

High-rise buildings ignore CDA plan

Experts suggest obtaining "completion certificate" before use of buildings by the owners

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In the absence of proper monitoring, an increasing number of high-rise buildings are being constructed without adequate parking lots and entry spaces causing traffic congestion in the city. Experts suggested that obtaining "completion certificate" before use of the building should be made mandatory to end this

practice by the owners of violating Building Construction (BC) rules. Besides, inclusion of Floor Area Ratio (Far) in the BC rules is also necessary for orderly growth of high-rise buildings, they said. Owners show parking spaces in the plans of their structures and get them (designs) approved from the Chittagong Development Authority (CDA), sources said. But, they hardly follow the designs during the construction.

They raise the buildings without the parking space shown in the designs, sources added. Such a culture made the city at many places a mess, causing unbearable traffic gridlock and resulting in wastage of invaluable time. Nasirabad at GEC intersection, Shaheed Abdul Halim Sarak, Mehediabag Road, Kazir Dewry, Lalkhan Bazar Ispahani Intersection, Dampara Wasa



Intersection, Station Road, Jail Road and Laldighirpar are the areas where the construction of buildings without parking lots is most prevalent. In some places, the owners tile the sidewalks in front of their buildings or markets along with a portion of roads to use as parking lots. They also engage private security guards to prevent rickshaws or other public vehicles from parking at those areas. In some cases, the owners keep under-ground parking space in front of their structures that are not spacious enough for movement of either vehicles or the local residents. Some high-rise buildings along the roads at Mehediabagh, Zakir Hossain Road and Kazir Dewry are the instances of such mindless construction. Lack of monitoring by the CDA created the scope for flaws during the construction of such buildings, sources said. Town planner and architect Zarina Hossain said that flaws in construction could have been checked if obtaining a completion certificate was made mandatory for use of buildings. She said "Absence of Floor Area Ratio (Far) in the BC rule encouraged construction of such buildings."

On the other hand, CDA sources said that for lack of manpower they cannot monitor the construction. CDA, however, has identified some buildings and markets that were constructed violating the approved designs. It issued notices to the owners to develop parking lot and keep adequate space in front of their structures, sources said. If the owners of such buildings fail to respond positively, the CDA will take action against them as per its provision, said CDA Chief Engineer Shah Muhammad Akhter Uddin. As per its provision, CDA can demolish the structures constructed in violation of approved design and take stern actions against the owners, he said. Besides, CDA has planned to take action against those who rented out their buildings for commercial purposes at its residential areas, Akhter said.

Crackdown on illegal brick kilns

SHAHIDUL ISLAM


The Department of Environment (DoE) launched a crackdown on illegal brick kilns in a move to limit the kilns' destructive emissions, which pollute the environment in Chittagong. The DoE filed 29 cases against the illegal brick kilns during the last three weeks. The actions were taken against the brick kilns that flout the rules of the Brick Burning Act causing pollution and health hazards, sources said. They are operating without any No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the DoE. Of the 29 cases, 12 were filed in Hathazari upazila, seven in Satkania, four in Rangunia, three in Chandanaish, two in Lohagara and one in Patiya, they said. "There are about 350 brick fields in Chittagong. Of them, only 60 run with a license and follow the DoE act properly and the rest flout the rules," DoE Director Mosharraf Hossain said. "Besides, 162 brick kiln owners, in the wake of our measures, moved to the higher court and obtained stay order for which we are not able to take further action against them," he said. Most of the brick kilns here don't have chimneys with the required height of 120 feet. The average height of their chimneys varies from 30 to 40 feet only. "The low height of chimneys causes serious pollution and unscientific brick kilns emit thick smoke," said Mosharraf Hossain. He said most of the owners tend to remain non-responsive to our warning and whenever we go for legal actions against them they move to the higher court for a stay order. "It often makes our efforts fruitless," he said. We, however, also appealed to the High Court against such moves of the brick kiln owners and the court has vacated five such stay orders." The DoE started the drive in February and would continue this month, he said. The Environment Protection Act 2001 prohibits construction of brick kilns within a three-kilometre radius of any city corporation, municipality, upazila headquarters, reserve forest and areas where at least 50 trees, 50 residential structures and school, college or other educational institutions are located. "If we follow this act properly, I think that there will be no place for us other than the Bay of Bengal or the open sky to establish brick kilns," Abdul Malik, president of Greater Chittagong Brick Field Owners' Association, told The Daily Star on Sunday. He urged the authorities concerned to give them an exclusive zone in Chittagong for brick kilns. "If the government gives us the zone we will not construct any brick kiln in and around the localities or at places prohibited by the Act," he said. Malik, however, dismissed allegations of polluting environment and said, "We, in fact in one sense, are contributing to the eradication of unemployment. Each of our brick field is feeding at least 500 poor people and their dependents." Blaming the 'partial' attitude of the DoE, he said the officials concerned have turned a blind eye to the hundreds of rundown and old transports in the city that pollute environment with thick smoke. "Many industries and factories are enjoying the same impunity as they have political leverage," Malik said.



Brick kilns are common at the Airport, Bayazid, Kattoli and Fateyabad areas in the port city, defying the Chittagong City Corporation ban. The authorities are indifferent to the problem. The picture was taken from the Kattoli area.


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Shaishab, a children's organisation, organised a children's fair at the Shilpakala Academy in the port city on March 1 with a slogan "We want a beautiful childhood for a beautiful world."



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An indigenous girl arranges flowers at the Japanese flower exhibition at a local hotel in the port city on March 4. Ikebana Society organised the exhibition.

Abu Sufian and Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) President Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed were present as chief guests in the seminars. Chittagong ICT Forum organised the seminars. Forum President Nizam Uddin presided. CCCI Vice-President SM Nurul Haque, Director Anwar Showkat Afsar, Amir Azam Chowdhury and Md Shahriar Chowdhury were present. A digital art competition for students of class one to five was held in the morning.

Stall for the disabled at trade fair

Centre for Disables Concern (CDC), a non-government welfare organisation, opened a stall run by disableds at the Chittagong International Trade Fair (CITF) 2005 at Railway Pologround on Thursday. PHP Group Chairman Sufi Mizanur Rahman inaugurated the stall named 'Dristi'. Various products like handicrafts, potteries and toys made by the disabled were put on show and sale at the stall. Sufi Mizanur Rahman urged the affluent section of society to stand beside the disabled. Advocate Khademul Islam Chowdhury, a blind lawyer, noted artist Ahmed Newaj, CDC Executive Director Selim Nazrul, CDC officials Aijt Nandi and Bipin Chakma were present.

Orientation on hospital management

An orientation programme on hospital management services during tremor was held at Lions Eye Hospital on Tuesday. Lions Eye Hospital Secretary Captain (Retd) MSI Bhuiyan inaugurated the programme as chief guest. Associate Professor of Geography Department of Chittagong University Shahidul Islam made presentation on the preparations at family and social level to face earthquake while Community Medicine Department Head of University of Science and Technology, Chittagong (USTC) Professor Jalaluddin Ahmed addressed. Concerned Women for Family Development (Cwfd) and Lions Eye Hospital jointly organised the orientation in assistance with Action Aid Bangladesh and European Commission. Action Aid Programme Officer Khaled Masud Ahmed and Cwfd Programme Officer Nadira Khuku also spoke.

Directive for action against 10 fertilizer dealers

State Minister for Forest and Environment Jafrul Islam Chowdhury here on Thursday directed action against ten dealers, reportedly for creating artificial crisis of fertilizers at Banshkhal upazila. He directed the concerned Agricultural Extension Department to investigate into the reported non-distribution of fertilizers by the ten dealers for the farmers of Banshkhal and take measures accordingly. He made the directive as the local farmers alleged that the dealers came from outside the upazila and drew huge fertilizer from Chittagong Urea Fertilizer Limited. But they sold the fertilizers elsewhere depriving the farmers of Banshkhal.

Reception

Babu Deshapriya Barua Chowdhury was accorded a reception here on Thursday for being appointed as the chairman of the executive committee of a Japan-based humanitarian organization - Rishiyao Koushei Kai. Gunijan Sambardhana Parishad of Gangakhine union, Patiya, accorded the reception to Deshapriya at Chittagong District Council auditorium. Khalilur Rahman, chairman and managing director of KDS Group of Industries, attended the reception as the chief guest. Shamsul Haq Chowdhury secretary general of Abahani Limited, Chittagong, presided.

Mayor Hajj Kafela



The expenditure for performing Hajj under Mayor Hajj Kafela for next year has been fixed at Tk 1.45 lakh. Mayor Hajj Kafela Tours and Travels determined the expenses at a meeting at its office at the Press Club on Tuesday. The meeting chaired by Kafela President and Chittagong City Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury also decided to enlist 500 intended pilgrims for the next Kafela. The intended pilgrims can pay the money in three installment -- one installment Tk 45,000 and two others Tk 50,000 each. The meeting also advised the intended pilgrims to take preparation for leaving for the pilgrimage on an approximate date of December 25 as the next pilgrimage is expected for January 9 next year.

Incorporate health issues into school curriculum

Rotarians at a view exchange meeting here on Thursday emphasised the need for incorporating health issues and awareness into the school curriculum. They also called for a greater community movement to ensure health security in the country. These programmes will help reduce mortality rate to a large extent," they said. The meeting was held at the Chittagong Club auditorium organised by Rotary Club of Chittagong. The meeting was followed by a projection styled "Rotary Health Quest" to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Rotary International. Rotary Club President Dr Moinul Islam Mahmud presided. President-elect Dr Emran Bin Yunus made a presentation on 'Rotary Health Quest' highlighting basic awareness on blood pressure. "Blood pressure is now the third most dangerous health hazard and if common people know how to measure it then BP-related mortality rate will reduce remarkably," Dr Emran said. Former secretary Mokammel Haque, former Rotary Club President Shamsul Kamal, Vice President Dr Nurun Nabi, Dr Omar Faruque Yusuf and Chittagong Press Club General Secretary Kalim Sarwar spoke.

Seminars on computer use

Seminars on 'Computer graphics and multimedia' and 'Computer usage and marketing' were held on the BCS Computer Show premises at the VIP Tower Complex on Thursday. Speakers at the seminars emphasised on the learning of various operations of computer to help reduce unemployment. Chittagong Press Club President Asaduzzaman Noor, president of Bangladesh Abritti Samannaya Parishad, inaugurates the five-day Prama Recitation Festival at the Shilpakala Academy in the port city on March 3, *left*, while local artistes, *right*, perform at the inaugural function.



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