

Annual govt grant for CCC dwindles

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The gradual decline in government annual grant is hindering the development of the port city as well as efforts to make it self-reliant, the Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) sources said. Besides, the outstanding tax and the abolition of Octroi (city tax) added to the problems. CCC got an annual grant of Tk 14 crore in the Annual Development Programme (ADP) for 2004-2005 financial year (FY) from the government. The lump grant also came down to Tk 20.33 crore in the current fiscal from Tk 33 crore of 2000-2001 financial year (FY). Having Chittagong in a geographically significant location and enriched with natural beauty, CCC took up several income generation projects as part of its development efforts. But the

outstanding tax and the dissolution of Octroi system stood in the way of implementing the projects, sources said. The number of holdings (houses) under the 41 CCC wards is around 1.13 lakh, including 23,000 thatched houses exempted from holding tax. The rest 90,000 holdings cleared Tk 31.64 crore as holding tax against Tk 97.95 crore leaving Tk 66.31 crore outstanding in the last fiscal year, sources said. CCC taxes amounting to Tk 62.52 crore, including Tk 35.14 crore due to Bangladesh Railway and Tk 6.06 crore to Chittagong Development Authority, remained unpaid till date, sources said. Besides, Tk 115 crore tax of Chittagong Port Authority remained pending since long, they added. Under the circumstances, Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury at a post-budget

press conference on June 29 urged for reintroduction of Octroi system to help CCC emerge as a self-reliant development agent of the government. He said that to keep its development activities continued CCC at present has to depend largely on the government grant, which is always very insufficient. As such reintroduction of the city tax was required, he added. He said the city tax was the main source of income for local government until the government dissolved it in 1981 to provide CCC with a negligible annual compensation of Tk 1.60 crore since then. Reintroduction of Octroi would help CCC earn annual revenue of at least Tk 50 crore and will be able to continue its development activities without lump grant, he said. The heavy vehicles carrying exported and imported goods

caused massive damage to the city roads as majority of the foreign revenue of the country is earned through Chittagong port, he said. But, Chittagong Port Authority pays only Tk 7 crore as tax to city corporation against Tk 40 crore annually, he said. "I don't want to compromise with this irregularities and deprivation any longer and in the interest of the development of Chittagong I will take necessary steps in this regard," Mohiuddin Chowdhury said. If necessary, CCC will go for legal action and build up movement along with the city dwellers, he said. "I am a part of the government, I am not opposing the government and I am talking about the rights of the city dwellers," Mohiuddin Chowdhury said.

POTHOLES POSE RISK



City roads become worn-out with the advent of monsoon to cause sufferings to the passengers and pedestrians here every year. It not only hinders smooth movement of vehicles but also poses a great risk of accident. The road at Bahodderhat bus terminal area depicts the miserable state of the city streets.

Naikkhongchhari: A transit point for arms smuggle

SHAHIDUL ISLAM

Naikkhongchhari upazila of Bandarban hill district has become over the years a safe transit point for smuggling and dealings of heavy and sophisticated arms. Besides, the remote dense forests here have also turned into a secure hideout for foreign-based, especially Myanmar militant or rebel groups and tribal criminal gangs. In separate or joint raids since September last year, Army and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) dismantled several hideouts and recovered around 200 sophisticated firearms, ammunitions and war-instruments from Naikkhongchhari. The arms and ammo included Ak-47 rifle, M-16,

Ak-56, G-3 rifle, foreign-made pistol, anti-aircraft rocket launcher, anti-tank grenade, hand grenade, land mine, explosives and military uniform. On June 17, a joint team of army and police in a predawn raid at Kalaghatta in Bandarban arrested nine Manipuri people whom they linked to an insurgent group of Indian state of Manipur. The law enforcers picked up 10 people from the house of one RK Khambal and a farmhouse deep into the forest, but later released one after primary interrogation. They seized some Indian currencies, a powerful binocular and some documents from their possession. They are active members of a rebel outfit, the People's Liberation Army of Manipur (PLAM), which is fighting for an independent state,



sources said. Law enforcers arrested two criminals Zahed Alam and Monzur Alam (both are from Ramu in Cox's Bazar) with 190 bullets of Ak-47 rifle at Naikkhongchhari on May 28.

An army-BDR joint team on March 14 raided deep forest at Mong Thua area in Dochhari Bazar and recovered seven SMG, seven walkie-talkies, 29 land mines, seven detonators and few instruments from a

Myanmar-based militant groups collect heavy firearms, including AK-47 rifles and conduct training camps at the deep forests of Naikkhongchhari. A portion of those firearms are sold out to different terrorist groups in Bangladesh

makeshift hideout.

Army and BDR dismantled a militant hideout and seized 11 Ak-47, 53 magazines, over 1500 bullets of Ak-47 and huge instruments at remote Chikanchhari forest on January 6. In another

raid at the same place on December 16 last year, law enforcement agencies recovered 25 Ak-47, two M-16s and huge ammunitions and explosives. Several Myanmar-based militant groups have set up their

hideouts at deep forests of Naikkhongchhari, sources said. They used to operate from there, collect heavy firearms and conduct training camps. A portion of those firearms are sold out through arms dealers to different terrorist groups in Chittagong, Dhaka and other parts of the country, sources added. The sophisticated firearms like Ak-47, Ak-56, M-16, G-3 rifle, SMG, pistol, grenade have a good demand to criminal groups operating in Chittagong, Dhaka and elsewhere and they buy those arms at a very high price, sources said. Ak-47, M-16 and G-3 rifles are sold at Tk 1.50 to Tk 2 lakh; Israeli-made Uzi submachine gun and Ak-56 rifle at Tk 1 to Tk 1.50 lakh; sophisticated pistol at Tk 50,000 to Tk 1 lakh; a hand

grenade at Tk 2,000; an Ak-47 bullet at Tk 30 and a bullet of Tommy gun at Tk 20, sources added. The most active militant groups are Arakan Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (ARSO), National United Party of Arakan (NUPA), Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front Organisation (ARIFO), Democratic Party of Arakan (DPA), Arakan Rohingya National Organisation (ARNO), Arakan Liberal Party (ALP) and Arakan Army (AA). Bangladesh and Myanmar has a 188-kilometre borderline. Of this, about 100 km from pillar no 1 to 55 is protected with arrangement of paramilitary BDR. But the remaining 88 kms are left unprotected, as those are dense forests, sources said.

the week that was

JBIC submits report on Karnaphuli Water Project

JBIC team lead by Kenji Hori presented the interim report on Karnaphuli Water Supply Project to Chittagong Wasa Chairman Maksumul Hakim Chowdhury here on Sunday. The project will be implemented by the Chittagong Wasa with the financial assistance of Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). It would pave the way for Wasa to implement the project to produce an additional quantity of 13.5 crore liters of water per day. The JBIC team led by Kenji Hori presented the interim report of Special Assistance Project Formation (SAPROF) study at a ceremony at Chittagong Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) conference room. Former commerce minister and Chittagong District MP Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury was the chief

guest at the ceremony with Wasa Chairman Maksumul Hakim Chowdhury in the chair. JBIC had already selected 30 acres of land along the Karnaphuli at Godown area under Rangunia upazila for implementation of the project involving Tk 840 crore, sources said. The organisers at the ceremony said that JBIC and Chittagong Wasa would sign a loan agreement next month to start installation of the project by February next. Wasa officials said that the project scheduled to be completed by 2010 would be implemented by 2009.

Dental, blood grouping camp

Swadhin, a voluntary organisation run by diploma students, held a dental, blood-grouping and homeopathic camp at Progressive Polytechnic Institute (PPI) at Halishahar on Saturday. PPI Principal MJS Quareshi inaugurated the camp while Swadhin



Munmun Ahmed and Tabassum Ahmed along with co-artists perform at a classical dance titled "Kaththwak Sandhya" organised by Indian High Commission at the Institute of Engineers Bangladesh,

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ntv celebrates 2nd founding anniversary

The second founding anniversary of ntv was observed amid grandeur and befitting way here on Sunday. A function celebrating the anniversary was held on the Chittagong Press Club premises. Ntv fans and elite of the city attended the function. Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Abdullah Al Noman, Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Chittagong University Pro-VC Professor Dr. Muhammad Shamsuddin, Chittagong Press Club President Abu Sufian, General Secretary Kalim Sarwar, Chittagong Chamber President Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed and renowned folk singer Shefali Ghosh also attended the function.

President Md. Enamul Haq Sagor attended as the chief guest. A 21-member medical team led by Swadhin Chittagong unit leader Muhammad Mayeen Uddin conducted the camp providing treatment to 61 dental and 19 homeopathic patients. The camp also carried out 42 blood-grouping tests.

CCC free medical camp

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) medical camp set up at Fateyabad Sandwip Colony began its service here on Saturday. Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury launched the camp to

provide free treatment to distressed pregnant mothers and children of the slum there. He said the launching ceremony that side by side with providing free treatments the camp would also conduct circumcision and nose and ear piercing free of cost. The camp provided treatment to some 750 women and children, conducted 32 circumcision and 365 nose-ear piercing on the day. Speakers at a dialogue emphasised the need for effective mass awareness campaign to check spread of drug addiction in the society. Voluntary organisation Jugantor Samaj Unnoyon Sangstha organised

the discussion at its Korbaniganj office on Wednesday with its Executive Director Yasmin Parvin in the chair. Director of the organisation Saidul Arefin, General Secretary Mahbubul Hakim, Ratan Kanti Das, Joyrab Begum, Hasan Murad, Ohidul Alam and Arza Begum also spoke. They urged the government and non-government organisations, social activists, people's representatives, professionals and religious leaders to come forward in fighting against the drug addiction. 'Corruption, dishonesty main problem' International Islami University,

DELL seminars

The seminar calendar for literature programme of the Department of English Language and Literature (DELL) of Premier University was published here on Sunday. As per the schedule of the seminar programme 13 articles will be presented in five seminars in the July-December semester of the department. The seminars will be held at university conference room on July 31, August 28, September 25, October 25, and November 27, says a press release signed by DELL President Professor Dr. Mohit Ul Alam.



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A street boy casts his vote to elect Shishu Parishad (Children's Council) at Chawk Bazar. Bright Bangladesh organised the election in association with Let Children Speak Project of UCEP on Monday.



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Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury leads a colourful procession marking the 2nd founding anniversary of ntv on Sunday.