

Dewanhat Lope Road Project put on ice

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

At last the Dewanhat Lope Road Project of Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) was put on ice after completion of over 90 per cent of the construction work done at a cost of Tk 3.5 crore. CDA took up the project back in 1995 as per recommendation by the Transport Survey Wing of Planning Commission and at the subsequent directive of the then planning minister himself. The road is being constructed beneath the Dewanhat over-bridge.

The road known as Dewanhat CDA Lope-road was to connect Dhaka Trunk Road at Dhaniwalpara to the east and at Dewanhat to the west of Dewanhat intersection. The project aims at easing traffic congestion at the Dewanhat intersection by diverting the long-distance Chittagong-bound transports, such as bus and truck, to the new road. These transports now use an alternative road, causing massive traffic jam at the Dewanhat intersection. The construction work of the 1200-foot long and 40-foot wide road was suspended following a legal suit in 1998, although over 90 per cent of the work has already been completed. As such, only 10 per cent of the work is left at the entry and exit points of the road. In the meantime, illegal occupants started encroaching the almost completed spacious and well-carpeted road.

The case was disposed of and Appellate Division of the Supreme Court gave its verdict in favour of CDA in 2001. And CDA took fresh initiative to complete the construction work and the encroachers were evicted in early 2002. The CDA also submitted a new project profile to the Ministry of Public Works seeking Tk 60 lakh in this connection last year. A top CDA official preferring anonymity told this correspondent that the project profile had been lying at the Ministry of Public Works as it was yet to get approval. "However, we are thinking of reviving the project and fresh initiative would be taken in this regard soon," he added. The problem erupted when a

"vested circle" instigated some landowners to go for a legal suit against CDA claiming compensation and acquirement money for a small piece of land at the eastend of the lope-road at Dhani-walpara area, CDA sources said. CDA acquired two-third of the lands for the project from Bangladesh Railway and the rest from the local people. CDA paid railway Tk 1.5 crore for land acquisition and compensation. The local landowners were also duly paid for acquisition of their land and got compensation for their structures, sources said. The incomplete road is being used as goat market and a huge area of acquired land including a big pond is now under the occupation of some local unscrupulous elements, sources said.



Foy's Lake: A huge chunk of earth has collapsed at a hillock by Foy's Lake during the first shower of the season recently. It reminds the necessity of immediate start of the project taken up for developing Foy's Lake park-cum-amusement centre to attract more tourists. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia laid the foundation stone of Foy's Lake Tourism Centre at Pahartoli on April 19.

ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER



Rubber Garden: A worker slices the bark of a rubber tree to collect its milky sap used to make rubber at a rubber garden at Ramu in Cox's Bazar.

Ramu Rubber Garden in bad shape

SHAHIDUL ISLAM

Ramu Rubber Garden, most viable rubber garden of the country at Ramu upazila about 20km off Cox's Bazar town, is losing its existence gradually. Lack of initiative, mismanagement and indifference have put the garden into a deplorable condition and made it a losing concern for years together. Besides, frequent plundering of trees and encroachment of land property added further misery to the ultimate fate of this important garden. Ramu Rubber Garden was established on a 630 acres of land back in 1961. Later, the

garden area was extended and rubber production began on 1,640 acres planting 1,34,000 trees in 199 blocks, sources said. The garden with 325 officials, employees and workers has produced rubber successfully until 1995 and proved its economic viability. Eleven gardens in Ramu, Chittagong and Sylhet produced about 5,000 tonnes of rubber against annual demand of around 8,000 metric tons even eight years ago and bulk of the quantity came from Ramu Garden alone. Rubber production has declined alarmingly after 1995. Rubber is now being produced from 41,445 trees

Eleven gardens in Ramu, Chittagong and Sylhet produced about 5,000 tonnes of rubber against annual demand of around 8,000 metric tons even eight years ago

on only 750 acres of land, sources said. Plundering of trees, grabbing of garden land and losing of 'life cycle' of trees have long been attributing to worsen the overall situation of the garden. "About 45,000 trees have been plundered in last few years and 700 acres of land occupied by the grabbers," said an official seeking anonymity to this correspondent over phone on Friday. He said four criminal cases were lodged against the encroachers. In 1998, about 20 ansars were appointed to check theft and other illegal activities. But the number of ansars was reduced to 15 later on. Many

of them are now allegedly involved in illegal activities because they do not get salaries for long, sources said. "Many workers and staffs are also doing the same job as means of earning to manage their families," said one staff who does not get salary for ten months. Twelve vehicles including truck, tractor, jeep and motorcycle of the garden are being used for personal and other means, sources said. The garden can revive its past glory and contribute again to the country's economy if appropriate measures are taken immediately, staffs and employees said.

the week that was

Passing out parade of Marine Fisheries Academy

The passing out parade of the 23rd batch of Marine Fisheries Academy (MFA) was held here on Saturday. Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman addressed the ceremony as chief guest at the academy auditorium. Noman said that fisheries apart, the country also has vast resources like gas and oil inside its water territory. He called upon the outgoing cadets as well as others for proper exploration of these potential resources underneath the water to help build up a self-reliant economy. Local lawmaker Sarwar Jamal Nizam was also present at the ceremony with Principal Md. Haider Hashim in the chair. Fifty cadets -- 16 from nautical, 24 from marine engineering and 10 from marine fisheries department, passed out through the ceremony.

Pre-launching meet on "Aamar Desh"

A pre-launching view exchange meeting on the new national Bengali daily Aamar Desh was held at a community centre here on Saturday. With Chittagong Press Club President Abu Sufian in the chair, elite of the port city including social, political, professional and business leaders participated in the meeting.

The guests referred to the role of a fair newspaper in the development of the nation and stressed for strong role of newspaper against the criminalisation of politics and the alleviation of poverty from the country. Scientist Prof Dr. Jamal Nazrul Islam, Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Chittagong University Vice-Chancellor Prof AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury, Purbanchaliya Sangbadptra Parishad President and the Azadi editor MA Malek, BGMEA Vice-President MA Salam, Editor Amanullah Kabir and Associate Editor Imdadul Haq Milon of the daily also spoke.

Painting exhibition ends

A three-day solo painting exhibition of artist Shaikat Jahan ended at Chittagong Press Club auditorium here on Sunday. Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman inaugurated the exhibition. With Helal Uddin Chowdhury, the chief reporter of the daily Azadi, in the chair, Chittagong Press Club General Secretary Kalim Sarwar and convenor of the exhibition Syed Masudur Rahman also spoke.

Turn garbage into resource

Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury stressed the need for turning garbage into resources like fuel and organic fertilisers for gaining economic benefit side by side helping waste management.

He was addressing as the chief guest the inaugural ceremony of a two-day workshop on waste management for improving environment and supply of pure water in slums in the city on Sunday.

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC), Public Health Engineering (PHE), UNICEF and an NGO of Waste Concern jointly organised the workshop at District Council auditorium.

CCC Secretary and Municipal Slum Development Project President Mostafa Kamal Uddin chaired the inaugural ceremony.

UNICEF Project Officer Afroza Ahmad, CCC Chief Conservancy Officer Saifuddin Mahmud Katebi and Poura Bosti and Shahartoli Prakaipa Director Kamal Uddin Ahmad also spoke.

ISPS Code at Ctg port within stipulated time

The process for implementing International Maritime Organisation (IMO) set International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) code at Chittagong Port will be completed within the stipulated time. Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Chairman AMM Shahadat Hossain said this while he was addressing as chief guest at the launching ceremony of a training programme for ISPS implementation at Chittagong Port that started at CPA Training Institute auditorium here on Monday.

To this end, all activities are going on in full swing while for experts having educational qualification of master mariners and marine engineers have been appointed for implementation of ISPS related security

plan at the port, he said. Besides, tenders were floated for installation of close circuit TV cameras at Chittagong port and Automatic Identification System at vessels, he added.

Mercantile Marine Department Principal Officer Captain AKM Shafiq Ullah also addressed the launching ceremony where ISPS Code Implementation Committee Convenor Captain Quamrul Hossain, also the Deputy-Conservator of CPA, made the address of welcome.

Forty officials of CPA and other related organizations would be trained up in the first phase of the programme while 680 by the end of June.

One Bank's port booth opens

To provide the port users with on line banking facility for payment of different port charges in an easier way the Port Booth of One Bank Limited opened on Sunday.

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Chairman AMM Shahadat Hossain inaugurated the booth as the chief guest.

CPA Member (Finance) Ahmed Abul Kashem, Chief Finance and Accounts Officer Harun Mia, Director (Transportation) Quazi Abdul Momen, Secretary Farhad Uddin and Ahsanul Karim, One Bank Managing Director Syed Nurul Aminm, Director ASM Shahidullah Khan and Mohammad Idris were present at the inaugural ceremony.

Tk 10 crore project for fisheries port

plan at the port, he said.

Tk 10 crore project for the rehabilitation of Chittagong Fisheries Port (CFP) has been included in the Annual Development Programme. Implementation of the project would start soon.

Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Abdullah Al Noman said this while he was inspecting the Chittagong Fisheries Port of Bangladesh Fisheries Development Corporation (BFDC) on Saturday.

Noman directed creating further freezing, storage and ice supply facilities for the fish exporters. He also emphasised intensifying the repair and renovation services to both the government and private fishing vessels through the Marine Workshop and Slipways.

Local lawmaker Sarwar Jamal Nizam, BFDC Chairman Abdul Haq, General Manager Abdul Hakim, Manager Zakaria Mamun and Dr. Enamul Haq were present.

CUET teachers for appointment of VC

Teachers of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (CUET) on Sunday brought out a silent procession on the campus demanding immediate appointment of a vice-chancellor to bring in dynamism in the academic and administrative activities.

Later, the Teachers Association held a rally on the EME Building premises.

The teachers at the rally announced that they would form a human chain on the campus on May 23 if their demand was not met immediately.

Founding anni-



The Daily Star - Astech Group 4th Inter-school English Debate Competition began at Regional Public Administration Training Centre in the city on Friday. BGC Trust University Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Sikander Khan speaks at the inaugural ceremony of the competition organised by Dhristy, a cultural organisation.



Four teachers (standing with crests in hands) awarded for their outstanding contribution pose with the guests at a reception ceremony organised by Bangladesh College University Teachers' Association at the District Council auditorium on Wednesday.

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