

Tk 225 crore CDA projects to develop city roads

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) has taken three projects worth Tk 225 crore for developing roads to maintain hierarchy of road network and open up new urban area in the port city.

The government has approved the projects under its Annual Development Programme (ADP) of 2006-2007 fiscal year in May.

The roads to be developed as per recommendations of Chittagong Metropolitan Master Plan (CMMP) included North-South Link Road, Link Road from CEPZ to Port Connecting Road (Port By-pass Road) and Widening and Improvement of Siraj-Ud-Doula Road.

CPA will also provide Tk 42 crore for the Tk 86 crore Port By-pass Road project, sources said.

Under the Tk 115.22 crore North-South Link Road project, a six-km road with a width of 120 feet to 160 feet will be constructed from Ambagan to Dhaka Trunk Road-Bayezid Bostami

Link Road near the proposed Asian University for Women, sources said.

The road will run through a bit of hilly terrain to link the landlocked new growing areas of Foyez Lake and Bayezid Bostami with the main city.

Of the total fund, around 90 crore will be spent for acquisition of land to construct the road, said the sources.

The CMMP prepared under the technical and financial assistance of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (UNCHS) in 1995 put a special emphasis on developing the road to open up new urban areas in the city's northern fringe to accommodate growing urban population and activities, sources at CDA said.

The implementation of the project is scheduled to start next month to be completed by 2010.

Under the Tk 86 crore CEPZ-Port Connecting Link Road (Port By-pass Road) project, a road will be constructed on the south-



Illegal structures were demolished for expansion of Siraj-ud-Doula Road.

western side of the city linking Cement Crossing with Port Connecting Road.

Passing through a vast tract of land, the road will link the airport, CEPZ, Chittagong port and other different important installations at Patenga.

The road will also create an easy communication linkage between Halishahar and Faujderhat industrial areas, said the sources.

Construction of the Port Bypass Road with a width of 160 feet will begin this year and to be completed by 2010-2011 financial year, sources added.

Some 20.76 acres of land will be acquired from Bangladesh Railway, Water Development Board, Housing Settlement Department and private owners for construction of the road that will also serve as an outer ring road for Sadarghat, Shah Amanat Bridge, Oxygen-Quaish Road and Bayezid Bostami Road, sources said.

A project involving Tk 23.61 crore has also been taken for expansion and improvement of Siraj-ud-Doula Road.

Siraj-ud-Doula was developed 20 years ago for vehicular movement from Kaptai, Kalurghat and Mohara industrial area to the traditional business hubs in the then city centre of Asadganj, Khatunganj and Chaktai. Development of the road became indispensable as it lost traffic volume due to narrowness and was unable to make passage for some five lakh people using the road everyday.

CDA, however, removed illegal structures from both the sides of the road to start expansion work.

Of the total cost of the project, around Tk 18 crore was required for land acquisition and compensation, sources said.

Construction of the road is scheduled to start next month to be completed by June 2009.

After completion of work, the road will create a good communication linkage between Chawk Bazar, Bahadderhat, Muradpur and Anderkilla, Kotwali and Asadganj-Khatunganj areas, sources said.

Malaysia to recruit 11,000 Bangladeshis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Malaysian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Abdul Malek Bin Abdul Aziz on Tuesday said process is underway to recruit some 11,000 workers from Bangladesh for Malaysia soon.

The Malaysian government recently made an investment proposal for two big projects in Bangladesh, including 400 million US dollar Dhaka-Chittagong Express Highway project.

He was speaking at a view exchange meeting here on Tuesday.

Other speakers at the meeting underscored the need for cross-border investment between the two countries.

The 11-member delegation of Malaysian Industrial Development Authority (MIDA) and Malaysia South South Association (MASSA) exchanged views with Chittagong chamber leaders at Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CCCI) auditorium.

Leader of the delegation Jalliah Baba said Malaysia, fifth biggest investor in Bangladesh, is keen to invest in different sectors like textile, automobile, packaging and power in Bangladesh.

CCCI Senior Vice-President SM Nurul Hoque in his address of welcome called for duty-free access of the Bangladeshi commodities to Malaysian market to bring down the trade gap between the two countries, which tilted towards Malaysia.

Pollution reduces in Chittagong port areas

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

Pollution has remarkably reduced at Chittagong port and its adjoining areas following the continuous anti-pollution drive by Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) magistracy throughout the year.

An unusual pleasant atmosphere now prevails there.

CPA magistracy in its continuous crackdown during the last five years detained and awarded punishment to over 1,000 vessels, both the local and foreign flag carriers, for causing serious water, air and noise pollution.

It also gave both legal and financial punishment to over 300 industries and commercial firms along the river Karnaphuli at Chittagong port channel and the neighbouring areas for polluting environment in various ways during the period.

Strong surveillance and continuous drive under Chittagong Port Law have succeeded in reducing pollution at different points of the river Karnaphuli to a remarkable extent and putting an end to open dumping of wastes into the water by vessels.



Chittagong port where once disposal of oily substance, right, was a common scene, now witnesses a remarkably improved environment, left.

Disposal of wastes, sludge and metallic rubbish into the water from the vessels anchored or under going repair at the port was a common feature.

CPA failed to check the nuisance while the port officials remained silent despite falling victim to the pollution that went on at the main operational areas of the port.

Being spared of punishment, the polluters, mainly the masters and mariners of different vessels, were on a spree giving the pollution in and around Chittagong port area an alarming shape.

But, the bad practice is now reined in. The port users, including mariners, stevedores and shipping agents as well as the foreign vessels that earlier used

the Karnaphuli as a "dumping yard" of wastes, are now much cautious due to frequent anti-pollution drives.

And the man who made this possible is CPA Magistrate Mohammad Munir Chowdhury.

Immediately after taking over his office, Chowdhury started visiting the port channel himself for trying the polluters on the

spot as the captains and crews of the vessels hardly cared for appearing before the port magistracy for trial.

He awarded penalty to some 800 local vessels and over 200 vessels carrying flags of Panama, Cyprus, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malta, China, India, Saint Vincent, Liberia and Indonesia during the period.

Chowdhury said there is a law to penalise the polluters up to Tk 10 lakh and sentence them up to 10 years in jail.

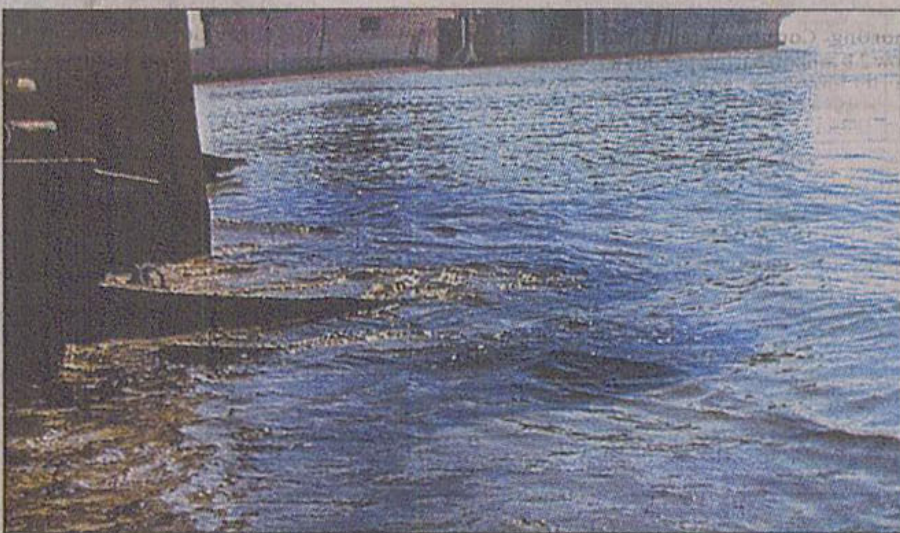
"The law relating to environment has been amended to set up environmental courts in all the six divisional towns," he said. "Besides, there is a provision for environment court to be conducted by a magistrate under the

district magistrate in each district," he added.

"Now we need to see application of the laws," he said.

He said, "Though there is a scope to check pollution, a criminal offence, and try the polluters under Chittagong port law, the law remained unexercised."

Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (Bela),



Chittagong regional officer Md Anwarul Haq said the frequent anti-pollution drives by the CPA magistracy is a "noble and courageous venture." The authorities like Chittagong City Corporation, Chittagong Development Authority and Bangladesh Railway can now follow the suit, he added.

Sources in concerned environmental forums also echoed the Bela officer saying that anti-pollution drive by other organisations is indispensable as the environment courts alone could hardly tackle the menace.

In this regard they said as per the environmental law a case can be filed with environmental courts only by the Department of Environment (DoE). The individual victims of pollution are only left with the options of filing a GD with concerned police station.

Taking cognisance of any case or trial of a polluter by the environmental court depended on the inquiry report of the DoE, they said.

As such the individual victim can not bring the polluters to justice, they said.

the week that was

Hawkers' Union installation held

The installation ceremony of newly elected office-bearers of Chittagong Sangbadpatri Hawkiers' Union at its office at Cheragi Pahar here on Thursday.

Election Commission Chairman Anjan Kumar Sen conducted the oath of the 12-member new executive committee at the ceremony with outgoing president Md Abu Taher in the chair.

Later, newly elected President Obayedul Haq Majumder, General Secretary Daudul Islam and Hawkiers' Samity advisors Md Shah Alam, Holal Uddin Chowdhury, Nurul Huda and Ataur

Rahman addressed the function.

Probe into boat capsized demanded

The people from Sandwip residing in the port city staged a demonstration and laid a siege to the BIWTC office demanding immediate resumption of operation of steamer service on Guptachhara-Kumira route at Sandwip channel and compensation for the victims of the June 8 boat capsizing.

Sandwip Students' Forum organised the demonstration protesting motorized boat capsizing in the Sandwip channel of the bay near Kumiraghat under Sitakuda

Police Station that left at least 15 people dead.

Later, speakers at a rally blamed the BIWTC and owner of Kumira and Guptachhara ghats and the concerned lessees for the boat capsizing.

They demanded a probe into the accident and punishment to persons responsible for the accident.

Otherwise, they threatened to go for tougher programme, including blockade of Dhaka-Chittagong highway. Sandwip Association President Dr Enayetur Rahman, General Secretary Mosharraf Hossain, Vice president Forkan Uddin addressed the rally chaired by Sandwip Students' Forum President M Salauddin Babu. Rezaul Karim Rupam, Ahmed Mainul

Hasan Tameel, Kazi Ramiz Uddin also spoke at the rally.

Bangladeshi mariners lauded

Speakers at a function on Friday said Bangladeshi officers and engineers made a good position in the international arena of marine sector abroad for their performance.

They have a bright prospect in this sector to bring reputation side by side with earning foreign currency for the country, the speakers said.

The function was arranged at a local hotel in the port city marking the activities of MSC Ship Management (Hong Kong) Limited, a global leader in shipping in Bangladesh.

Ashis Mishra, representative of the Geneva-based company, was the chief guest at the function organised by Unicorn Shipping Services Limited, the local agent of MSC (Mediterranean Shipping Company) Ship Management.

MSC that has around 300 container ships operating worldwide is keen to go full steam in employing engineers and officers from this region, he said.

It will offer opportunities for the seafarers, especially engineers and officers from Bangladesh, Mishra said. Unicorn Shipping Managing Director Captain ATM Anwarul Haq and top officials from shipping world and sailing

staffs of MSC in Bangladesh were present at the function.

Prize giving ceremony held

The prize giving ceremony of the annual literature and cultural competition of Chittagong Residential School and College was held here on Thursday with a grandeur and enthusiasm.

Secretary of the Jute and Garment Ministry AKM Solaiman Chowdhury was present as chief guest at the ceremony held at a local community centre with Principal Harunur Rashid in the chair.

Journalist Muhammad Iskandar Ali Chowdhury was present as special guest at the ceremony while Zahidul Islam Bhuiyan, Dr Shafiqul Islam and Vice Principal of the Halishahar campus of the college Raushon Ara Yasmin were present.

Later, a cultural function was held at the ceremony performed by the students.

'Rid the country of monarchy'

Speakers at a seminar on Saturday called for waging a mass movement to rid the country of the "monarchy" of the two major political parties.

They said both the main two political

parties are trying to establish a state of monarchy in the country ignoring the well-being of the people.

The seminar titled "Implementation of Province and Establishment of Autonomous Local Government" was organised by Unity for Political Reforms (UPR) at Muslim Institute.

Former minister and UPR coordinator ASM Abdur Rob was present as chief guest at the seminar with eminent scientist Prof Dr Jamal Nazrul Islam in the chair.

Krishak Sramik Janata League President Quader Siddique attended the seminar as special guest.

Rob said the civil society was now emerged as a social as well as a political power to see the honest and eligible leadership in the helm of the state.

Kader Siddique in his speech said at present there was no practice of democracy in the parliament where only autocracy is being exercised.

'Expand IMS'

Speakers at a seminar here on Thursday emphasised expansion and strengthening of the Institute of Marine Sciences at Chittagong University for proper utilisation of marine resources and accelerating economy of the country.

Institute of Marine Sciences (IMS) of Chittagong University (CU) organised the seminar titled "Marine Resources Utilisation and Exhibition 2006" at its seminar room on the occasion of the

"World Sea Day".

The speakers also called for setting up a separate ministry for marine affairs for proper utilisation and management of marine resources.

CU Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr M Badiul Alam was chief guest at the seminar with Prof Dr MA Kader in the chair.

Prof Dr Jamal Nazrul Islam and Science Faculty Dean Prof Nazmus Sadat Md Yahia were the special guests.

IMS Director Prof Dr Mohammed Jafar presented the keynote paper at the seminar.

An exhibition of rare species of fish, aquatic animals and oceanographic instruments was held and a colourful procession also brought out on the occasion.



STAR PHOTO

Prof Dr Sikander Khan speaks at a meeting on the proposed budget organised by Arthaniti Samity, Chittagong chapter on the Chittagong Press Club premise on Friday.



STAR PHOTO

Artists of Bangladesh Betar, Chittagong centre perform at a cultural function titled "Surer Bangshibadak" at Theatre Institute Chittagong, auditorium on Thursday on the occasion of 107th birth anniversary of poet Kazi Nazrul Islam.