

## 'Installation of pvt port may cause death of Karnaphuli'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Speakers at a discussion here yesterday observed that allowing installation of a private container port in the estuary of Karnaphuli might cause massive siltation and environmental hazards leading to 'premature death' of the river.

They recommended conducting a feasibility study before allowing any installation in the estuary of Karnaphuli - known as the economic lifeline of the country - on which the country's seaport is based.

The discussion on 'The present and future of the Karnaphuli' was organised by the Chittagong Environmental Journalists' Forum (CEJF).

Minister for Food Abdullah Al-Noman attended it as chief guest while Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) president Farid Ahmed Chowdhury was present as special guest.

Presided over by Forum chairperson Monowara Hakim Ali, the discussion was also addressed by Chittagong Port Authority

(CPA) Chairman Golam Robbani, Director of Department of Environment, Chittagong, Md. Ismail, senior journalist Rashed Rouf, Chittagong bureau chief of The Daily Star Md. Nurul Alam, Chittagong Ladies Club president Zinat Azam, Chittagong Women entrepreneurs' Association vice-president Khaleda Awal, architect Zarina Hossain, CPA Deputy Director (Security) Khaled Uz Zaman, forest officer Dewan Md. Zaful Islam, and journalist Omar Kaiser.

General Secretary of CEJF Quazi Abul Mansoor presented the keynote paper at the discussion.

The food minister said that to reduce the risk of river siltation, a comprehensive planning mechanism should be there for river training and for proper maintenance of the city's drainage system and canals that carry mud and wastes to the Karnaphuli.

The minister underscored strict enforcement of the existing laws to stop encroachment of the river and disposal of chemical and other wastes from different

factories along the river and the canals, which is polluting the river alarmingly.

He said it is high time to take measures against the illegal encroachment and pollution of the river before the evil practices go beyond control.

The participants at the discussion came down heavily on the authorities concerned as they did not take any initiative to save the river.

The speakers put accent on the eviction drives and other necessary measures to check the pollution of the river.

They strongly criticised the CPA for not taking proper measures to stop the encroachment and check pollution of the Karnaphuli. They also blamed the CPA for leasing out lands on the river banks to the factories that dump harmful chemicals in the river.

CCI president Farid Ahmed Chowdhury stressed the need for coordinated efforts to save the river Karnaphuli from pollution and siltation.

## Increase allocation to dev programmes for women

### Speakers urge govt at pre-budget seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a pre-budget seminar yesterday called for an increase in the budgetary allocation to development programmes for women to ensure sustainable development of the country.

They also urged the government to present a gender-sensitive national budget to establish equal rights of women in the society.

Held at the National Press Club in the city, the seminar on 'Women's demand prior to the placement of national budget' was organised by the Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS) in association with the Bangladesh Freedom Foundation.

## Tk 18.5 cr Japanese contribution to eradicate polio

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh will receive Tk 18.5 crore from Japan for National Immunization Days (NIDs) in 2003 leading to polio eradication in Bangladesh.

At least 25 million doses of Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) will be procured with this contribution. The doses will cover 40 per cent requirements for the 11<sup>th</sup> NIDs on January 18 and March 1 next year.

The Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Jiro Kobayashi and the UNICEF representative in Dhaka Morten Giersing signed an agreement to this effect at the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare yesterday, a UNICEF press release said.

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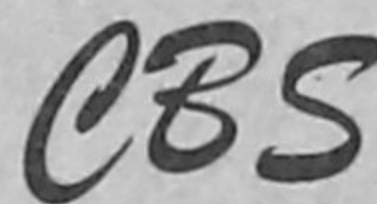
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## Teaching Service Commission to be formed

BSS, Dhaka

The government is contemplating formation of a separate body called 'Teaching Service Commission' for appointment of teachers for non-government schools and colleges.

The process of forming such a commission is now at its final stage, said Education Minister Dr. Osman Faruque in an interview with BSS at his office in the city yesterday.

He also explained government plans to check copying in examination halls as well as modernisation of madrasah education, raising the standard of education and separation of education administration.

Dr. Osman Faruque said the government had taken up a long-term plan against copying in the examination halls with training of teachers, modernisation of education curriculum, semester system and making the teachers school-college bound.

"It is not possible to check this course by employing guards in the examination halls, although it has brought success this time as a short-term arrangement to create public awareness," he said. The government has already published a circular that no teacher can stay out when the classes are on, he added.

He said the government was also seriously thinking about clamping down a ban on private tuition business, which he described as unlawful. "Any teacher can provide additional coaching to his students under separate arrangements," he said.

He said a committee to deal with transfer of teachers had already been formed headed by the Chairman of each board. "No teacher will now have to come to the DG office for his or her transfer matter," he said.

Madrasah education will now have school-college curriculum side by side with religious education, he said.

The speakers proposed to raise the budgetary allocation to the development programmes for women to at least seven per cent from the present three per cent.

Terming the budget an 'important political document', they said the budgetary preparations should be open to people.

They also suggested forming a public expenditure commission to monitor the implementation of the budget.

Dr. Pratima Pal Majumder presented a research paper on 'Reflection of women's voice and national gender objectives in national budget of Bangladesh' in the seminar and Executive Director of BNPS Rokeya Kabir moderated the programme.

Dr. Pratima said the budgetary allocation for women's development programmes is not sufficient as the policy-makers are not gender-sensitive.

She urged the civil society to help enhance the gender sensitivity of the political parties, bureaucrats and the people to ensure women's participation in the development activities.

Dr. Pratima also suggested establishing a separate women affairs ministry and allocating more funds for the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs.

Among others, Dr. Atiur Rahman, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad general secretary Ayesha Khanam, Wahidul Haque, local government expert Dr. Tofael Ahmad, Prof. Jahanara Haque, and women activists Shirin Akhter, Taslima Hossain, and Dr. Magduma Nargis Ratna spoke on the occasion.

Expressing concern over the deteriorating law and order situation in the country, Dr. Atiur urged the finance minister to declare the next budget an 'anti-crime' budget.

## World Environment Day on June 5

UNB, Dhaka

World Environment Day will be observed in the country as elsewhere in the globe on June 5.

The government as well as social and environmental groups have chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the day in a befitting manner.

Environment and Forest Minister Shajahan Siraj will inaugurate a painting competition for children and juveniles at 3:00 pm at Shishu Academy today.

Video slides on environmental issues will also be displayed at the academy at 4:30 pm on the same day.

The Ministry of Environment and Forest will bring out a colourful procession from Shishu Academy premises at 8:00 am tomorrow. The environment minister will lead it.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will inaugurate an environment fair at Bangladesh-China Friendship conference centre at 11:00 am on Wednesday.

A discussion on 'Environment of Dhaka City' will be held at the same venue at 3:30 pm the same day. Communications Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda will be present there as chief guest.

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## Holcim stands beside the deaf

BSS, Dhaka

A team from the Bangladesh National Federation of the Deaf (BNFD) recently participated in the "2<sup>nd</sup> Asia Pacific Deaf Youth Camp-2002" in New Zealand, says a press release.

Ten deaf youths from the BNFD attended the camp.

Holcim (Bangladesh) Limited, the country's leading cement producer, provided partial financial assistance for the trip. The cheque was handed over to Fazole Elahi Khan, general secretary of BNFD at an informal ceremony at Holcim office in Dhaka.

Speaking on this occasion P N Iyer, VP (Marketing & Sales) of Holcim said, "Our vision is to provide foundation for society's future and we always believe in excellence. We wish for a society with strong educational and professional base. This little endeavour of ours is an ideal instance of such vision," he added.

"Holcim will always stand beside the community whenever needed," he said.

Holcim's advertising agency Unirend Ltd jointly organised this assistance.



P N Iyer VP (Marketing and Sales) of Holcim hands over a cheque to Fazole Elahi Khan, general secretary of BNFD at a function in the city recently. Also seen in the picture are: Ibrin Kamal Chowdhury, cultural secretary of BNFD and Zeeshan Kingshuk Huq, DGM (Marketing) of Holcim.

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