

One CNG filling station for over 6000 vehicles

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The lone refuelling station in the port city struggles to deal with a huge number of CNG vehicles to meet the everyday need.

Over 4000 CNG vehicles depend on Chittagong City Corporation CNG Refuelling Station. Immediate solution to the crisis is unlikely as the progress in setting up of more refuelling stations is very slow, sources said.

The station with a capacity of refuelling some 1000 vehicles with some 650 cubic meters of CNG daily now operates round-the-clock.

Hundreds of vehicles, particularly the four-stroke three wheelers, waiting in a four-kilometer queue have become a permanent scene at the refuel-

ling station at Dampara in the city.

As the station refuels only four vehicles in every two minutes the vehicles wait in the long queue for at least five hours each narrowing down all the roads surrounding the station and hindering traffic movement as well.

Arrival of increasing number of such vehicles and conversion into CNG ones, are worsening the situation everyday.

Apart from other vehicles, the number of four-stroke three wheelers at present has exceeded 6000 in the port city. Of them, over 3000 were CNG while the rest were waiting conversion.

Meanwhile, several thousand more vehicles are also in the pipeline and their arrival will

sure to aggravate the situation further, sources said.

"We are refuelling some 2200 vehicles with around 13,000 Cubic Meter of CNG everyday," CCC Executive Engineer Md. Abul Hasnat, in-charge of the station, said.

The station starts operating at 6.00 am and continue till all the waiting vehicles are refuelled at 3AM, he said.

To cope with the pressure CCC already started installing another two dispensers at the station, he added.

"The installation of the new dispensers at a cost of Tk 3 crore would be completed by next two months," he said.

Meanwhile, the land for installation of 17 refuelling stations was earmarked in the port city. Bangladesh railway has leased out lands to set up 13

stations.

But not a single station started operating for some unknown reasons.

It is alleged that non-cooperation from CCC, the authority responsible for giving trade license and holding number, and Chittagong Development Authority (CDA), responsible for approving the site, delayed the operation.

Mayor refuted the allegation outright and reiterated to extend his all out support and cooperation in setting up of refuelling station in private sector.

Sources in Bakharabad Gas System Ltd (BGSL) said they were ready to provide natural gas to the refuelling stations on a priority basis.

Deputy General Manager (Marketing) Md. Hasan said CNG refuelling station was

getting priority at everywhere. It was being provided with lands in suitable place and Non-Objection Certificates (NOC).

"We are also encouraging the intended entrepreneurs providing them with necessary information," he said.

However, three more CNG refuelling stations are likely to go into operation within a next few months, sources said.

BGSL sources said they have recently given gas connection to one CNG refuelling station, Sea Cold, near City Gate area under Pahartoli thana. The station was expected to start operation soon, they said.

Besides, installations of two other refuelling stations, one in front of GPO and another at port connecting road at Halishahar, are nearing completion, sources said.



Local artistes enthralled the audience at a colourful function at the Chittagong Press Club auditorium on Monday. Portrait, an organisation of photographers, organised the function on the occasion of its 14th founding anniversary.

Parkee is the best

MOHIT UL ALAM

"Inhast Wattanam" is an Afghan phrase, Syed Muztaba Ali in his famous travelogue "Deshe Bideshe" tells us, which means "My country is the best".

You go to the Parkee Beach on a winter Friday, you'll feel the same. But, how do you go to Parkee? Not that easy. The Parkee beach is only one hour's journey from Chittagong, but the road through Anwara is narrow and broken, and the last three kilometres of the journey, paved with ground bricks as it is under construction, is pliable only by rickshaws and autorickshaws. The CNG-run four-stroke autos also ply up to Parkee Bazar.

From Parkee Bazar, however, you'll have to walk through two contiguous large swamplands before you reach the beach, a mud-packed sandy strip of wide coast, not really very propitious from a tourist point of view. You can neither bathe here, nor squat. For nature lovers, however, Parkee has a non-stop series of wonders to offer.

The water of the sea is dark and murky, and the crabs are not to be found here, but you span your eyes over the horizon

from east to west, and you're instantly gratified.

At Patenga, the stationary ships clutter your view, and at Parkee it is the opposite, and if you hold your eyes overlong on the sea, you might feel yourself estranged from the din and bustle of the world. You may feel very lonely, and like a Pantheist you may communicate with the sea in its ethereal language.

The sea is there, but what has most adorned the Parkee Beach is a man-made forest of the tamarix trees (Jhau tree). I've never seen such a beautiful plantation of this sea-friendly poetic tree anywhere else (unfortunately, the tree has failed to attract the notice of poet Jibananda Das.

The trees, grown on geometrically straight lines, offer romantic vistas from vantage point. The high sun on the beach psychedelically counterpoises the cool shade spread by these trees.

Scientifically, Jhau tree is grown around the coast for land retention, and, poetically, it has in its appearance and colour something a touch tragic, which the beach lovers find very ecstatic.

The sound produced by the

wind coursing through the Jhau frond, called 'nishan' in Bangla, fills up the air on the apparently quiet beach every now and then.

This abundance of nature, however, goes unappreciated as the tourism facilities are near zero at Parkee. No good restaurants are there to eat, though vendors selling drinking water and tea and biscuits aren't in the want. You may also buy cans of cheap beer and smuggled cigarettes. Certainly, a few horses of the very ordinary breed do scamper on the beach, riding which per round is Tk 20 per person, or a snapshot on horseback Tk. 10 only. No toilet facilities, except for a few tin-toilets erected on the open field, which men can somehow use, but women can never. No security people around, and that is with all these ladies of vulnerable age as visitors! Besides, businessmen having started shrimp hatcheries have forcefully occupied the pathways to the beach, compelling the tourists to take a long detour.

I've collected the information that a master plan worth Tk seven crore has been undertaken to develop Parkee as a full-fledged tourist resort. Only God knows how far it is true!



To the utter disappointment of city dwellers an eye-catching artificial spring made of gravels on a hill beside Zakir Hossain Road adjoining the Pahartoli BNSB Eye Hospital is yet to be inaugurated although two years have been passed after Chittagong City Corporation constructed it.

the week that was

Chittagong College reunion held

The two-day reunion of former students of Chittagong College ended on Friday amid enthusiasm and with a fervent call to build greater fraternity in the society.

Elaborate programmes were taken by the Chittagong College Ex-Students Parishad at MA Aziz Stadium to hold the reunion. The big bowl wore a festive look as thousands of former students turned up there.

On the concluding day, six meritorious students were awarded stipend and medal and 48 veteran members who studied in this century-old college in-between 1940 to 1970 were accorded warm reception.

Vice President of the Parishad Principal Hasina Zakaria (Bela Islam) chaired the session. The day's programme concluded exchanging pleasantries, recalling the sweet memories on the campus and organising cultural function.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin and senior member of the Parishad Azizullah Khan jointly inaugurated the reunion.

Demand for autonomy of CHT reiterated

The central council of Hill Women's Federation was held at Chittagong

Shaheed Minar on Friday. Professor Abul Kashem Fazlul Haq inaugurated the council by releasing pigeons in the morning.

Speakers at the function reiterated their demand for autonomy of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). They urged all to extend their cooperation in this regard.

Leader of Gonotantik Biplobi Jote Amir Abbas Tapu, Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP) General Secretary Alokesh Chakma and Pahari Jobo Forum President Apu Chakma also spoke.

In the afternoon, a discussion on 'Role of womenfolk and their responsibilities in the movement for autonomy in CHT' and Prof Abul Kashem Fazlul Haq, Rehnuma Ahmed, Rokeya Rafique Baby, Hasibur Rahman and Rabi Shankar Chakma addressed the function.

Call to stop further termination

Speakers at the biennial conference of Jatiya Sramik League, Kalurghat Industrial Zone unit, demanded just wages for the workers and stoppage of further termination.

Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury was present as chief guest in the conference on the Shapla premises at Forest Industrial Development Corporation (FIDC) road.

Former Sramik League President Mohammad Nurul Islam presided over the conference. Former MP Mohammad Yousof, labour leaders Mohammad

Sirajullah, Shahidul Islam Dulal, Abu Taher, Abdul Wahab, Abdul Khaleque Chowdhury and AKM Joynal Abedin also spoke.

Restaurant workers press for 5 points

Chittagong District Hotel and Restaurant Workers Employees Union at a rally demanded immediate implementation of its five points including labour law and minimum wages.

The rally was held on District Council premises on Sunday with union leader Mirza Abul Bashar in the chair.

Trade Union Sangha leader Ali Haider, AK Mahmud and Mohammad Mamun, Hotel Restaurant Sweetmeat leader Abu Taher, Zahangir Mintoo, Mohammad Hanif and Babar Ali addressed the rally.

They also demanded reinstatement of Mohammad Hanif and Mahub Ali to their job. Later, a protest procession was brought out that paraded main city thoroughfares.

Classical dance evening

Dancer Tilottoma Sengupta enthralled viewers with her unique performance on the stage of Alliance Francaise Chittagong on Monday.

Alliance Francaise organised the classical dance evening named 'Kathaka' for its members, students and

house rent, medical allowance as per government rule, two festival bonus, announcement of new payscale and interim 30 per cent dearness allowance.

The procession was followed by a rally at city's Anderkilla Intersection. Regional President of Bangladesh Teachers' Association AKM Abdul Wahab Chowdhury presided.

Teachers press 17-point demand

Teachers and employees took to the city streets on Sunday to press home their 17-point demand.

Bangladesh Teacher Employees Unity Council organised the agitation programme demanding modern education policy, 40 to 45 per cent

house rent, medical allowance as per government rule, two festival bonus, announcement of new payscale and interim 30 per cent dearness allowance.

The procession was followed by a rally at city's Anderkilla Intersection. Regional President of Bangladesh Teachers' Association AKM Abdul Wahab Chowdhury presided.

Headmasters meet board chairman

Leaders of Headmasters Forum called on Chittagong Education Board Chairman AKM Shahidullah on Sunday.

They exchanged views on different aspects ranging from quality education to cheating-free examinations.

Forum President and Headmaster of

Municipal Model High School HM Fazlul Quader, Vice President Mohammad Aslam Khan and Abdul Mannan, Secretary M Mohsin Chowdhury and forum leaders Mohammad Habib Ullah, Imdadul Anwar, Nurul Mostafa, Khair Ahmed and Sheuli Dham attended the meeting.

Need for free, fair commission stressed

Speakers at a view exchange meeting stressed the need for a free and fair commission to have a corruption-free Bangladesh by 2006 and placed some recommendations to this end.

'Campaign for Good Governance', a non-government organisation, organ-

ised the meeting at the Chittagong District Council auditorium on Thursday. Professor Dr Tofayel Ahmed of Public Administration Department of Chittagong University was present as chief guest with former President of Chittagong Union of Journalists (CUJ) and Chittagong Press Club Muhammad Idris.

The speakers said corruption in the country would come down to a greater extent if misuse of power can be reduced. "The four-party alliance led by BNP had promised to form a free and neutral Anti-Graft Commission and appointment of an ombudsman to check corruption but they now seemed to have forgotten their election pledges," they said.

Dr. AQM Sirajul Islam, Advocate Khademul Islam, Masuiddowla, Kazi Shahjahan, Rekha Chowdhury and Jane Alam addressed the meeting.

Bijoya Sammilony of lawyers

The annual Bijoya Sammilony of Chittagong lawyers called for fighting against all the evil force to have a fair society.

Justice SK Sinha was present as chief guest at the Sammilony held at Chittagong District Bar auditorium on Saturday.

Advocate Dharendra Lal Dutta chaired the function. Veteran revolutionary Binod Bihari Chowdhury addressed as key speaker. Folk artist Rathindra Nath Roy was accorded reception at the ceremony.

District Session Judge Abdur Rahman Patwari, Bar President Ferdous Ahmad and General Secretary Mujibul Haq also spoke.

ADB keen to help develop Chittagong

Country Director of Asian Development Bank (ADB) Taru Shibuchi expressed keen interest in the joint venture initiatives to develop the port city tipped as the commercial capital of the country.

He had shown the interest at a meeting with Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) President Amir Humayun Mahmud Chowdhury on Thursday.

Shibuchi, referring to unique geographical setting of the port city, said Chittagong is the focal point of economy. Besides, the Chittagong-Dhaka Highway and the rail link are being considered as the 'economic corridor' of the region, especially after recent signing of the SAFTA Agreement.

Amir Humayun earlier sought ADB's cooperation in developing the power sector and road and rail communications.

CCCI Senior Vice President Ershad Ullah, Vice President Monzurul Amin Chowdhury, ADB's Chief Project Implementation Expert Hens Klarsen, Project Officer Mohammad Rafiqul Islam and Ahmed Faruque were also present.



A procession (left) characterised by pomp and grandeur was brought out on the occasion of Cake Festival in the city on Friday. Young girls (right) are enjoying cakes at the festival organised by different cultural organisations at DC Hill Park.

