that he has found in a dustbin. A Star photo shows exactly that: Some workers squatting over a gas-tube in the very workshop where the disaster had occurred only a few days ago. They obviously were trying to find out how the chamber leaked. But, to the readers' plain eyes what appeared as disturbingly inappropriate is that such live gas tubes can't be handled in that manner, engaging common workers.

Every body knows that human lives are cheaper in our society by the dozen. So, the way our local buses dump people like fish inside their bellies, the way our launches ply in the raging waves of the Meghna overloaded by two to three times, the way our beggars and homeless people spend their lives in the city streets under the open sky, is the same way in which labourers are given to work at the Sitakunda ship-breaking yard. They are Guinea pigs, not human workers. They live in high risk, food for death. Moreover, the workers engaged are mostly males, living at the sites, away from families, in abject tenements. The question

naturally occurs about how they live everyday, what they eat, and what they do after their work at the yard. Nowadays, demographic studies show that population and environment are interrelated. Sitakunda yard must be the subject now for a fuller study on the workers living at the yard. When their working conditions can be known, then it would be possible to create a high-security anti-accident protective cordon. The oxymoronic irony of all this is that the Sitakunda Echo Park is situated just opposite the ship-breaking yard.

## the week that was

### Upgrade CGVC

Chittagong Government Veterinary College (CGVC) should be upgraded as part of infrastructure development to turn Chittagong into commercial capital in true sense. Food Minister Abdullah Al Noman said this while he was addressing commencement ceremony of the 8th batch of the college as the chief guest at the CGVC auditorium on Sunday. The speakers emphasised on veterinary education at university for flourishing agriculture and livestock based industries in the country. The Purbokone Ltd chairman and Chittagong Dairy and Poultry Firm Association President Md. Yusuf Chowdhury spoke at the function as special guest with Principal Dr. Nitish Chandra Devnath in the chair. A discussion meeting on practice of veterinary treatment and education was also held. Chittagong University (CU) Vice-Chancellor Professor Nuruddin Chowdhury and Department of Livestock Director Dr. Sultan Mohiuddin were present as special guests.

### 70-day festival of Biponi Bitan begins

A 70-day festival marking the 40th anniversary of Biponi Bitan (Chittagong New Market) began here on Saturday. Food Minister Abdullah Al Noman inaugurated the festival as the chief guest. Biponi Bitan Merchants Welfare Committee organised the festival. Speakers at the function vowed to uphold tradition of the market and further development of the market through close interaction between the businessmen and the consumers. Chittagong Chamber President Amir Humayun Mahmud Chowdhury, CDA Chairman Brigadier General Sharful Alam and Federation of Chittagong Shop Owners Association founding president Alhaj Salahuddin were special guests with the Welfare Committee President Alhaj Alamgir Alam in the chair.

### Painting Exhibition

A painting exhibition of students of six city arts schools was held at Chittagong Press Club auditorium here on Friday.

### Outdoor services open at Ctg Dental College

The outdoor services opened at Chittagong Dental College and Hospital, the first of its kind in Chittagong, at Halishahar on Friday. Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury in his speech as chief guest assured of taking measures to make the hospital and college of international standard. The hospital with all facilities would open up a new horizon in health care service in the port city, Khosru said. Chittagong University (CU) Vice-Chancellor Professor AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury, Chittagong University Teachers Association (CUTA) President Prof ANM Monir Ahmed Chowdhury and former CUTA President Iftekhar Uddin Chowdhury attended the ceremony as special guests. Alhaj Syed Mohammad Abu Naser, founder and managing committee chairman of the hospital, presided. SMA Naser Foundation established the 50-bed hospital with the outdoor facilities housed in two multi-storied buildings at Noyabazar of Halishahar this year.

### R&H men form human chain

formed a human chain at Jamalkhan and Andarkilla for realisation of three points here on Thursday. The human chain that stretched for over one kilometer was formed as a part of the programmes at the

## Starship Juice First Maths Festival held



Science fiction writer Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal addresses the prize giving ceremony of the Ganit Utsab (maths festival) at Nasirabad Girls High School here on Friday. Dhristy, Chittagong in collaboration with the Bangladesh Mathematics Olympiad Committee organised the festival to search for the talents.

The "Starship Juice First Maths Festival" was held here on Friday. Over 900 students of some 50 schools and colleges participated the day-long mathematics festival. The festival, first of its kind in the port city, was organised by a socio-cultural organisation of Dhristy in collaboration with Bangladesh Ganit (Mathematics) Olympiad Committee (BGOC), at Nasirabad Govt. Girls High School. Starship Juice sponsored the festival. The speakers at the inaugural and closing sessions of the festival underscored the need for practice of mathematics. They said there was no alternative to it for making progress in any

branch of science education. Practice of mathematics is the exercise of mind that takes to the height of a world citizen, they said. The festival included Ganit Olympiad, exchange of opinion, film-show, open discussion and debate followed by a prize distribution ceremony. Renowned scientist Professor Dr. Jamal Nazrul Islam addressed the inaugural ceremony as the chief guest. Professor Dr. Md. Kaikobad of BUET, also executive member of BGOC, and CM Koyes Sami, Managing Director of The Oriental Bank, Principal Safia Rahman of Sunshine Grammar School and BGOC General Secretary Munir

Hasan were present as special guests. Science fiction writer and BGOC Vice-President Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal distributed prizes among the winners as the chief guest in the prize giving ceremony in the afternoon. Principal Hasina Zakaria of Ispahani Public School and College, Chittagong, was special guest at the ceremony. Assistant General Editor of the Prothom Alo, Chittagong Office, and poet Bishwajit Chowdhury, Chittagong Press Club General Secretary Kalim Sarwar and Starship brand officer Shamim Hossain Khan also attended. Dristy General Secretary Saif Chowdhury conducted the function.



General Manager of Proshika Computer Systems (PCS) Qazi Rubayet Ahmed gives details about the Proshika internet service at a press conference held on the occasion of the launch of PCS activities in Chittagong on Monday.

### Sharodiya Ananda Utsab

A fortnight long Starship Juice Mimi Sharodiya Ananda Utsab 2003, a sales festival, began at Mimi Super Market in the city on Thursday. Mimi Super Market Businessmen Association organised the festival on the occasion of Durga Puja, the largest religious festival of the Hindu community. CM Koyes Sami, Managing Director of The Oriental Bank Limited, inaugurated the festival as the chief guest where Chittagong Press Club General Secretary Kalim Sarwar was special guest. Association President Md. Abul Kashem presided. Oriental Bank DMD Imamul Haq and Abul Khaer, Condensed Milk and Beverage Ltd Assistant General Manager (Sales) Amanullah also spoke.

### Process on for Trans-Asian Railway corridor

Processing is going on to build up Bangladesh Railway as a corridor of Trans-Asian Railway. Bangladesh Railway Director General Rezaul Karim told a meeting of heads of divisions at Central Railway Building (CRB) conference room here on Saturday.

### Seminar on 'entrepreneurship development'

The speakers at a seminar on 'entrepreneurship development' stressed the need for coordinating the knowledge what is required in the practical life to help produce quality products and grow good entrepreneurship in the country. Bureau of Business Research (BBR) organised the seminar at Chittagong University (CU) commerce faculty gallery here on Thursday. Chittagong University Vice-Chancellor Prof AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury was the chief guest. Pro-VC Professor Dr. Md. Shamsuddin and industrialist Sufi Mizanur Rahman were present as special guest and guest speaker respectively. The speakers also stressed for producing more honest, sincere and quality entrepreneurs for spearheading the country. Professor Amal Bhushan Nag presided over the seminar while Professor Dr. Md. Shaukatul Meher of BBR made the address of welcome.

### Shatoranji Exhibition held

An Exhibition of traditional and indige-