

## Tk 52.66cr fish landing centre fails to attract traders

**ABDULLAH-AL MAHMUD**  
 The most modern fish landing centre of the country at Firingee Bazar in the port city is lying idle round the year.  
 Bangladesh Fisheries Development Corporation (BFDC) developed the centre under Fish Landing, Preservation and Distribution Facilities Project on the south bank of the river Kamaphuli at Monoharkhali (locally known as Bridgeghata) in 1994. The Tk 52.66 crore project was implemented with the financial and technical assistance of Japan to maintain quality of fishes and ensure proper price for the fishermen. The project was also aimed at developing an improved supply and distribution system.  
 The centre went into operation in April 1994, which was inaugurated by the then prime minister Khaleda Zia on July 2 the same year.  
 But, the centre could not be made operational in true sense

from the very beginning of its inception even for a single day due to poor management and leasing out of warehouses to party men, who have no experience in fishing or fish trading.  
 All the privately managed "ghats" (fish landing centres), particularly one at Fishery Ghat, are doing brisk business of fish landing and distribution amid muddy and unhygienic conditions that damage quality of fishes and pose threat to public health as well as reduce the expected volume of export, said the sources.  
 The fish traders as well as the fish exporters said poor management is responsible for the present state of the BFDC centre.  
 Leasing out the warehouses to persons without any experiences in fishing or fish trading at the initial stage discouraged the genuine traders and fishermen to avoid the landing centre, they added.  
 Compared to private ghats, the BFDC fish landing centre at Monoharkhali offered better facilities for landing, preservation

and distribution.  
 It was enriched with a 1530 sq-metre floor for trading, an ice plant with a daily production capacity of 32 tons and separate ice crushing machine, 42 warehouses for the wholesalers and cold storage with a holding capacity of 32 tons or 165 cubic meters.  
 With three steel pontoons each measuring 600 sq metre, a 25m X 5m gangway, a steel bridge and necessary equipment, it had arrangement for smooth landing of fishes charging only Tk 5 per mound.  
 At the fish landing centre fishes could be taken to the trading floor or warehouses directly from the fishing boats while carrying fishes from the landing spots to the arats or trading floors standing at some distance in the privately managed ghats took an extra transportation cost.  
 The BFDC centre has diesel filling station, water supply station for fishing boats, a huge car parking space measuring 2020 sq

metre and space for giving berth for 50 to 60 mechanised boats at a time.  
 It can help land fishes weighing 45,000 tons to 60,000 tons annually or 123 tons to 164 tons a day.  
 But, till date the centre could never go for operation up to its capacity with two to three landing taking place a week during the off-peak season, said the sources.  
 The centre witnessed landing of only 6682 kgs of fishes this month, which is around 6.5 tons and about one-twentieth of its minimum capacity, employees of the centre said.  
 With such a poor state of operation, it could not even earn the money required for its maintenance and payment of the staff salaries, they said.  
 "None of us including three officials, three guards, one peon and two cleaners could draw our salaries during the last five months," said the staffs on Monday.  
 Despite reducing the deposit money from Tk 50,000 to Tk

25,000 for taking lease of the warehouses and trading space, only 15 traders now operate at the centre, they said.  
 Of 42 warehouses, 12 were converted into office rooms, 15 being used by the lessees while the rest remained vacant or used for other purposes.  
 Lying almost idle most of the times the overhead harvesting crane and brine tank of the ice plant, ice storage, ice crushing machine and other equipments are rusting away while pontoons and gangway decaying fast.  
 On the other hand, the fish landing centre at Fishery Ghat under the management of Kendrio Matshyajibee Samabai Samity (central fishermen cooperatives society) has become the main and largest wholesale market of fishes in the port city.  
 Ehsanul Huq, manager of the BFDC fish landing centre, said the fishermen and fish traders avoid the centre as it does not allow fishing, landing or sale of jatkas (fish fries).  
 He said Marine Mercantile Department and Fisheries Department should force all the fishing boats to land fishes at the centre, which is mandatory in the MMD rules.  
 The frozen food exporters also emphasised the need for measures by the government to make the centre vibrant.  
 Landing of fishes in the ghats in a conventional way discourages the foreign buyers, said an official of Bangladesh Frozen Food Exporters Association.



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A pothole on a busy road in Amtali area has been posing danger to passengers as well as pedestrians for the last two weeks, but the authorities have turned a blind eye to it.

## Poor policing gives rise to robbery in trains

**NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR**  
 Crime has increased in an alarming rate in trains on Chittagong routes as Government Railway Police (GRP) here are unable to tackle the menace.  
 At least five incidents of robbery and snatching have occurred in trains on different routes in Chittagong in May, leaving 14 passengers injured.  
 Police arrested 20 robbers and snatchers red-handed with the help of passengers in these connections.  
 Fifteen trains leave Chittagong Railway Station everyday for different parts of the country, sources said. Of them, 13 services — Paharika for Sylhet, Sagarika for Chandpur, Kamaphuli for Dhaka, Godhuli for Dhaka, Nasirabad for Bahadurabad, Meghna for Chandpur, Jalalabad for Sylhet, Udayan Express for Sylhet, Dhaka mail for Dhaka, Turna Nishitha for Dhaka, Paharika down train and two shuttle trains for Chittagong University (CU) — need police protection for safety of the passengers and their belongings.  
 Only 60 law enforcers, including 17 policemen and 43 Ansars are managing the huge job at Chittagong Station of GRP while on many occasions the GRP authorities requisite seven

policemen from its Faujdardhat Station and 10 to 15 from the Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP), sources said.  
 An officer in-charge (OC) runs the station with the help of three Sub-Inspectors (SI) and five ASI from the Old Railway Station building.  
 The GRP can't deploy sufficient force in the train in need to save the passengers and their belongings due to shortage of manpower.  
 The authorities only can deploy six to eight policemen

and Ansars in the large trains of 13 to 15 compartments while the number of law enforcers has been decreased considering importance of the train, sources said.  
 Besides, the policemen are to do a huge job that include platform duty, assisting mobile court and eviction drives, GRP station sentry, mail duties, looking after the Unnatural Death (UD) cases, investigation of the cases and raids for arrest of criminals. In addition, some of them go on leave and join training.  
 Attack on passengers and crimes have increased in the running trains due to lack of sufficient law enforcers, sources said.  
 GRP Chittagong Station OC Nihar Ranjan Nath said it is too tough to tackle the robbers and snatchers in the trains by a small number of policemen and ansars.  
 The organised gang of robbers and snatchers take the opportunity of boarding and descending from the running train due to its slow movement from Feni to Chittagong Station following the poor condition of

the track, Nihar said.  
 "Massive eviction drives on footpaths and city slums as well as other parts of the country might be the cause of rising crimes as most of the evicted people went jobless", he added.  
 At least five passengers of the Chittagong-bound Mahanagar Godhuli from Dhaka were injured when they tried to resist a gang of robbers in Faujdardhat area under Sitakunda upazila on May 30. Six of the passengers were arrested in cooperation with the passengers.  
 A gang of robbers stormed into the Chittagong-bound train Sagarika from Chandpur in Bhatiyari area of the same upazila on May 2, leaving seven passengers injured. Police arrested 10 robbers in this connection.  
 Three incidents of robbery and snatching occurred on different trains, leaving a railway attendant and wife of a railway employee injured on May 9, 19 and 22.  
 Passengers caught four robbers red-handed in the incidents. Besides, several incidents of snatching in Chittagong University (CU) shuttle trains occurred that left several students injured.  
 A section of railway employees are also involved with the crimes taking passengers without ticket for money from different spots, sources said.

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## theweekthatwas

### Increase allocation for persons with disability

Speakers at a dialogue called upon the people to come forward for the welfare of the persons with disability side by side the government initiatives.  
 They urged the government too to increase the allocation for them in the upcoming budget.  
 The dialogue titled 'Required Allocation for the Disabled in the Budget' was jointly organised by Centre for Disables Concern (CDC) and Action on Disability and Development (ADD) at Chittagong Press Club on Tuesday.  
 Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong Mokhlesur Rahman was the chief guest in the dialogue with CDC Adviser Dr Moinalul Islam Mahmud in the chair.  
 Additional Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Chittagong Mohiuddin Ahmed Khan and District Governor of Lions Club Kabir Uddin Bhuiyan were present as special guests.  
 Eminent writer Begum Mustari Shafi, sports organiser Minhajuddin Ahmad and Chittagong Ladies Club President Jinat Azam also spoke.  
 Advocacy officer of ADD

Bangladesh Fazlul Azim presented the keynote paper on 'Expectations of the Disabled in National Budget'.  
 The speakers urged the government to ensure the rights of persons with disability in the sectors like education, health, employment, training, social security, transport and communication.  
 Advocacy Director of CODEC Absar Habib, journalist Nazimuddin Shyamal, CARE project manager Ashis Chatterjee, Prof Dr Mamtaz Begum of Agrabad Maa O Shishu Hospital and female ward commissioner of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Rehena Kabir Ranu participated in the discussion.  
**US-Bangla training ends**  
 An eleven-day US-Bangladesh combined training course titled 'Flash Buffalo' ended at Chittagong Naval area on Thursday.  
 The certificate awarding ceremony was held at the BNS Issa Khan. Bangladesh Navy organised the training course.  
 US DA Lt Col Randall and L Koehl Moos were present on the occasion.  
 Four officers and 12 sailors from Bangladesh Navy and Coast Guard and 13 members of US navy took part

in the course.  
 Instructors of US Navy gave the practical and theoretical instructions on different aspects like close quarter, combat, boat handling, visit, boarding, march, seizure, hook and climbed movement.  
**Painting exhibition begins**  
 A six-day painting exhibition of water colours began at the Alliance Française on Saturday.  
 Prof Aloptogin Tushar of Fine Arts Department of Chittagong University (CU) inaugurated the exhibition at a ceremony at Alliance Française gallery.  
 Forty students of CU Fine Arts Department and Chittagong Govt Art College participated in the exhibition.  
 The paintings, displayed at the exhibition, was drawn at a workshop

recently on water colour conducted by ASEM Saem on the bank of river Kamaphuli and on the premises of Pahartali Railway Museum.  
 The exhibition will remain open to all everyday from 4:00pm to 8:00pm.  
**Workshop on film ends**  
 A nine-day workshop titled 'Film and

Television Drama Workshop-2007' ended on Saturday.  
 Resident editor of the daily Prothom Alo Abul Momen distributed certificates at the closing ceremony organised by Ajantrik, a cultural centre, at its office at Jamal Khan Road.  
 Artist Dhali Al Mamun was present at the ceremony.  
 Young filmmaker Nurul Alam Atik conducted the workshop where around 24 participants wrote four complete scripts based on their own stories and thoughts.  
 The workshop included eight theoretical and practical classes, display of foreign films and TV production and open discussion.  
**Save CRP**  
 Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB), Chittagong steering committee members in a statement on Saturday demanded exemplary punishment to those who are responsible in removal of humanist Valerie Taylor from her position as the coordinator of Centre for Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP).  
 They urged the government to take necessary steps to save the national voluntary organisation.  
 ADAB members said Valerie built the organisation collecting money

going door to door of the people of Britain with a view to helping the people with disability and improving quality of their lives.  
 ADAB, Chittagong Chairperson SM Nazer Hossain, Vice-President Shyamal Mazumder, Treasurer Imam Hossain Chowdhury, member Kazi Iqbal Bahar Sabery, Halima Chowdhury, and Umme Kulsum were signatories to the statement.  
**2 drug peddlers held**  
 Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two drug peddlers with 950 bottles of contraband phensidyl here in the early hours of Wednesday.  
 Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab-7, Chittagong raided the TT Building near old Railway Station building at Station Road and arrested two persons at around 2:45am on charge of peddling contraband drugs.  
 The arrestees identified as Md Chan Mia, 27, son of Md Azhar of Gaibandha and Md Jamshid, 27, son of late Mamta Mia of Shikhabaha of Chittagong are allegedly involved in peddling drugs in the area for long.  
 According to their statement, the law enforcers recovered 950 bottles of phensidyl from a room on the rooftop

floor of the building.  
 The arrested were handed over to the General Railway Police (GRP).  
**Safe road demanded**  
 Speakers at a meeting in memory of Prof Chowdhury Anwarul Karim on Saturday urged the government to award capital punishment to the drivers responsible for road accidents.  
 Prof Karim died in a road accident along with his son Chowdhury Hasin Ishtiaq Dipan on June 2 in 2006.  
 The meeting was organised by Professor Chowdhury Anwarul Karim Smiriti Sangsad at Zila Parishad auditorium.  
 Eminent filmmaker Kawsar Chowdhury in his speech emphasised the need for amending the existing laws to punish the drivers responsible for the road accidents.  
 He urged the authorities concerned to make the licence giving process more strict to bring discipline in the transport sector.  
 Dr AQM Sirajul Islam, Prof Muniruzzaman, Engineer Subhas Barua, Faruq-E-Azam Bir Pratik, AKM Abbas Ali Khan, Chowdhury Mohammad Babar and wife of late professor Jaheda Sultana also spoke.



Artiste Subhra Sengupta and her group perform dance at the Nazrul Mela at Nazrul Square on Friday.