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109 out of 158 members of Ctg city BNP resign

CHITTAGONG. Aug 1: One hundred and nine out of 158 executive committee members of the BNP, Chittagong city unit today tendered their resignation in protest against the newly announced city committee, headed by former city mayor Mir Mohammad Nasrullah, reports BSS.

On the second day today of the agitation against the new committee, BNP and its different front organisations held a protest rally at its Nasim Bhaban office premises with president of Jatiyatbadi Sramik Dal, Chittagong Division unit MA Nazimuddin in the chair.

Speedy trial of Bangabandhu's killers demanded

Speakers at a rally organised by Bangabandhu Parishad yesterday called for expediting the trial of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, reports BSS.

They also strongly demanded trial of those who were indirectly involved in the conspiracy of killing the father of the Nation and most of his family members.

Presided over by Parishad president Prof Kabir Chowdhury, the rally was addressed by Political Adviser to the Prime Minister Dr SA Malek, Mayor Mohammad Hanif, city AL General Secretary Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, MP, and Barrister Shawkat Ali Khan.

Withdraw Billal murder case, Titas Gas employees' call

Eleven hundred employees and officials of Titas Gas Company have appealed to the government to withdraw the Billal Murder case against some 'innocent' employees and union leaders of the organisation.

Death of Billal was an accident and not a murder, they said in a petition. Billal, an employee of Titas Gas Company, died falling from the seventh floor of the Titas Gas building in the city during a clash among activists of three rival unions on July 9, 1992.

The 1101 employees in their petition submitted to the authorities on Thursday said that Billal was a 'victim of politicisation of the unions by the then ruling party'.

Everybody knows that Billal was an accident, they said in a petition.

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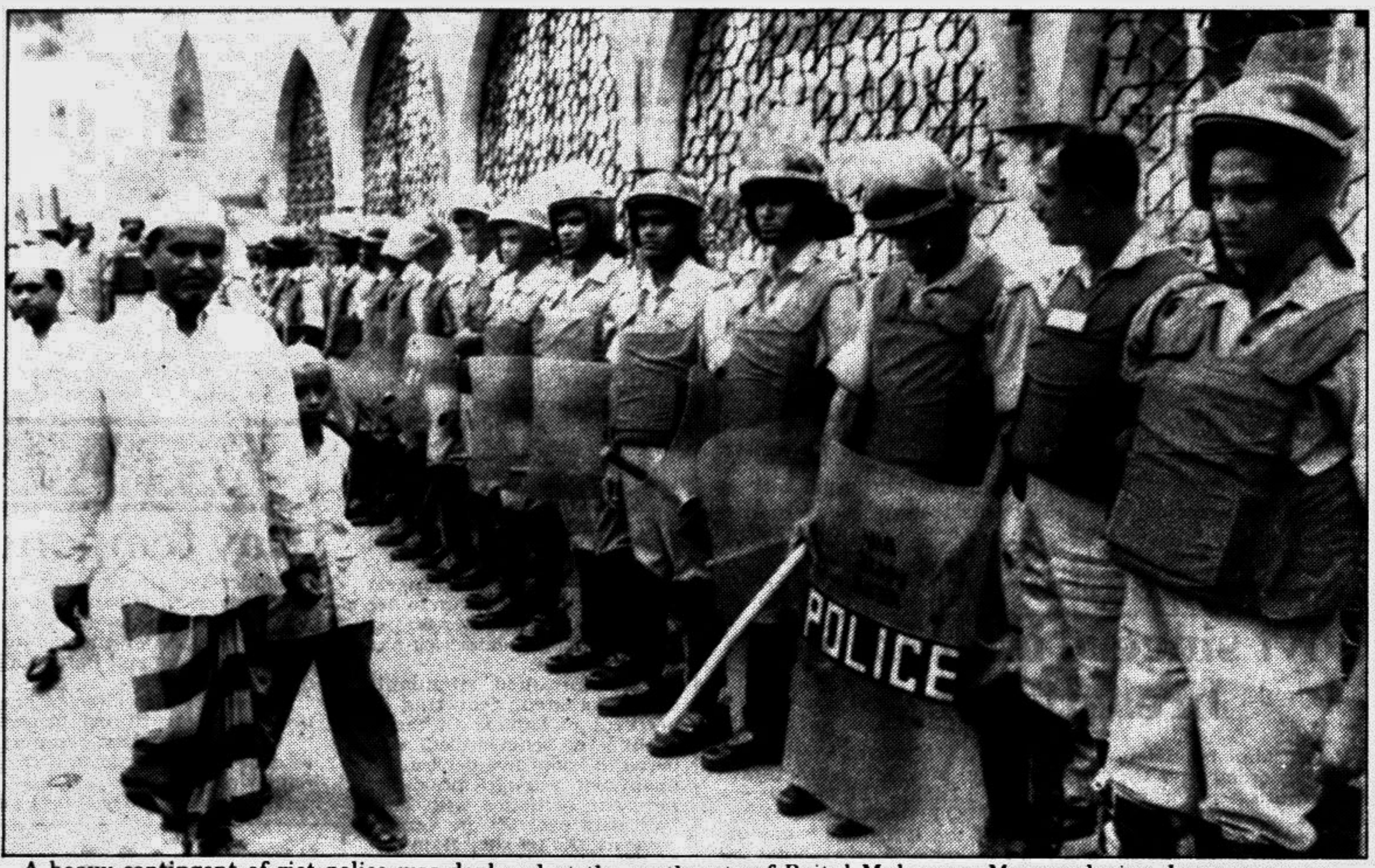
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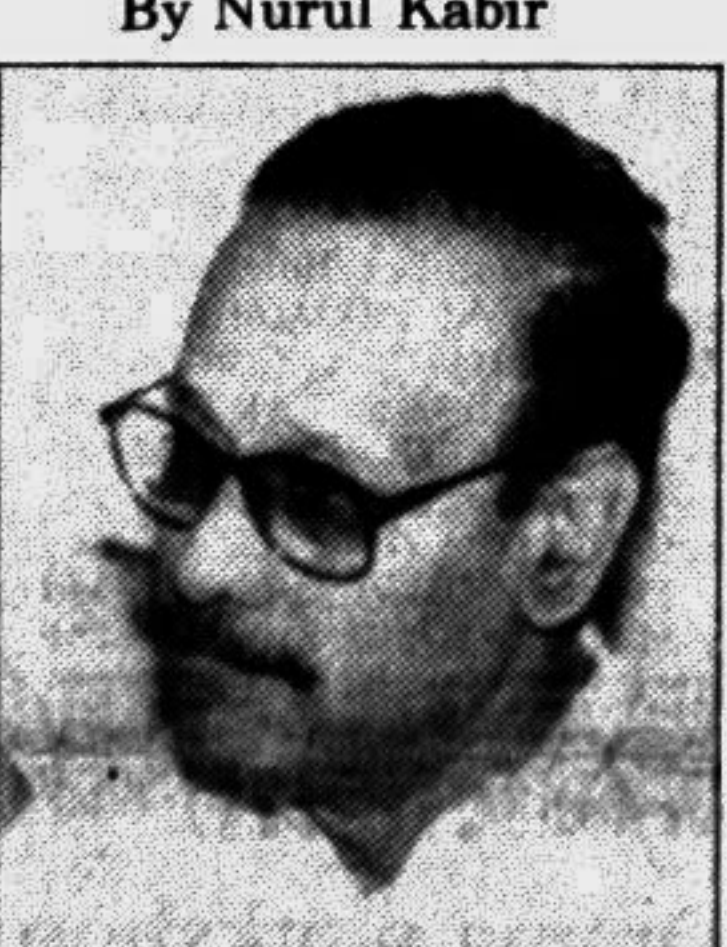
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A heavy contingent of riot police was deployed at the north gate of Baitul Mukarram Mosque during Jumma prayers yesterday.

Mannan Bhuiyan tells The Daily Star BNP will never become a communal force

By Nurul Kabir Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has expressed his confidence that his party 'will continue to remain a centrist political platform, with institutionalisation of multi-party democracy and strengthening of the national economy, particularly the private sector, as its objectives.'



Mannan Bhuiyan

Asked to substantiate the allegations, Bhuiyan said that the national economy had been exposed to a stagnancy — there was no significant economic activity in the country. The government talks about strengthening the private sector, but consistently refuses to disburse project loans to the private sector entrepreneurs.

Towards left or right, but, I reiterate, BNP will never prove to be a communal political force. Thousands of BNP activists across the country know that our people are pious but they are not fanatic. Evaluating the performance of the government headed by Sheikh Hasina, the BNP leader said this government has been rendering 'disservice' to the people. The government's economic policies are plagued with self contradictions and the head of the government has even proved herself to be indifferent to the interests of the people.

AI proposes set of standards for setting up nat'l HRC

The Amnesty International has proposed to the government a set of standards for establishment of a National Human Rights Commission. The AI proposal, titled 'Bangladesh: Proposed Standards for a National Human Rights Commission', containing 22 recommendations, was made available to The Daily Star recently.

The AI, in its recommendations said that the proposed Commission should be independent of the government and its charter should reflect its independent status. The Commission should be established by law or, preferably, by Constitutional amendment. The Commission should be mandated to review the effectiveness of the existing legislation and administrative provisions in protecting human rights and should be able to make recommendations for amendment to such legislation or introduction of new legislation, as necessary.

The Commission should prepare reports documenting all the complaints it has received, together with the action taken in each case, as well as an account of all its other activities for promotion and protection of human rights. The reports should be presented periodically to representative national and regional bodies, the AI suggested.

Education policy Political fronts on campus opposed

By Mizan Ali Members of the Committee for Formulating National Education Policy have reached a consensus that students should not be allowed to open front organisations or affiliate bodies of political parties in educational institutions, according to committee sources.

The 58-member committee headed Prof Shamsul Haq was formed about five months back. A total of 19 sub-committees were formed to recommend measures on various issues in the education sector. Majority of the members supported a ban on student politics in educational institutions. It was, however, opposed by a section on the ground that student politics played a vital role in our Liberation War.

Flood in Cox's Bazar

COX'S BAZAR, Aug 1: About 1.5 lakh people have been marooned in Chokoria thana for the last two days as heavy rain and onrush of hill water caused a flood, report UNB.

The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) will bring 13 lakh workers of the garments industry under insurance scheme within seven days. Each worker will be eligible for a Tk 40,000 compensation claim under the insurance scheme in exchange of an annual premium of Tk 10, a press release issued by the BGMEA said last night.

Tomorrow's countrywide demonstration called off Try those who issued circular renaming ZIA, demands BNP

The BNP has called off tomorrow's countrywide demonstration designed to protest the changing of the name of Zia International Airport, but demanded trial of those involved in issuing a circular renaming it Dhaka International Airport, reports UNB.

The demonstration day programme, announced on July 27, has been withdrawn in view of the government declaration that it had not changed the name of any airport, BNP Secretary General told a press conference at 29 Minto Road yesterday afternoon.

He said the flight service department of Biman Bangladesh Airlines on July 17 issued a circular renaming ZIA as Dhaka International Airport. He also produced copies of the circular, signed by the Deputy General Manager of Flight Service.

It said: As per decision of the management from now on whenever inflight announcements are made regarding Dhaka Airport, it must be mentioned as 'Dhaka International Airport.' Any amendment as proposed must be made in this regard. This is for strict compliance.

Bhuiyan said obviously the circular was issued following a government decision as 'an official alone cannot dare to show such audacity of changing the name of ZIA which is highly sensitive.'

We demand trial of those responsible for issuing the circular though an official announcement made it clear that no name of any airport of the country has been changed, he said.

He warned of tough street agitation if the state-run radio, television and flights do not use the name of ZIA.

The BNP secretary general said that the party had received information that many foundation stones laid during BNP regime were being removed.

It's not a good culture, he said while urging the government to refrain from resorting to such bad culture which would only create conflicts.

Bhuiyan said since the assumption of power by Awami League, it has started politics of killing, repression, arrest, issuing warrants for arrest and filing false cases against BNP.

More than 150 leaders and workers of the BNP and its front organisations were killed in attacks by the ruling party and thousands were arrested, he said adding that false cases have been filed against at least 10,000 BNP men across the country.

He alleged that the government has now intensified its evil design to erase the name of the proclaimer of independence Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman. He claimed that Zia was also a creator of modern Bangladesh.

Bhuiyan said no government institution was named after Zia in his life time. The grateful nation, after his martyrdom, named only a fertiliser factory, an airport and the Shishu Academy auditorium after him through official decision.

He told a questioner that renaming government institutions, buildings or bhabans after Sheikh Mujibur Rahman without soliciting public opinion cannot be permanent.

At the meeting, Dr Haq had questioned the compatibility of the project with the environment and residential character of neighbouring areas, role played by the authorities concerned as regards the project, economic analysis of the 75-year period and life span of the buildings. He termed the project highly optimistic.

Hasinur Rahman had emphasised the project's consistency with the recently prepared Master Plan for Dhaka. He pointed out that environmental, social and economic aspects of the project should be thoroughly studied by Rajuk before finalising it.

Following the meeting, things moved fast. Rajuk top officials moved to the Ministry of Housing and Public Works on May 24, 1995.

The meeting was chaired by MD Hasinur Rahman, the then Secretary of the Ministry, and was attended by, among others, Salim Ibrahim, Director of Indus Valley, Dean of the Faculty of Civil Engineering, BUET, Dr Alamgir M Haq and Humayun Khadem.

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Project on Gulshan Lake Serious flaws in Rajuk deal

By Morshed Ali Khan Serious procedural flaws have emerged in the Rajuk deal to hand over 220 acres of prime land in Gulshan, Baridhara and Banani areas to a Singapore-based developer, Indus Valley, on a Build-Operate-and-Transfer (BOT) basis for 75 years.

Under the deal, Indus Valley will construct a massive complex comprising a hotel, condominiums, service apartments, office buildings, shopping centres, hospital and other facilities. The project will cost about 213 million US dollars. Indus has already paid Rajuk 250,000 dollars as a deposit and will pay Tk one crore annually as royalty.

According to official documents, Rajuk accepted and later approved the company's proposal without involving any of its own professionals in reviewing or studying the project's feasibility.

It was revealed in a document that Rajuk Chairman Humayun Khadem held several informal meetings with Indus management before the first official meeting in the Ministry of Housing and Public Works on May 24, 1995.

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N'ganj BCL leader shot

From Our Correspondent NARAYANGANJ, Aug 1: A local student leader was shot by unidentified assailants here last night.

Md Sajnu, 28, joint secretary of Narayanganj city unit of pro-Awami League Chhatra League, received bullet injuries in his back when some gunmen fired on him from a crossing near Mission Para close range at 11:30 pm.

He was rushed to Narayanganj Hospital and later shifted to Shamrita Clinic in Dhaka. Police nabbed four youths — Biplob, Jainal, Mabbub and Salahuddin from Mission Para area in this connection.

Narayanganj district and city units of Awami League held a protest rally this afternoon at Bangabandhu Road.

Chaired by district AL president Prof Najma Rahman, speakers at the rally demanded immediate arrest and trial of the persons responsible for the attack. They blamed BNP for the attack.

Strike in Bihar protesting Laloo's arrest: 500 held

NEW DELHI, Aug 1: More than 500 people were arrested Friday for blocking roads as supporters of a jailed politician in eastern India protested his arrest on charges of embezzlement, a domestic news agency said, reports AP.

The general strike shut down most schools and businesses statewide. Railroad services were halted in many places.

Laloo Praasad Yadav, former chief minister of Bihar, has been in a police compound converted into a luxury jail in Patna since his arrest on Wednesday.

Pisciculture in floodplain: A success story



Fishermen and villagers releasing fingerlings in Borobila beel at Pargachha in Rangpur.

By Masud Arif, back from Rangpur It was like a festival for the fishermen and villagers who gathered in dozens on the bank of Borobila Beel at Pargachha in Rangpur to watch the release of fingerlings.

The concept of pisciculture in a floodplain — the low-lying areas flooded during monsoon — has changed the life of people around Borobila in three years. It was started under the government's Third Fisheries Project (TFP) in 1994.

The TFP, a project jointly funded by the government, World Bank, IDA, UNDP and ODA, ended last year but the fishermen of Ramnathpur Union Fishermen's Co-operative Association have succeeded in building stocks of fingerlings in Borobila without government support this year.

The fishermen's association is releasing one and a half tonnes of fingerlings this year with the support of a local NGO, Promoda Sundarisen Kalyan Trust. State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Satish Chandra Roy inaugurated the release of fingerlings this year with the support of a local NGO, Promoda Sundarisen Kalyan Trust.

DCC asks for Tk 153cr grant to repair roads

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has asked for a government grant of Tk 153 crore to repair the damaged city roads and drains, and to complete other related works, reports UNB.

Frequent digging of roads by the utility services like DESA, WASA, Titas Gas and T&T, followed by a series of recent incessant rain, caused serious damages to the city roads.

When contacted, a DCC official said Kataban-Nilkhet, Sukrabad-Tallabagh, Purana Paltan-Naya Paltan, Mouchak-Malibagh-Rampur and Maghbazar-Nayatola roads as well as roads in Hatirpool, Basabo, Khilgaon and in old parts of Dhaka are in a dilapidated condition.

The DCC has received only Tk 30 crore from the government, after it submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) seeking Tk 153 crore for the repair of damaged city roads and drains.

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