

Move to beat water woes

Wasa to go ahead with Tk 162 crore Madunaghat project soon

SHAHIDUL ISLAM

Against the backdrop of deepening water crisis in the port city, the Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) at last seems to have appeared with realistic term or hope to mitigate the decade-old sufferings, thanks to the positive response from the Italian government.

Processes are underway to start formally the work of Madunaghat Water Supply Project at a revised cost of Tk 162 crore (around 12 million Euro), sources at Chittagong Wasa said.

The project is one of three big projects under Chittagong Wasa's "Short Term Action Plan" to be implemented in two years with a capacity to produce around 27 crore litres of water in addition to present production of only 18 crore litres against the daily demand of over 40 crore litres for 38 lakh people of Chittagong City Corporation, sources said.

The current production can only meet less than half of the demand to attribute to the acute sufferings of the city dwellers, sources said.

Italian government-financed Madunaghat project alone will contribute 4.5 crore litres of water daily, Wasa chairman Maqsumul Hakim Chowdhury told The Daily Star.

He said Italy has agreed to provide the loan of 11.82 million Euro (around Tk 162 crore) to the project under easy terms and interest payable in 60 years.

He said a three-member Italian team visited Bangladesh on October 16 to discuss about signing an agreement (financial convention) for the Madunaghat project.

"I hope the project work will start formally in four months after signing the agreement next month," Maqsumul said. It will take at least two years to complete, he added.

Wasa sources said the Italian government is giving the loan at an interest of only 0.5 percent and Bangladesh will not require paying the loan in first 25 years.

In 2001, Chittagong Wasa floated an international tender for the project and an Italian contractor firm named TNE-SPA won the bidding.

The project cost was estimated at Tk 88 crore, which got the approval from the cabinet purchase committee in September, 2003. The project was later revised at Tk 162 crore due to hike of dollar price in the international market, sources said.

Apart from Madunaghat project, Chittagong Wasa also will implement two other big projects under its 'Short Term Action Plan.' The two projects are: Karnaphuli Water Supply Project with a daily production capacity of 13.50 crore litres and the extended unit of Mohra Water Treatment Plant (under phase II of Mohra project) with capacity of nine crore litres.



The site for Madunaghat Water Supply Project of Chittagong Wasa on the bank of the river Halda under Hathazari upazila.

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Students hardly bother travelling by the overcrowded shuttle train and take it rather as a pleasure ride.

Culture on wheels

Shuttle train service between the port city and the Chittagong University has been a great source of joy for the students

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR

The shuttle train has been a great source of joy nurturing latent talents, including the cultural ones and sharing thoughts, for the Chittagong University students for long.

Of 16,000 students, the university has accommodation facilities only for some 5000 in its nine dormitories, including three female halls and a few cottages.

The shuttle train, between the port city and the Chittagong University, carries about 11,000 students to the university from the city everyday.

Excluding a few travelling by buses, maxis or auto-rickshaws, they are to depend on two shuttle trains operating five times a day.

As such, during the one and a-half hour journey of 22 kilometres, it offers the huge number of students a nice time to practise latent cultural talents and exchange thoughts and views on different issues enriching mental faculty.

Around one and a half dozen of shuttle-based musical groups have developed over the years as most of the students pass the time amid a huge merriment gossiping and singing.

Members of these groups sing popular songs using different parts of the compartment body as musical instruments to create rhythm.

The groups are Cockpit, Khaitta Kha, Boiragi, Cherubim, Who Cares, Weapons, War Goods, Vagabond, Bangali, Always, Non-stop, Black Hole, Cyclopes, Auto and CU Virus.

Rashedul Hasan Tusher, a member of 'Cherubim', said, "We enjoy singing inside the compartment that helps us develop fellow feelings and friendships with students of different departments."

It makes one feel the urge for going to the university regularly, Tusher said.

Krishnabrata Bhattacharya, member of 'Always', says, "I cannot think of going to the university without the group for a single day."

"We enjoy the journey because these groups perform and sing in the train," said Rafiya Sultana, a student of Communication and Journalism.

It helps students not to bother when they sit on windows, passages and doors in the overcrowded shuttle trains that carry at least 300 students in each of the nine 100-seat compartments, she said.

Besides, the students of the highest educational institution get a chance to exchange their thoughts and opinions on any subject during the journey.

The body of the compartments also provides room for practice and display of various pieces of short writings, poems, advice and comments. Sometimes, political and other programmes or demands are also brought to the notice of the students through announcements or posters and leaflets pasted or inscribed on the compartment body.

It, however, is always not a pleasure ride because a section of students travel sitting on the rooftops and the student wings of political parties make the shuttle train as their target of attack to press their demands.

On the other hand, the age-old coupes allowing rainwater to come inside and worn-out railway tracks posing risk of accident mar the pleasure of travelling by the shuttle train.

Sometimes, rush of beggars and local people, mainly the city-bound vendors who board on the train with bag and baggage, hamper the refreshing atmosphere that means so much to the students.

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Exhibition to create interest about space

With a view to enhancing knowledge and creating interest among the students about the space, an exhibition and slide show was held at the Ispahani Public School and College auditorium here on Saturday.

Bangladesh Astronomical Society organised the exhibition in association with Ispahani Public School and College.

During the exhibition a discussion was also held where astrologist FR Sarkar gave an analytic speech about different topics on space with Principal Professor Hasina Zakaria in the chair.

Bangladesh Chemistry Association Secretary Dr Md Mobarak Ali Akand and NUM Hossain also spoke at the discussion while Sanjida Shahin, Prof Mujibullah, Rokhsana Begum, Prof Segufta Sharma, Prof Mukul Barua, Main Uddin Ahmad and Prof Zowharul Bhattacharya took part in the question-answer session.

'Eradicate gender discrimination'

Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury on Wednesday said there is no alternative to the total eradication of gender discrimination from the society for onward economic development of the country.

The city mayor said this while inaugurating a two-day workshop titled, "Gender and Development" organised by Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts (BITA) in association with the Action Aid, Bangladesh at the Chittagong Theatre Institute auditorium.

"Womenfolk are now coming up in different professions while consciousness was growing among them about their rights. This trend has to continue for the greater interest of the nation," he said.

BITA Executive Director Sishir Dutt presided over the launching ceremony where Action Aid Bangladesh Women Rights section chief Khuku Chakrabarty and BITA Project Coordinator Nasim Banu also spoke.

Speakers at the workshop emphasised developing a good relation

between CCC and the development agencies to establish women's rights.

Call to donate blood

The speakers at a blood donation programme urged the adult persons of sound health to donate bloods regularly after every five months in a noble effort of saving lives.

Lions Clubs of Chittagong Karnaphuli, Leo Club of Chittagong Karnaphuli and Leo Club of Chittagong Bandhar jointly organised the blood donation programme at a community centre at Love-lane on Friday.

Some 40 bags of blood were collected at the programme conducted with the help of Sandhani, a leading organisation of medical and dental students for collecting blood.

Lions District Governor Akram Hossain was present as the chief guest with Iftekhar Hossain Khan in the chair.

Former district governor Abdul Gaffar Dobhash, Nader Khan and Rupam Kishore Barua were special guests. Hasna Hena Foyz, Asheda Zalat, Aslam Chowdhury, SM Samsuddin,

Prashun Kumar Barua, KM Rahman, Jahangir Mia, Sitara Gaffar and Kamruzzaman Liton were present.

Seminar on higher education in Malaysia

A seminar on information about admission and higher education in the universities abroad was held at Agrabad in the city on Thursday.

H & I Council organised the seminar at its Agrabad Office to give details on Malaysia Sunway University College.

Co-ordinator of the university college Ragesh Kumar Sharaf, Sobastan Lu Un Lang of Executive International Student Office, representatives of H&I Dhaka and Chittagong Office Robiul Hossain and Saniul Islam were present at the seminar.

Speakers at the seminar said Sunway University offered world-class facilities to the students.

"The university authority makes arrangement to provide visa without any interview and offers credit card system, cheaper accommodation,

library and computer lab facilities".

"The university offers degrees on BBA, MBA, Engineering, Accounting, IT, Hotel Management, Telecommunication, Psychology, CAT, Multi Media and ACCA and other higher courses", they added.

Safe disposal of clinical waste demanded

Environmental organisations of Jono Uddog, Save Chittagong and Barnali jointly formed a human chain in front of the Chittagong Press Club on Thursday demanding safe disposal and destruction of hospital and clinical wastes.

The human chain was followed by a rally where Professor Idris Ali, ADAB chairman SM Nazir Hossain, Sharif Chowhan of Jono Uddog, Iqbal Bahar Sabery of CSDF, Tushar Kanti Basak and Morshed Alam of Save Chittagong, Barnali executive director Abul Kalam Azad, Bibhuti Ranjan Das of Agrajatra and Md Mohiuddin of LID spoke at the rally.

Barnali Chairman Saroj Kanti Das presided.



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An artiste performs at the second round of the talent search competition organised by Bengal Foundation at Theatre Institute, Chittagong auditorium on Friday.

Music competition held

The two-day second round of a regional competition searching talents for creative Bangla songs concluded here on Saturday.

Bengal Foundation organised the competition at Chittagong Theatre Institute auditorium where 196 artistes from different districts under Chittagong division participated in the three events of Nazrul, folk and modern songs.

Popular songster Subir Nandi, folk singer Mridul Kanti, Mohiuzzaman Chowdhury, Sumon Chowdhury, Yakub Ali Khan, Mita Haq and Zahir Alam were present as the judges at the competition.

Organisation director Nubha Nahid Chowdhury conducted the concluding ceremony.

Aboshar Sahitya Award announced

Aboshar, a cultural organisation, at its regular monthly gathering Sahitya Adda at the Chittagong Academy

auditorium on Friday decided to award two litterateurs for their outstanding contribution in their respective fields.

The personalities to receive "Aboshar Sahitya Award" are Sukumar Barua and Sabih Ul Alam.

The meeting with Sattayabrata Barua in the chair decided to accord the awards on the organisation's upcoming 22nd founding anniversary.

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Bipul Barua and poet Biswajit Sen spoke at the meeting. Srijon Kanti Pal, Goutam Kanungo, Rupam Mutsuddi, Mamun Al Rashid, Abdul Ripon, Hanif Chowdhury, Liton Kumar Chowdhury, Sarwar Amin Babu, MA Halim, Suman Accharya, Arif Raihan and Prama Kanungo rendered songs and recited poems.



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Outgoing First Vice-President of BGMEA MA Salam receives new First Vice-President SM Abu Tayab with bouquet at a reception ceremony of Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) at Agrabad BGMEA Bhaban on Monday.



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Energy and Mineral Resources Advisor Engineer Mahmudur Rahman gives away certificate to a student at a seminar of Cisco Local Academy of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (Cuet) at Cuet auditorium on Monday.