

Greens for protection of floodwater retention points

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists and urban experts at a press conference yesterday urged authorities to implement the Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan (DMDP) immediately to ensure protection of flood flow zones (FFZs) and floodwater retention ponds (FRPs) for a livable habitat of future generation.

Developers are encroaching and filling earth on the FFZs around Dhaka city posing a serious threat to the city dwellers as the FRPs, identified in the DMDP, are not being preserved for containing and flowing out flood water, speakers alleged at a press briefing organised at a press conference.

Encroaching and filling the FRPs and the FFZs is a violation of the open space and water body protection act 2000 but no action has been taken so far against any developer, they said.

Speakers at the briefing held at Jatiya Press Club also demanded the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartirakha (RAJUK) to draw out a detailed area plan (DAP) of the city urgently.

There were as many as 30 FRPs spotted at different city points in

Dhaka master plan prepared in 1995, they said.

The RAJUK drafted out the DMDP at a cost of Tk 16 crore and it was approved in 1997.

"Even after six years of its approval, the DAP has not been started and land grabbers are filling earth in the FFZs as the RAJUK failed to identify and mark the FRPs in those areas," said Prof Nazrul Islam, an urban expert and vice president of the BPA.

The RAJUK marked only two water bodies at Kalyanpur and Mirpur-Chandpur area, the speakers informed the press.

They also demanded inclusion of environmentalists, urban experts and civil society representatives in the RAJUK's decision making body in charge of reviewing the DMDP.

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, Prof Muzaffar Ahmed, Prof Badul Alam Mojumder and Prof Nasir Ezaz Khan and Abu Naser Khan, environmentalists, were present at the press conference.

Jail killing case

FROM PAGE 12 Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam appearing for the petitioner raised the apprehension of not getting justice in the lower court.

The special public prosecutors and the investigating officer of the case were removed after the present government took office following the last general elections, he said.

The HC observed that there was no necessity to transfer the case from the lower court. The case is pending with the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka.

On November 3, 1975 four national leaders Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Aham Quamruzzaman and M Monsur Ali were killed by some mid-ranking army officers inside the Dhaka Central Jail.

Following the HC verdict, the case is now open for trial in the court which was conducting it.

Political killings

FROM PAGE 12 of a market at Elephant Road on August 8.

An Awami league leader, Motiur Rahman, 48, vice-president of Panchokroshi union was shot dead at Ullapara in Sirajganj on August 6.

Nurul Biswas, 50, a BNP leader of Chartrupur union of Pabna was shot dead on August 1.

Unknown assailants shot dead BNP leader Anwarul Haque Anu, 40, and injured his brother at Johnson Road in old part of the city on July 18.

Abdus Samad Khan, 50, an Awami League leader of the party's Pallabi unit, was gunned down in front of his residence on July 11.

Mukter Hossain, 33, a BNP leader and youth secretary of ward 74, was shot dead near his house at Sutrapur on July 1.

Rats in JS

FROM PAGE 12 Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shaheed echoed with Abdul Hamid on rat disturbance at JS office.

The kitchens of the canteens, store rooms and toilets at the JS are frequently littered with left-over of food, which attract the rats, said an official of the JS, requesting anonymity. The MP hosts face like problems, he added.

"Many important documents are not preserved so well as to prevent the rats from damaging those," the JS official alleged.

Prof Noor Jahan Sarker of the department of zoology of Dhaka University said a pair of rats on average can produce 12 offspring in every two months. Each rat eat more than 10 kg food a year, which includes things like paper. But each damages another 20 kg for reserve, she added.

Prof Noor suggested the use of rodenticides and regular cleaning drives on the JS premises to prevent rat damages.

Hartal on Thursday

FROM PAGE 1

chair at the party's Bangabandhu Avenue office.

It also decided to stage a countrywide demonstration on August 27. The AL will bring out silent processions in different places including Dhaka, while a 'gayebana janaza' for the slain leader will be held in front of the party's central office.

The AL enforced a dawn to dusk hartal on August 16 demanding execution of the judgement in the Bangabandhu murder case.

After the meeting, Abdus Samad Azad told reporters that police did nothing when Monzurul Imam was shot by the criminals. "That proved the involvement of the ruling party in the crime," he asserted. Yesterday afternoon, the AL workers demonstrated at the Russell Square to protest the killing and a rally was held in front of the AL office at the Bangabandhu Avenue.

Our Gopalganj Correspondent reports: Opposition Leader and AL President Sheikh Hasina, while addressing a rally at Tungipara yesterday, alleged that the ruling party killed Monzurul Imam in a planned way.

Expressing her deep shock over the killing, she blamed the sons of the prime minister for their 'role' in the crime. She said, 'rule of violence' has been established in the country by the four-party alliance government.



PHOTO: AFP
An activist of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party kicks a policewoman during an anti-government demonstration in Islamabad yesterday.

Speaker urges AL to join CPA meet

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The speaker and the deputy speaker have initiated moves for the participation of the main opposition Awami League (AL) in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) conference.

The move came following the AL's threat to boycott the conference accusing the government of politicising the process to host it in Dhaka from October 4 to 12.

Both Speaker Jamir Uddin Sircar and Deputy Speaker Akhtar Harim Siddiqui urged the AL to participate in the activities preparatory to the conference that the AL has boycotted so far.

The speaker talked to Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shahid by telephone and asked him to nominate AL deputies to the sub-committees for the conference.

Jamir Uddin, also chairman of the conference steering committee, is likely to send a letter to Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina, seeking her cooperation to the hosting of the conference.

On his talks with the speaker, Shahid said: "I told the speaker that we (AL) will hold a meeting tomorrow (Tuesday) and discuss all the issues."

He said he raised objections over the formation of the steering committee without any consultation with the opposition and inclusion of two non-parliamentarians -- M A Harris Chowdhury and Md Mosaddeq Ali -- in the committee.

Both Harris and Mosaddeq are political secretaries to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

Shahid said the speaker assured him of meeting the opposition demands once they joined the committee meetings.

The deputy speaker, who is the chairman of the coordination committee of the conference, called the opposition chief whip on Sunday urging opposition lawmakers to attend the committee meetings.

The AL on Sunday said that the government did not consult with it for holding the conference in violation of the CPA charter and denied the main opposition of its rights.

"The CPA is a non-partisan body, all the lawmakers are its members. There is no scope to organise the conference unilaterally," Shahid told

The Daily Star.

If the government does not change its attitude to the opposition, the AL will boycott the upcoming conference."

Earlier this month, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid lodged a complaint with the CPA, saying: "If the trend of ignoring the opposition continues, it will not be possible for us to join the conference."

More than 400 delegates from the 48 member countries are expected to attend the conference.

Former PCJSS leader shot dead in Rangamati

UNB, Rangamati

A former leader of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) was shot dead in Kawkhali Upazila yesterday.

The victim, Krishna Shangkar Chakma, 38, of Betchhara village, was shot near Kawkhali Bridge while returning home from a bazar at about 9am.

Witnesses said a gang of 15 surrounded him and fired several shots, leaving him dead on the spot.

Sources said Shangkar Chakma was killed by armed assailants allegedly belonging to a group opposing the CHT peace accord.

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Man to die for killing wife, sons

COURT CORRESPONDENT

One person was sentenced to death yesterday for killing his wife and two sons in May 2002.

Mohammad Abu Hanif, judge of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-3, Dhaka Division, gave the verdict in presence of convict Mohammad Hafizur Rahman alias Mintu, 35, at a crowded courtroom.

The convict can file an appeal with the High Court against the judgement within seven days.

The three victims were Rokeya Begum, 30, Fahim Hasan, 11, and Fahim Hossain of seven months.

Mintu killed his wife and two sons at about 9:00pm on May 9, 2002, over a family feud at his rented house at Uttar Badda in the city. Later, he left the bodies inside a room of the house and went away.

On May 11, Mintu was found unconscious near Balaka Bhaban at Zia International Airport. The decomposed bodies were recovered from the house on May 12 on the basis of the information given by Mintu and a murder case was filed against him with the Badda Police Station the same day.

The accused gave a confessional statement before a metropolitan magistrate on May 16 last year.

The investigation officer of the case submitted charge sheet against Mintu on December 12.

The tribunal framed charges against the accused on March 24, 2003.

Eighteen out of the 25 prosecution witnesses were cross-examined during the trial.

The trial of the case began on March 27 and was complete in 31 working days.

Bata Shoe factory official murdered

UNB, Gazipur

An official of a Bata Shoe factory was murdered in his house at Barodewa in Tongi Sunday night.

The victim was identified as Hanif Sarkar, 43, manager (advertisement) of Tongi Bata Shoe Factory.

His wife Nazma Sarkar Beauty said two young men came to their house at about 11:00pm and were talking to her husband until she fell asleep shortly before midnight.

By the time she woke up, she said, the two men had already killed her husband and then tied her up before leaving the house.

A kidnap case was filed with the Patiya Police Station yesterday in connection with the abduction of Zaker, a second year student of Al Jamiya Al Islamia Madrassah at Patiya.

His father Alhaj Omed Ali filed the case accusing four alleged criminals of Moheshkhali in Cox's Bazar district. The accused are: Matiur Rahman, Abdul Karim, Saleh Ahmed and Feroz Ali.

The case said the suspects had earlier threatened to kidnap Zaker for ransom.

Md Hossain, elder brother of Zaker, told The Daily Star yesterday that the kidnappers demanded a ransom of Tk 10 lakh three days after his abduction on August 19.

Taxi driver Kanak Raja said chaos followed the explosion.

"Within a few seconds splinters from the taxi were flying about," he told AFP.

The roof of the taxi was ripped apart and thrown at least 100 metres near the entrance of the Taj Hotel.

Bus driver Tanaji Pawar said he saw panic-stricken men and women running.

"It was a scene of complete anarchy and chaos. I knew when I lifted some of the injured that they had no chances of survival. They were dead."

The second explosion was outside one of the city's most popular Hindu temples inside the densely populated old city, demolishing a ramshackle shop selling fruit juice.

Both areas were cordoned off, with scores of police scouring the scene for clues. Sniffer dogs were brought out to search for other bombs around southern Bombay, the city's financial heart.

The Mumbai Stock Exchange slumped around three percent immediately after the blasts and closed down 2.92 percent on what

JS body unhappy at health ministry work

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliamentary standing committee on government assurances yesterday expressed dissatisfaction on the slow progress of health and family welfare ministry in fulfilling assurances given by ministers at the Jatiya Sangsads.

The committee at its meeting reviewed the progress status of the assurances and urged the ministry to take necessary steps to fulfil them.

Ministry officials informed the meeting that in the eighth parliament, ministers and state ministers gave 16 assurances. Of these three have been fulfilled while others are on the way to being fulfilled.

On the other hand, 54 assurances were given in the seventh parliament of which only 19 were fulfilled.

However, the committee observed that in spite of what the ministry officials said, most assurances were only in the paper-work stage.

"There is a serious lack of coordination in the implementation of projects," Abdus Sobhan, committee chairman, said yesterday.

Among various assurances given by the ministers, were providing ambulances and X-ray machines, recruiting doctors and building health complexes in different constituencies of the Jatiya Sangsads.

Committee members Alamgir Haider Khan, Mostafa Kamal Pasha,

S A Sultan and Mia Golam Parwar attended the meeting.

FBCCI polls

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building at Motijheel and its adjacent areas got overcrowded as candidates and voters gathered round a number of canopies erected by different panels with sitting arrangements.

The election to the apex trade body this year is being held under a reformed electoral process having two tiers.

In the first phase, the directors will be elected and in the second phase tomorrow, the elected and nominated directors themselves will elect one president and two vice-presidents for a two-year term.

Twenty-four directors -- 12 each from the two groups -- will be elected to office through direct balloting. Fourteen others -- seven from each group -- have already been nominated as directors by the government.

The two groups alternately share the presidency and this year it is the association group's turn.

Four candidates are vying for the presidential post. Among them, Abdul Awal Mintoo, a selected director from the Bangladesh Association of Banks, Abdul Matlib Ahmad of the Bangladesh Cement Manufacturers Association and MA Rouf Chowdhury of the Bangladesh Vegetable Oil Refiners and Vanaspati Manufacturers Association are contesting the election with separate panels. MA Awal, a selected director from Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, is appearing as an independent candidate.

(Read more on Business Page)

Simon

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