



Part of the CDA road at Dhaniwalapara at Dewanhat encroach by illegal occupants.

PHOTO: ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER.

Out of legal tangle into bureaucratic web

Admin procrastination now hinders the Tk 3.5 crore road construction project as HC rule goes in favour of CDA

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

The construction work of a CDA road at Dewanhat over bridge area of the city could not be completed in more than seven years.

A legal suit forced the road with over 90 per cent of the construction done at the cost of Tk. 3.5 crore lie useless since 1998, sources said.

The appellate division of the High Court disposed of the case in favour of the Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) early this year, but an administrative procrastination now hinders the completion of the construction project, they added.

As such, construction and renovation of only 10 per cent of the road at the entry and exit points that might involve Tk. 60 lakh has been standing in the way of putting the road into use, sources said.

Local people said completion of the road could have eased the huge traffic congestion at Dewanhat crossing to a great extent.

Sources said, The CDA started construction of the 1200 ft long and 40-ft wide road running beneath Dewanhat over bridge back in 1995.

The project that aimed at easing traffic jam of that area was taken up as per the recommendation of the Transport Survey wing of Planning Commission and at the subsequent directive of the then planning minister.

The road known as Dewanhat CDA road was to connect ends of Dhaka Trunk Road at Dhaniwalapara to the east and at Dewanhat to the west of Dewanhat intersection.

The purpose was to enable all the Chittagong bound long distant transports like buses and trucks ply through an alternative road bypassing Dewanhat intersection where unbearable traffic congestion occurs everyday.

The authority acquired two-thirds of the land (32,000 Sq. ft) from Bangladesh Railway and the rest from the local land owners.

The CDA had to pay railway Tk. 1.5 crore for land and removal of railway structures. The local land owners were also duly paid for the land acquired from them and on structures.

The construction work went on smoothly and over 90 per cent of the road was completed before a

"vested circle" instigated some local land owners to go for a legal suit against CDA claiming compensation and acquirement money for small piece of land at the east end of the road at Dhaniwalapara, sources in CDA said.

The legal suit and ultimate stay order forced suspension of the construction work in 1998.

The almost completed spacious and well-carpeted road had to be left useless when illegal occupants started encroaching and occupying the road and acquired land.

The road, by now, is being best regarded as a goat-market while a huge area of acquired land including a big pond of CDA was occupied illegally by some local unscrupulous elements.

A few local land owners in collaboration with a 'vested circle' continued the legal battle hindering the construction work till the beginning of this year.

However, the case was disposed of and appellate division of High Court gave its verdict in favour of CDA.

After having the legal complexities cleared, CDA took fresh initiative for construction of the road and

the illegal encroachers were evicted early this year.

Sources said, to complete the construction and renovation at west end of the road, CDA submitted a new project profile to the Ministry of Public Works around six months back.

But, a CDA high official on condition of not to be named told The Daily Star that the project profile had been lying at the ministry for Public Works and it remained yet to be dispatched to the Planning Ministry for required approval.

He said that sanction of Tk. 60 lakh more would be required to complete the rest of the work in the fresh initiative.

Mentionable, Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) has taken initiative and all procedures are nearing an end to construct a fly-over at Dewanhat intersection. Construction of this CCC proposed 1220-ft fly over would involve around Tk. 28 crore. After floating of tenders for the project and receipt of tender schedules in this regard CCC is now waiting for experts' report Okaying the soundness and feasibility of the design of the proposed Fly over.

Saga of a research centre

ATAUL GANI SUMON

The Research Centre for Mathematical and Physical Sciences (RCMPS) of Chittagong University (CU) has become a model of research works in the country.

In the field of theoretical research on different subjects, the centre has earned international reputation in this sector.

It has become the strolling ground for the world famous personalities. The five Nobel laureates already visited the centre.

Internationally renowned scientist Prof Jamal Nazrul Islam joined the Chittagong University leaving the Cambridge University in 1984 as a teacher of the Mathematics department.

He took the efforts to build up the research centre in the country.

He submitted a draft plan to the academic council of the university. He also gave a copy of his plan to Nobel Prize winner physicist Prof Abdus Salam, founder director of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) at Trieste in Italy.

Prof Salam welcomed the effort and assured him of providing all possible help.

Meanwhile, the CU academic council and the senate approved the plan.

Prof Salam visited Bangladesh on January in 1986.

During his visit he attended at a three-day conference at the

Chittagong University from January 8 to 10. He also requested the then president of the country to help Jamal Nazrul Islam build the research centre.

Prof Salam also wrote a letter to the president again requesting him to help Prof Jamal Nazrul Islam to bring the dream into reality.

He also sent a copy of the letter to Prof Jamal Nazrul Islam. All the concerned authorities and the people helped their best to build the centre.

The then education secretary Abdullah Al-Muti-Sarfuddin, finance minister Saidduzzaman and the Vice-Chancellor of the Chittagong University also helped their best in this regard.

As a result of their sincere efforts, the centre was established on September 19 in 1989.

In the first five years of the centre, the ICTP under many programmes, provided scholarship, books and journals. The centre is still getting the moral support from ICTP.

Third World Science Academy of Italy included the centre in the top ten list of the 'Ten Centre of Excellence'.

Following this, the centre will get the visitors' status.

Moreover, Chittagong University, University Grants Commission (UGC), Science and Technology Ministry and Atomic Energy Commission are assisting the centre.

The centre confers the M.phil

and Ph.D Degree in research level in many subjects including General Relativity, Cosmology, Particle Physics, Quantum Field and Theory, solid Test Physics, Field Dynamics, Dynamics of Ocean and Atmosphere, Statistics Chemistry, Mathematical Economics, Foundations of Philosophy and Mathematics and Logic.

Some days ago the centre included the Computer Science in the text. On the occasion of the ten years anniversary on September 19 in 1989, the centre introduced its computer laboratory with five computers.

Since then, 13 students got the M. Phil degree and 7 others got Ph.D. degree from the centre. Many students are doing their research works for M.Phil and Ph.D degree under the supervision of Prof Jamal Nazrul Islam and Prof Abul Monsur Chowdhury.

The visiting fellows and the part time teachers of the centre supervised the rest research students.

A weekly seminar is held on Wednesday at the Research Centre. At the seminar the, students submit their research papers to their respective teachers. The teachers give their lectures to the students about their research works.

The centre also organises two or three workshops a year. The experts train the research students at the workshop. Moreover, one or two international conferences are also held at the centre a year.

A total of 12 international and some special conferences were

organised by the centre so far.

About 32 internationally renowned scientists, economists and philosophers attended the conferences.

The five Nobel laureates who visited the centre are- Roger Penrose of Oxford, Jessy Taylor of Cambridge, H Araki of Japan, JA Mayarles of Oxford and Prof Amartya Sen of India.

There are a nice conference room, teacher's rooms, office rooms, library, and a small conference room in the two-storied research centre.

Most of the research works done at the centre are of theoretical type. Practical research works were neglected here. There is no research laboratory for practical research in the centre.

Prof Jamal Nazrul Islam, director of the centre, said Prof Abdus Salam also suggested him to introduce the practical research works besides the theoretical works.

'This is now under consideration whether to introduce the practical research works,' he added.

The ICTP sponsored the scholarships in the first five years of the centre. Now the centre provides no scholarship to the students.

'But now we are thinking about introducing the scholarships from the fund of the centre,' he said.

The centre authorities have a plan to give it a residential shape to help the students and the teachers to do their research works smoothly.



The Research Centre for Mathematical and Physical Sciences (RCMPS) at Chittagong University.

PHOTO: STAR



Polythene bags are still being sold in the port city. The picture was taken from Bahodderhat Bazar on September 27.

PHOTO: STAR

Pollution threat to marine animals

NURUL ALAM

The government launched a fresh investigation into the death of marine animals after two dolphins had died at the country's southeastern coast of Cox's Bazar recently, official sources said.

The two dead dolphins were recovered from Cox's Bazar sea beach on Tuesday and their death came four months after the incident of another mysterious death of thousands of snails there.

Marine scientists believe that such a death could be the result of sea pollution.

Director of the environment department here, Mohammad Ismail said that he had asked his research officials to collect samples from the Cox's Bazar coast for test to identify the causes of deaths of the dolphins and other marine animals.

"I have also requested the Cox's Bazar administration to identify the causes as it has become a matter of concern to all of us," Ismail said. The tests done already in the atomic energy commission after the death of snails on April this year, could not trace the causes whether those died due to the environmental pollution in the sea.

"We have spent about Tk 19,000 against the investigation and test after the death of snails, but could not find out the reasons," Ismail added.

He said the investigation, how-

ever, revealed the release of effluents from over 40 hatcheries and industries located at Cox's Bazar coast.

"The effluents are dumped into the coastal water without treatment while oil spillage from the vessels at the Bay of Bengal is also a common problem," he added.

Dr. Nani Gopal Das, a marine scientist of Chittagong University, said the deaths of dolphins and snails might be the cause of the environmental pollution in the sea water due to dumping of effluents from the hatcheries and industries at Cox's Bazar and Teknaf coast.

Nani Gopal said artificial feeds and chemicals were being used in the hatcheries located there and the effluents were dumped into the sea without treatment that abruptly caused pollution.

"The hatcheries are not being managed properly and in a scientific way," Nani Gopal said.

"The deaths of thousands of snails at Cox's Bazar coast over 2 kilometer area triggered concern as it was really alarming," Nani Gopal said. "Even the turtles also died on various occasions due to pollution," he added.

Measures should be taken immediately to check the menace of sea pollution by ensuring better management of local hatcheries and industries, he said.

Amirul Huq, Managing Director of Prime Shrimp Hatchery Ltd, a

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MOHIT UL ALAM

Jamal Chowdhury of Battery Goli was a union parishad member, very happy with a large family. Many of his sons were already grown up in 1971. In March, the week before the crackdown, Chittagong became a hot cauldron of rage and hatred between Bengalees and Biharees. Many parts of the city, such as the Wireless Colony, Sher Shah Colony, Pahartoli, Baghghona, Lal Khan Bazar, were seeing communal riots everyday. A very large 6-storied building, known as Khaled Building (which was an office of the Police Department for three decades), opposite to Chatteswari Mandir (Temple), became the target in this week, because many Kabulis used to stay there.

Mahtab, a second-year intermediate science student from Chittagong College was leading the attack with a 303 rifle that he collected God knows from where. Mahtab was using the temple's boundary wall as a cover, and many of his friends who had no rifles were just watching him in awe. The Kabulis also had firearms, but they were too scared to use them, as on the street below a large mob had already gathered to storm the building. Under Mahtab's effective coverage (he had J. C. C. [Junior Cadet Course] training at both Chittagong College, and before that, at Chittagong Collegiate School) the mob succeeded in making their way into the building. What happened to the lives of the Kabulis is not known, but everything from that building was looted, and having used all his magazines Mahtab got down from the temple and stopped a man in a

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side alley who was carrying an electric metre that he had ripped off from the switch box at the Khaled Building. Mahtab's friends had a hard time in stopping him from killing that man on the spot.

As the Pakistan army reestablished their control over the city, one morning, a group of soldiers, acting on a tip, entered Jamal Chowdhury's residence at Battery Goli, which is just the next lane from Khaled Building. They took two of his sons who were found in the house, Jasim, 23, and his immediate younger brother, to the camp for questioning. They were never returned. In the same round the soldiers picked Altaf Meah, another widely respected UP member of the same area from his house who also never returned. Altaf Meah's eldest son Khali now runs the Altaf Metal Works shop located at the mouth of Battery Goli.

If tragedy struck like that in Battery Goli, Mahub Ul Alam, living in a house located at the meeting point between Battery Goli and Kazir Dewry 2nd Lane, nearly avoided it by sheer guts. He was a First World War veteran, and was reading a newspaper reclining in his easy chair on the morning of April 2 when a band of Pakistani soldiers broke through the main gate of his house. Mahub's wife and children and grand-children had all left for the village home about two days ago, leaving the 73-year old man in the competent hands of the house servant, Nazir, a young boy from Noakhali. Mahub didn't leave with

his family by choice, saying that in a wartime situation a soldier never deserts his fort, by which he meant his house. Obviously his family was not convinced.

Seeing his age and composure and the fact that he was an old timer, the Pakistani soldiers backed off, but they didn't forget to grab the prized cock from his wife's chicken-run.

Mahub and his servant Nazir were spared, but not so was Satya Babu, a motor mechanic, who was as good as a wizard about cars. He was lifted from his house at Kazir Dewry 2nd Lane in the first week of April, and then was tortured to death at Circuit House which the Pakistan army had turned into the zonal headquarters. Along with Satya Babu, another local boy, named Babul Huq, was taken from Kazir Dewry 1st Lane. He was lined up with others before a firing squad also on the Circuit House premises. But as luck would have it, as the machine guns rattled, a bullet truck his throat and he dropped on the ground unconscious, but he was not dead. He came round when it was pitch dark, his throat still bleeding. As he made safe his escape, he realised that the bullet passed through the less vital parts of his throat, causing a hole. Defying medical science, that Babul Huq is still alive, serving at Chittagong Club as a bartender.

Monju and Rafique were two great friends from childhood. As the Liberation War started they were in their early youth, very tender in age, but had enormous courage inside

their small chests. They were probably the first group of young boys to join the Mukti Foj from Kazir Dewry. By the middle of May they finished their first phase of training and entered the city with a sack full of hand grenades. In their first series of guerrilla operations they blew off the Lazaf petrol pump at the intersection of Jamal Khan Road. Monju and Rafique never failed in any of their operations, and after liberation, Monju joined Purbokone, a prominent local daily, as a photojournalist a profession in which he is now leading in Chittagong. Rafique, on the other hand, went to the Middle East, earned much money, and only occasionally visits his country.

Sazed and Shahed were uncle and nephew, but friends, and they were younger than Monju and Rafique. But still they left to join the Mukti Foj. It was late September when Sazed and Shahed crossed the border through Mirserai. Sazed was Mahub's youngest son, and Shahed was Mahub's eldest son's first son. At their disappearance the whole family were in near collapse worrying about their fate. But Mahub calmed everybody by saying that if he had not been this old, he would also have gone out to fight the war. Sazed and Shahed returned from the war victorious. Sazed formed the famous band Souls and Shahed joined in as a lead guitarist. Souls today is a very popular band, though Sazed and Shahed are not with it anymore. Sazed is now living in Spain, and Shahed is working as a reporter of Chattagram Bir Mancha, another local daily.