

Move to turn Cox's Bazar into a modern resort city

MUAZZEM HOSSAIN SHAKIL

An ambitious master plan has been undertaken to turn the resort town of Cox's Bazar into an ultramodern city which can be able to meet up the needs of the 21st century.

Major non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have expressed their keen interest to take part in the development work at an opinion exchange meeting at Hilltop Circuit

House here recently.

Entrepreneurs from Dhaka and Chittagong, local journalists, business, administration and joint forces officials were present at the meeting. Cox's Bazar Deputy Commissioner (DC) Aminul Islam presided.

Renowned sculptor Rasa and his three friends led by Ragib Uddin Ahmed enthralled the participants in the meeting by presenting the

master plan. The attractive feature was a global standard 'Beach Park' at Laboni Point and a major sculpture at its centre which is to be built at an estimated cost of Tk 3 crore. Five more small sculptures surrounding the big one will be the added attraction. The main sculpture will be 60 feet high where portraits of different species of sharks can be seen along with sea wave. They said the dream city is now a matter of time.

A drawing of the probable sculptures along with a fountain which is to be built at the entry point of the resort city was also shown to the participants.

Meanwhile, the existing shell market was demolished from the original site. It will be replaced by a modern one.

Through advertisement, attention of major organisations with social commitment have been drawn to construct the sculpture.

Meanwhile, the officials of Grameen Phone, City Bank, Grameen Bank including Aitel and other organisations have shown their keen interest to take part in construction of the main sculpture and the beautification work.

The scheme includes construction of city gate, installation of cable car service and observation tower including an open stage theatre where renowned artistes of the country are likely to perform in future. The observation tower and other establishment will be of different nature.

There will be touch of classic art in the work.

Cox's Bazar Tourism Development Committee has welcomed any other improved plan, if any, from individuals or organisations.

In the meantime, the Tourist Zone of Cox's Bazar was freed from billboard. Billboard owners have been asked to refrain from giving one sided advertisement, rather they were asked to add something environment-friendly component. Flower beds will beautify the town and its surroundings beyond 15-kilometre area.

All the initiatives will turn Cox's Bazar into a different city.



PHOTO: STAR

The design of sculpture, 'Sagorika,' of Beach Park at Laboni point in Cox's Bazar sea beach is on display at a meeting of Cox's Bazar Tourism Development Committee in the resort town recently.

Hilla still a common practice in Bogra village

23 incidents occurred at Dashtika village

HASIBUR RAHMAN BIULI, BOGRA

Tota Mia had to part from his father Md Af sar about three months ago although he and other family members were rehabilitated in society after his mother Mosammat Aysha's Hilla marriage with neighbour Bula Mia.

Mosammat Aysha told this correspondent, her husband Af sar pronounced the word 'Talak' aiming at her during a quarrel several years ago. As other villagers learnt this, village influentials decided to perform Hilla marriage to Aysha. When Af sar opposed the decision, village elders abandoned him. They did not call Af sar or his family members in any social or religious function. Even Af sar was not allowed to say prayers in local mosque.

This is a typical situation at Dashtika village in Bogra suburb. The situation prevails here for years together, said Hilla marriage victims

Mosammat Rahima, Mosammat Rabea, Mosammat Golapi and Mosammat Daisi.

Tota managed to normalise relationship with villagers by handing over Tk 500 in cash to Bula Mia. But others like Bula Mia raised the rate of Hilla marriage from Tk 500 to 4,000. So, Samsu Mia failed to give Hilla marriage to his wife Bilkis. Similar was the condition of Ralhan's wife Habiba Begum and Kashem's wife Tahera Begum. Hanjela's first wife Sahera is still waiting for Hilla marriage. Hanjela's second wife Saleha was compelled to marry her 70-year-old father-in-law Md Kanchan Mia through Hilla marriage about five years ago, but Sahera did not get an opportunity to get back to the social fold through such marriage.

However, local elders did not acknowledge this saying if anybody pronounces the word 'Talak' in presence of his wife their conjugal life will come to an end, according to Islamic custom. In that case, Hilla marriage is a must to resume their conjugal life, they said.

But several years ago some Islamic scholars said, at a meeting in Kahali upazila, that Islam does not permit such type of marriage. The meeting was told that any couple's conjugal life will end if any sane man pronounces 'Talak' three times. But if he is angry, 'Talak' will not be effective, the meeting said.

Several incidents of Hilla marriage occurred in the aforesaid village in Bogra sadar upazila in last 25 years. In turn, Bula Mia, Md Sattar, Md Jobbar, Md Akbar, Md Fakira and Md Samad were bridegrooms in Hilla marriages.

Although the situation improved slightly at Dashtika village following publication of stories, but no administrative action was taken against the culprits. Grameen Alo, an NGO, is working to improve the socio-economic condition there for the last few years. Grameen Alo Executive Director Ferdousi Betum said at least 23 incidents of Hilla marriage happened at the village, but the victim women did not dare to seek justice from any body. Still they do not dare to do so, Ferdousi added.

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