

Repair of Karnaphuli bridge begins today

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

To ease the mounting sufferings of the Chittagong people, at least to some extent, the repair and renovation work of Shah Amanat Bridge on the river Karnaphuli begins here today.

Roads and Highway authorities are implementing the project for replacing the worn-out and risky decks of the bridge at a cost of Tk 5.50 crore, sources concerned said.

Beside, though everything is set to start implementation of Tk 590 crore Third Karnaphuli Bridge project soon, construction of the 980m bridge will take 38 months, they said.

As such, when completed the renovated Shah Amanat Bridge will also facilitate plying of heavy transports as an interim-service provider during this period, said the sources.

High quality wood (7,000

pieces) for the decking of the bridge has already arrived and implementation of the repair and renovation project will start on June 21, R&H Executive Engineer Feroz Iqbal said on Monday.

"The tenure of implementation of the project is six month. We, however, expect to complete the work far ahead of the scheduled time," he said.

Communication ministry at a meeting with minister Nazmul Huda in the chair on April 4 last year decided to repair the bridge with government's own fund as deck of the bridge developed at least 15 huge holes on it causing accidents frequently, sources said.

Immediately after the decision, R&H appointed contractor "Shamsuddin Mia and Associates of Dhaka, for the work.

The authorities expected to



The repair and renovation work of Shah Amanat Bridge on the river Karnaphuli begins here today. Roads and Highway authorities are implementing the project at a cost of Tk 5.50 crore

complete the repair work within six months to ensure smooth movement of light vehicles along the bridge until 2010.

Under the project a weighing machine and a toll plaza will also be set up at both the ends of the bridge for its proper maintenance, sources said. Heavy vehicles will not be allowed to ply on the bridge, sources added.

But, it took more than 13 months to bring the imported wood from Brazil to kick off the repair and renovation project.

R&H blamed the non-availability of ships for the delay in arrival of the imported woods. Shah Amanat Bridge (popularly known as Karnaphuli bridge) was constructed on Arakan Sarak (Chittagong-Cox's Bazar) in 1990. It linked south Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Bandarban with other parts of the country and brought about a remarkable change in road com-

munication in this region reducing both the distance and time required for journey.

But within ten years of its opening, the bridge was closed for heavy vehicles as its wooden deck developed cracks and became worn-out at many places.

The bridge remained open for light vehicles. But its dilapidated condition, particularly the worn-out decks having holes all over it, remained as a matter of rising concern.

With the century-old Kalurghat rail-road unable to cope with the flow of vehicular traffic and the construction of the 3rd bridge on the Karnaphuli yet to be started, an alternative means of maintaining the road communication of South Chittagong division with the rest of the country must be developed, said the people of South Chittagong.

Hill people find fortune in mango

Sneha Ranjan Chakma is an inspiration to many in Khagrachhari

JASIM MAJUMDER

With his hefty mango harvest, Sneha Ranjan Chakma is now an inspiration to many in the hilly lands of Khagrachhari.

Sneha started mango plantation on some 1.5 acres of almost fallow land adjoining his courtyard in September in 2003, encouraged by his wife Rama Chakma, 40, and son Parbhan Chakma, 20.

Once poor indigenous farmer of Kukichhara under Panchhari upazila, he now expects an income of around Tk 2 lakh a year from the sale of mango of his orchard.

The horticulture centre of nearby Dighinala upazila extended its helping hands when the poor farmer was facing difficulties in making investment for his dream orchard.

The spirit and determination of Sneha Chakma made Mithu Bikash Chakma of Dighinala Horticulture Centre to visit the site for planned orchard and supplied the intended fruit grower 550 saplings of mango, 100 litchis and 50 olives in 2003.

The farmer left no time to start his struggle for self-reliance and an unyielding work of some 30 months brought him success with all the mango trees of his orchard bearing fruits for the first time this year.

"I expect an income of about Tk 2 lakh from the mango of my orchard this year," Sneha said while talking to this correspondent at his orchard on June 7.

"When all the trees are grown up I will just have to take a good care of them to bring me an equal or more amount of profit every

year from now on," he said.

Sneha also thanks and expresses gratitude to Bangladesh Rural Development Corporation (BRDC) for providing him with a power tiller, a power pump, a spray machine and a water pump.

Roma Chakma said she encouraged her husband Sneha to cultivate mango in the fallow land after hearing about its variety and benefit. Roma also expresses gratitude to Horticulture Centre, BRDC, district administration and district agriculture office for their cooperation and inspiration.

Horticulture Officer Mithu Chakma said determination of Sneha made them to come forward with all sort of help and cooperation.

Mizanur Rahman, horticult-

ure officer of Hhagrachhari, said Sneha is a very active, honest and hardworking person.

"We are ready to extend him more support for cultivation of mango that has a huge prospect here and thus help them become self-reliant," he said.

The success of Sneha also inspired other farmers of his tribe to cultivate mango and develop over 40 Amrapalli (mango orchards) in the upazila, said Mizan.

The district agriculture and horticulture office sources said around 600 mango orchards have been established in Khagrachhari district in last two years.

If all these orchards are taken care of properly, Khagrachhari will be flooded with mangoes and turn into another Chapainawabganj, they said.



I WISH I COULD: He can't afford to buy the entry ticket. Yet after passing the whole day collecting waste papers in the streets, on his way home the street boy gazes through the fence of the Children's Park in Chittagong to quench his little thirst. The picture was taken on Sunday.

the week that was

New ride at Concord Amusement World

The authorities of Concord Amusement World, Foy's Lake installed an international ride named Pirate Ship for the visitors.

Pirate ship is one of the most exciting rides in the world and offers thrilling feeling to its riders, said a press release on Saturday.

On the occasion, a concert organised jointly by the Concord and Bangladesh was held at the amusement park. Raffle draw of the concert was held on Thursday. Concord Senior DGM ABM Zakaria handed over prizes among the winners.

Hanging bridge opens

A hanging bridge and a rest house were inaugurated at the Banskhali Eco Park on Saturday.

State Minister for Environment and Forest Jafrul Islam Chowdhury was present as chief guest at the inaugural ceremony with Eco Park Project Director Dr Tapan Kumar Dey in the chair.

Chief Conservator of Forest Md Osman Gani, Chittagong Zone Forest Conservator Salahuddin Ahmed, Banskhali UNO Md Humayun Kabir Khondakar and Banskhali Pourasava Chairman Kamrul Islam Hossain were present as special guests.

Speakers said the new 400-foot hanging bridge and two-story Oiraboti Forest Rest House, built at a cost of Tk 45 lakh, will add an extra attraction in the eco-tourism sector.

Work of the Tk 5.57 crore project began at Banskhali Eco Park with a view to protecting the biodiversity of the extinct forest area as well as creating

opportunity for research, eco-tourism and entertainment.

Workshop on livestock

Department of Livestock, Chittagong organised a workshop titled, "Development of goats for poverty alleviation" at the Chittagong Veterinary University auditorium on Saturday.

A total of 252 participants, including the deputy commissioners and district livestock officers from all the six districts under Chittagong division and 12 farmers, took part in the workshop.

Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Md Ashrafur Maqbul presided over the workshop where Department of Livestock Director (Expansion) Sunil Chandra Ghosh was the special guest.

Muslim Welfare Society installation held

Personalities dedicated to the nation and the country are rare now in the present society, said ruling party Whip Syed Wahidul Alam MP here on Friday.

Addressing the installation ceremony of Muslim Welfare Society (MWS) Central Committee as the chief guest Wahidul Alam, also convener of Chittagong city BNP, called upon all to come forward to establish a peaceful and prosperous society.

Society advisor and Chittagong chamber director Mahbul Alam Talukder presided over the ceremony held at Chittagong Metropolitan Union of Journalists (CMUJ) auditorium.

Industrialist M Yakub Ali was the special guest at the installation ceremony where Chittagong Union of Journalists (CUJ) General Secretary Reaz Haider addressed as the principal

SCF demands 60pc of CU budget for research

Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, Chittagong University (CU) unit on Saturday submitted a memorandum to the Vice Chancellor Prof Badiul Alam demanding 60 per cent of the total budget of the university for education, research and student welfare for the next fiscal.

During submission of the memorandum, the SCF leaders told the VC that allocation in these sectors decreased remarkably in recent years.

The students are to move through unsafe shuttle train and study in run-down classrooms risking their lives, they said.

The students also face acute accommodation problems, no sufficient books and journals in the library and seminars and apparatus in the laboratories, they said.

CU unit President Kanchan Sarkar,

General Secretary Jamir Uddin Rasel, Organising Secretary Kolin Chakma, Mejba Uddin, Ashrafuddoula Reza and Julekha Akhter were present on the occasion.

Tk 2.88 cr for dev of Satkania

Satkania Municipality signed a sub-project agreement with Bangladesh Municipal Development Fund (BDMF) on Tuesday for developing infrastructure of the Municipality area involving Tk 2.88 crore.

Comptroller of Accounts Syed Arif Haider of BDMF and Satkania Municipality Chairman Mohammadur Rahman signed the agreement on behalf of their respective sides for the development project to be implemented under the World Bank financed Municipal Services Project Phase-2.

As per the agreement BDMF will bear 90 per cent of the cost under which 700-kilometre concrete road, one kitchen market and a public toilet will be constructed.

Satkania municipality chairman will work as the project manager marking the

first-ever involvement of a people's representative in implementing any project.

A portion of the fund will be spent for income generating scheme to increase the revenue of the municipality, sources said.

BDMF Finance Manager Md Abdul Hakim, Programme Manager Harunur Rashid Sikder and Monitoring Officer Engineer Md Ali Hossain were present at the signing ceremony.

Pekuya comes under digital telephone

Pekuya upazila in Cox's Bazar came under digital telephone network with the inauguration of a newly set up 500-line exchange on Friday.

State Minister for Communications Salahuddin Ahmed inaugurated the exchange talking to Telecommunication Minister Barister Aminul Haq over telephone.

The people of Pekuya from now on will be able to make phone call to both home and abroad directly.

The code for the new telephone exchange is 03428 while two digits (56) have to be added before the numbers of all the previous telephone connections under the exchange, sources said.

Prajanma 71, an organisation of the children of freedom fighters and family members of the War of Liberation, forms a human chain at Zakir Hossain Road of Pahartali on Thursday. The human chain protested erection of a monument beside a drain and demanded it at the mass grave at Pahartali.



Veteran Lalon singer Farida Parveen enthralled the audience at a solo musical function at the Institute of Engineers Bangladesh (IEB), Chittagong centre auditorium on Wednesday. Alliance Francaise, Chittagong organised the function on the occasion of the World Music Day.



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