

Rajuk puts Gulshan Lake in jeopardy

Lakeside walkways, green space allocated for residential plots

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rajuk has allocated most of the walkway and lakeside green space extracted from the Gulshan Lake for residential plots.

The authorities culled the space from the lake about three years ago with a view to 'protecting the water body' from being filled.

To make things worse, the construction on these newly allocated plots is already underway. The allocations have frustrated the residents of the area close by, who said the lake would soon disappear if the government fails to check the aggressive encroachment.

At Gulshan-2, at the end of roads-104, 103, 102 and all along the lake, opposite Morium Tower, the construction work is going on round the clock. On one plot at road-104, a developer has extended his boundary into the lake area claiming that Rajuk gave the additional allocation.

The aggressive encroachment on the Gulshan-Banani-Baridhara Lake comes in the wake of a government decision to launch a Tk 120-crore project to develop the lake. It is alleged that some top Rajuk officials are deliberately delaying the launching of the project fearing that the fact of this illegal allocation would be revealed to the public.

Rajuk took up a project about three years ago to fill the banks of the lake to make a public walkway. The former Rajuk chairman had then told The Daily Star that the walkway would not only beautify the area, but deter 'illegal

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DUBIOUS DEAL ... construction continues along Gulshan Lake after Rajuk allocated public walkway and green space for residential plots.

Rupsha AL man shot dead by his son

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Rupsha upazila Awami League activist Mollah Altaf Hossain, 55, was gunned down by his son at his house at Khan Mohammadpur village on Wednesday night.

Manju, an activists of Rupsha-Terokhada unit of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (BPCP), was arrested with a pipegun used for killing his father.

According to police, Molla Altaf survived the first attempt on his life by his son in 1999. But he died in the second attempt on Wednesday night when his son shot him point blank, police said quoting inquest report.

Local people said Manju is an armed cadre of PBCP. He pressed his father recently for handing over entire property to him by registered deed. Instead, his father made an arrangement to hand over Manju to police.

Manju threatened to kill his father on Wednesday morning for planning to hand him over to police, Rupsha thana OC said.

No case was filed till filing of this report.

Access denied

Interconnection project for 2.5 lakh cell phones in limbo

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

A project for giving over 2.5lakh mobile telephones access to BTTB's fixed telephones is hanging in the balance due to non-allocation of funds in the Annual Development Programme (ADP), depriving the government a huge amount of revenue.

Only Tk one lakh has been allocated in the current ADP for the Tk 490.22 crore project, Tk. 296.86 crore of which will come from project aid, sources concerned said.

The project proposes installation of equipment in the BTTB's network to facilitate inter-connection of mobile phones and fixed phones.

The Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (MOPT) had proposed inclusion of the project in the last financial year, but it was not done, the sources said.

The BTTB (Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board)

could earn crores of taka by providing such inter-connection, they said.

There are four mobile phone service providers in the private sector in the country now. These are Pacific Bangladesh Telecom Limited (PBT), GrameenPhone (GP), Telecom Malaysia International Bangladesh (TMIB-Akte) and Sheba Telecom.

These companies offered to invest five million US dollars (about Tk 30 crore) in the project to develop BTTB infrastructure.

The MOPT proposal also includes inter-connection facility for the proposed two-lakh mobile telephones of BTTB, three lakh fixed telephones of WorldTel and two lakh PHS (Personal Handy Phone) telephones of Bangladesh Broadcasting Telephone Technology (BBTT), a joint venture of BTTB and a Japanese company.

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JS committee condemns Israeli attack on Palestinians

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at a meeting yesterday adopted a resolution condemning the Israel's attack on the freedom loving Palestinians.

Presided over by Committee Chairman Dr Mohammad Selim, the meeting has extended its full support to the Palestinians for their independence.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury Kayser, Nurul Islam Nahid and Mariam Begum attended the meeting. Foreign Secretary Moazzem Ali was also present.

The meeting discussed the recent border skirmishes and underscored the need for ratification of the 1974 Indira-Mujib Border Demarcation Treaty by the Indian parliament as well.

News Analysis

A major shift for major gain

Vajpayee govt ready to go the extra mile for peace

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, *New Delhi*

The government of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee has undoubtedly effected a major shift in its stand by extending an invitation to Pakistani military ruler General Pervez Musharraf for talks here.

By contrast, there was no element of surprise in the government's decision to call off the unilateral cease-fire in Jammu and Kashmir, announced on the eve of holy Ramadan in November last year.

Ever since Musharraf seized power in a coup on October 12, 1999 in Pakistan, the Vajpayee government has consistently shunned dialogue with him taking the moral high ground that it cannot share the table with a man, who overthrew a democratically elected government.

Besides, since Pakistan's intrusion into Kargil in 1999, New Delhi has steadily maintained it would talk to Islamabad only after it stops aiding and abetting terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.

But even in making the turnaround and inviting Musharraf for talks with the military ruler in saddle and militancy in Kashmir showing no sign of abetting, New Delhi appears to have positioned itself for yet another diplomatic gain. India, analysts here note, is ready to go

the extra mile to give peace a chance.

Another reason for inviting Musharraf is that India obviously does not want to give the impression of being tough, especially after calling off the six-month-old cease-fire which failed to evoke positive response from militant groups in Kashmir and to bring the separatist conglomerate Hurriyat Conference to the negotiating table.

That India would not give up the high diplomatic ground was evident by the remarks of External Affairs and Defence Minister Jaswant Singh last night after the announcement. "India is yet again offering the hand of friendship, reconciliation, co-operation and peace to Pakistan in the expectation that this opportunity will be positively and purposefully used by Islamabad."

The invitation to Musharraf has effectively put the ball in Pakistan's court, analysts here say.

The decision to call off cease-fire was taken in the light of inputs from security agencies as well Jammu and Kashmir government headed by Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, and the visit by Home Minister LK Advani and Jaswant Singh to the state last week to take stock of the

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Govt has redeemed lost glory of Liberation War: PM

UNB, *Dhaka*

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government has redeemed the lost glory and history of the nation's heroic War of Liberation distorted by the post-75 regimes and anti-liberation forces.

"Frustration that loomed over the nation has now disappeared and spirit and enthusiasm returned with the projection of true history of our liberation struggle in correct perspective," she said while studying the model of a mural to be engraved in a wall at the Independence Monument site at Suhrawardy Udyan.

The 424-foot long and 14-foot-10-inch high mural will keep alive the spirit of victory of independence war for all future generations. The model was selected through an

open design competition by artists, sculptors and architects.

The mural will contain the historic events and struggles from the beginning of the Language Movement in 1947 to the Liberation War in 1971, contributions of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other celebrated leaders, Bangalee culture, tradition and language.

Hasina hoped that the Independence Monument project that includes a monument, museum and mural would present a complete history of the country's war of liberation.

Earlier, works Secretary Qamrul Islam Chowdhury apprised the prime minister of the progress of the project.



President Shahabuddin Ahmad and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina see Venezuelan President Hugo Rafael Chavez off at ZIA yesterday.

Road barricade programme in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT *Khagrachhari*

A day-long road barricade programme was observed in Khagrachhari district yesterday.

Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP) enforced the barricade programme protesting alleged rape of three tribal women and torture of 13 people by security personnel during an arms recovery drive at Matiranga on May 21.

PCP activists damaged a vehicle near Khagrachhari town at about 2 pm and beat up the driver and helper of the vehicle.

Movement of vehicles on Chittagong-Khagrachhari road remained suspended as PCP activists put up barricades at different points.

Meanwhile, Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP) and Hill Women's Federation (HWF) jointly held a rally and brought out a procession in the city yesterday evening protesting the incident at Matiranga.

Addressing the rally in front of the National Press Club at around 6 pm, the young tribal leaders condemned the incident and demanded exemplary punishment to those involved.

Among others, Panchanan Chakma, Rupak Chakma and Kabita Chakma addressed the rally.

'Planned' shutdown of plants causes acute power shortage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The forced shutdown of some power units, including a 210-MW power unit at Ghorashal, has resulted in power shortage across the country for the last few days.

And the planned shutdown of some other units, including another major Ghorashal unit for maintenance purpose, has worsened the situation.

Top PDB officials earlier expected an improved situation of power supply in this lean season. But on Wednesday, the amount of PDB's projected loadshedding was 230 MW against the overall demand for 2825 MW.

The PDB control room, however, said yesterday the actual amount of loadshedding was lower than the projected amount, as the AES

Haripur supplied 200 MW to the national grid during the day's peak hours. It could not supply power to the grid Wednesday morning though.

Earlier, PDB sources said despite all efforts, there would be at least 200 MW loadshedding a day across the country.

The country is now being deprived of 550 MW power due to shutdown of two 210-MW units at the 950-MW Ghorashal power plant, and the failure of the fifth and sixth units to reach their peak – 210 MW, PDB officials said.

The third unit remained shut down due to leakage in its boiler super heater drain line since May 18, while the authorities had to shut down the fourth unit on the night of May 21 as its generator developed 'hydrogen leakage.'

The fifth and sixth units are now operating with restricted load due to technical problems. At present, the fifth unit generates 170 MW and the sixth 130.

Besides, a number of power units in Shajibazar, Khulna and Ashuganj with the capacity of more than 200 MW in total have been shut down for maintenance purpose. And the forced shutdown of a number of units in Ashuganj, Bheramara and Sylhet has made the country suffer at least 70-MW power shortage.

"The situation would have been worse if AES Haripur had not supplied power to the national grid this year," said a PDB official, adding that all the units at Ghorashal power plant are expected to revert to the full capacity of 950 MW by next week.

Bangladesh will be part of India, if AL returns to power

Khaleda tells Kishoreganj rally

UNB, *Kishoreganj*

Opposition leader Khaleda Zia has urged people to vote for 'paddy sheaf' to guarantee peace and progress in the country through reestablishing politics of production and development.

The former prime minister forewarned that if Awami League returned to power, Bangladesh would be part of India. "India will grab entire Bangladesh."

She said Ershad, her former ally in alliance politics, again wants to come to power in league with Awami League. "Both Awami League and Ershad are now silent about the directives of their Indian masters."

"The present government has failed to provide security to the people. People have lost confidence in Awami League as it did not fulfil any election commitment given to the people," she said addressing a big public meeting at Muktijoddha College ground yesterday afternoon.

Khaleda Zia said if the four-party alliance led by her comes to power, the coalition would lead the country towards prosperity through setting up mills and factories and reopening the closed industries.

She urged people to remain alert and united behind nationalist and Islamic forces as well as the sheaf of paddy.

Combat 7 'diseases of poverty' on an urgent basis

Speakers urge at discussion meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion meeting here yesterday called for combating the 'seven diseases of poverty' on an urgent basis and stressed a strong political commitment for this.

Besides taking heavy toll, the seven diseases -- tuberculosis, malaria, AIDS, diarrhoea, measles, acute respiratory infection, and maternal and pre-natal complications -- are slowing economic growth, they said.

These diseases can be fought with wider use of existing inexpensive tools and the vicious cycle of poverty caused by these can be broken, said Jalaluddin Ahmed, director of the South-South Centre, which organised the discussion in cooperation with Partners in Population and Development.

Incidence of tuberculosis and malaria can be reduced by fifty per cent, death of new born babies by 80 per cent and transmission of AIDS virus (HIV) to young people by 25 per cent within the next decade only through a concerted and planned effort, he said.

Prof Abul Barkat and Dr Murtaza Majid jointly presented a paper on 'Diseases of Poverty in Bangladesh'.

The research paper said one person is infected with tuberculosis (TB) every two minutes in the country and 138,000 new cases are detected every

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
May 25		6.39 pm
May 26	5-12 am	

Prayer Timings		
May 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fazr	4-20	4-50
Juma	12-15	1-20
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-44	6-48
Esha	8-00	8-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		



Laid-off Ansars register their protest carrying their sick colleagues in vans during a demonstration after police drove them away from Muktangan in the city yesterday where they were holding a fast-unto-death programme.