

CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDINGS

Most of city dwellers ignore RDA rules

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi Development Authority (RDA) has failed to operate effective drives against unauthorised establishments and buildings that are not approved by RDA. City people are constructing buildings ignoring RDA rules and without approved design, according to the sources. More than 10,000 buildings have been constructed in the city areas without RDA approval, sources added. RDA Chairman Tapan Chandra Majumder, however, said they are going to launch drives soon against those establishments and their owners. Aiming to build a planned and well-decorated town, the RDA was established in 1977. It was mandatory for building owners to collect layout design of commercial and residential buildings, sources said.

But in most cases, the building owners constructed, extended or amplified their buildings violating RDA building code. In many cases, RDA approved design for a single storied building while building owners constructed three-storied buildings without the permission of the authority later. RDA authorities, however, did not take any punitive actions against those illegal building owners who extended building violating RDA rules. A source in the RDA said, since 2005, they spotted 8,500 buildings that were constructed in the city areas without collecting permission and approved design of RDA. The figure however, crossed over 10,000 in the recent days. According to the sources, RDA filed 40 cases against the lawbreakers during the past six years between 1996 and 2002. But RDA

only demolished a part of a building near city's PN Government Girls' School. Many local residences have filed written complaints to the RDA authorities seeking legal actions against such illegal buildings. Despite receiving RDA notices, the construction works of many buildings are still going in full swing. According to the sources, hundreds of unplanned buildings have been being constructed at city's Seroil, Mothpukur, Sagarpara, Tikapara, Bhadra, Kadiaganj and Court, Naodapara, Baliapukur and Upashahar areas but RDA rarely knocks those building owners. Abul Kalam Azad, an RDA official, said they could not go against the accused people for lack of manpower. Since RDA has no magistrates, they could get less cooperation from the administration for launching eviction drives, he added.

Afghan dist governor held for links to Taliban

AFP, Kabul

Afghan authorities have detained a district governor and his police commander for alleged links with the Taliban after militants briefly captured the area a week ago, the government said yesterday. The officials, from Bakwa district in the western province of Farah, have also been dismissed from their jobs, after the Taliban were able to hold the district capital for several hours before being ejected by security forces. "They were detained over links to Taliban," interior ministry spokesman Zemarai Bashary said of district chief Mohammad Ismail and his police chief, Haikal Khan. About 300 Taliban rebels attacked the town overnight last Monday and forced out the weak police force. Afghan security forces backed by the Nato-led International Security Assistance Force retook it the next day.



Some of the victims of yesterday's devastating fire at Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC) Bhaban are now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

ILLEGAL FEES
JU students postpone siege programme

JU CORRESPONDENT

The siege programme enforced by left-leaning student organisations of Jahangirnagar University (JU) to stop realising 'illegal' fees from admission seekers by the respective departments, has been postponed till March 5. The 'Committee to resist realisation of illegal fees' (CRRIF) suspended the programme following an assurance by Proctor Prof Kamrul Ahsan that a transparent account on the expenditure of the realised money will be provided. The CRRIF enforced the programme in last two days barring admission seekers selected from the merit list to get themselves enrolled paying the illegal fees. Flouting the rules, a total of 24 departments except the newly incepted two were realising varied sum of money ranging from Tk 500 to Tk 10,000 during enrolment of students every year in the name of departmental development or 'Sangsad'. The realised money is apparently spent to buy computers, refrigerators, water-filter, air cooler and intercom system. In the last few years, a number of students who topped the merit list at different departments' admission test could not get admission for failing to pay illegal fees. The CRRIF leaders vowed to launch tougher agitation if the realised money is not returned to the admission seekers and a transparent account on the spending of money is not provided by March 5.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT JU
No decision yet about culprit

JU CORRESPONDENT

The syndicate of Jahangirnagar University (JU) sat yesterday to decide the fate of the teacher of Bangla department suspended after alleged sexual harassment. The meeting was called on completion of investigation by a probe-body headed by VC Prof Khandaker Mustahidur Rahman. A first-year female student of Bangla department brought an allegation of sexual harassment against the teacher on November last year. Earlier, the university authorities convinced the agitators under the banner of 'Jahangirnagar Against Harassment (JAH)' to withdraw fast unto death programme assuring them of taking lawful action against the teacher by February 21. However, no action has been taken yet. The syndicate has been in progress as of 6:45pm.

China wants free, fair, neutral polls in Bangladesh
Ambassador tells Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

The Chinese government wants free, fair and neutral elections to establish a democratic government in Bangladesh, Chinese Ambassador Chai Xi said here yesterday. The outgoing Ambassador made the remarks during his farewell call on with Awami League President Sheikh Hasina at her Sudha Sadan residence. "China wants a free and fair election in this country through which a democratic government could be formed," AL General Secretary Abdul

Jalil quoted Chai Xi as saying to Hasina during more than an hour-long meeting. The Chinese envoy told reporters that he expressed his sincere hope for stability and prosperity of Bangladesh. Chai Xi said the Communist Party of China (CPC) has a long and historical party-to-party relationship with AL and he expressed his desire to strengthen the relationship between the two countries as well as the two parties. He hoped the AL president would visit China again as the chief of her party delegation. Considering Bangladesh as his

second home, Chai Xi said it is very painful for him to say goodbye to Bangladesh. "But, I have to do it." Jalil said they discussed the relationship between AL and CPC and hoped the relationship would be strengthened in future. "As Prime Minister, Hasina took our relationship to a new height," he observed. Hasina recalled Chai Xi's contributions during his tenure as Ambassador to the development of Bangladesh.



Winners of Pran Prothom Alo Jatiya Achar Protijogita 2006 pose for photograph with Editor of the weekly Begum Noorjahan Begum at Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

PILFERING TRANSPORT FUEL
2 CCC officials suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) yesterday suspended its two officials and two drivers because of their involvement in pilfering transport fuel. CCC authorities also formed a three-member inquiry committee to probe the matter. Joint forces on Sunday arrested CCC Superintendent Engineer (mechanical) Abul Hasnat, Transport Pool Officer-1 Joysen Barua, CCC drivers Abdur Razzak, Shah Alam and owner of a petrol pump Jalal Ahmed in connection with pilfering fuel from the corporation's transport pool section. During interrogation by joint forces, the two drivers confessed that they

have long been pilfering fuel being allocated for CCC transport in connivance with the superintendent engineer and pool officer and the petrol pump owner. The three-member probe committee headed by director, local government, Chittagong has been asked to submit its report within 15 days. The committee has also been asked to investigate into the involvement of the arrestees in details, the extent of the financial loss of the corporation owing to such pilferage, and negligence of the supervisors concerned. Meanwhile, all the five arrested in this connection were handed over to Kotwali Police Station.

Minor girl raped at Keraniganj

UNB, Keraniganj

A paedophile was arrested for raping a minor girl at Suvadda Paschimpara yesterday. Jodge Mia, 40, a local BNP leader, was arrested in this connection when the victim's grandmother filed a case against him. The victim aged about 10, was admitted to Paricharja Clinic while she was bleeding. She told the relatives and police that neighbour Jodge Mia allured her to go to his home at about 11:00am where he deflowered her. The neighbours rescued the girl when she cried for help. On information, police rushed to the spot and arrested Jodge Mia.

'Issues of contemporary politics' launched

A book titled 'Issues of Contemporary Politics' by ambassador Kazi Anwarul Masud was launched at a ceremony in the city recently, says a press release. Ambassador Masud is also a columnist of The Daily Star. Ambassador and former foreign secretary Faruque Choudhury was present as the chief guest at the publication ceremony held under the sponsorship of Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (Bilia). Describing the publication of the book as timely, Workers' Party president Rashed Khan Menon hoped that the message given in the book would provide lessons for the current politics in the country.

Ambassador Mohiuddin Ahmed and ambassador Mahub Alam referred to the various conflicts raging in the world today. Former foreign secretary Syed Moazzem Ali spoke of his experience as ambassador to Iran in connection with the Iranian nuclear quest mentioned in the book. Ambassador Faruque Choudhury hoped that more books particularly dealing with South Asia and South East Asia would be published in future. Former works secretary Jagannath Dey also spoke at the programme moderated by Bilia Director Ambassador Waliur Rahman.



The launching ceremony of a book titled 'Issues of Contemporary Politics' was held at Bilia auditorium in the city recently. From left are Kazi Anwarul Masud, Faruque Choudhury and Waliur Rahman.