

Tk 10000cr project to develop road network, embankments

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

Two four-lane roads-cum-embankments forming parts of an outer ring road will be developed along the coast and the river Karnaphuli with the assistance of Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).

JBIC has already started the process of providing assistance in a TK 10,000 crore project to develop the road network and flood protection embankments in the port city.

Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) will coordinate the project to be implemented by the government with the financial assistance from Japan.

Two Japanese firms Nippon Engineering and Japan Engineering Consultant, have been appointed through an international tenders held in Tokyo on April 20 for implementing the project.

To prepare design, time schedule, financial estimate, tender documents of the project, a 14-member team comprising expert and engineers is scheduled to start work from June 11.

A seven-member team of Japanese experts and engineers led by Kazuhiro Hassigawa of Nippon Engineering will conduct the Special Assistance for Project Formation (SAPROF) study involving around Tk 10 crore.

JBIC will carry out the study from its temporary office at CDA building, sources said.

JBIC Chief Representative Yasuo Fujita on May 21 confirmed the date for SAPROF study on Chittagong city ring road project.

Duration of the study is six months and the team will submit its final report by November, said Fujita.

Fujita requested CDA chairman to provide office space,

equipments, secretarial services and necessary cooperation to the SAPROF team.

To assist in overall development of infrastructure and road network under a private sector infrastructure investment project, JBIC carried out a feasibility study in two phases in 2005 and 2006, sources said.

It signed an agreement with the Economic Relation Division (ERD) in August last year to conduct a study under a project titled "Multi-sector Infrastructure Development in Chittagong".

JBIC conducted the study in cooperation with CDA, for construction of a riverside road along the Karnaphuli stretching from Sadarghat Strand Road to Kalurghat bridge under flood protection embankment project; construction of the 4th Karnaphuli bridge on the upstream and a road linking the bridge with Oxygen-Quish road and Kalurghat bridge under Chittagong bypass and road

construction project; and a 12km road stretching from Patenga to Faujderhat under coastal road and embankment project.

JBIC submitted the study report in February and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the government in March for construction of the riverside road and coastal embankment-cum road involving Tk 10,000 crore.

Under the project the four-lane coastal embankment-cum-marine driveway stretching from Patenga to Faujderhat will be constructed with a 100m width while its height will be raised by another 3 meters, CDA Chairman Shah Muhammad Akhter Uddin told this correspondent at his office on Monday.

The four-lane riverside road to be constructed along the Karnaphuli stretching from Kalurghat to Sadarghat under the same project would have the same length and width, he added.

High price makes seasonal fruits sour for consumers



Seasonal fruits at a store at Station Road in the port city.

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DWAIPAYAN BARUA

Delicious seasonal fruits have turned sour for consumers in Chittagong due to their high prices caused by poor supply even in the peak fruit season.

Supply of mango, the first choice of most consumers, is also poor this year compared to the previous years due to fall in production caused by monsoon nor'wester in the northern districts, said the traders.

With the advent of summer this year, local varieties of seasonal fruits like mango, jackfruits, litchi, pineapple and others produced in Chittagong region started arriving in the markets since middle of April.

Fruits from northern region of the country started coming here two or three weeks ago, but not in abundance, sources said. Langra, a popular variety of mango from Rajshahi and adjoining districts, is yet to come in abundance while traders

hoped to get supply of fazli, another mouth-watering species, in one or two weeks.

Himsagar imported from India is now selling at Tk 90 to Tk 100 per kilogram and the same variety produced in Kushtia are being sold at Tk 80 to Tk 90 a kg at the retail markets in the port city while good quality of himsagar was sold at Tk 60 to Tk 70 last year.

Langra of Kushtia was found at Tk 70 to Tk 80.

The wholesales at BRTC Fallmundi (fruit storehouse) were selling a five-kg tukri (basket) of himsagar and langra from Bagha of Rajshahi at Tk 250 to Tk 300 on Monday.

Wholesale price of guti, a local variety of mango, is Tk 25 to Tk 35 while vendors and retailers are selling this variety at Tk 40 to Tk 50.

The price hike of the seasonal fruits makes the consumer frustrated. Arifur Rahman, a consumer, said it is really higher price for fruits in this high season.

Traders could not give any

reasonable answer about the price hike of fruits without pointing to the price hike of other essentials. Some of them, however, blamed the poor supply of mango for the higher price.

Production of mango falls this year compared to last year in Rajshahi and adjoining districts as huge amount of mangoes fell down before getting mature due to nor'wester, Kamruzzaman, a mango supplier of Bagha, told this correspondent on Monday.

Litchi of Dinajpur, Thakurgaon and Meherpur was found selling at Tk 2400 per tukri of 1000 pieces at the wholesale markets.

The same quality of litchi of 100 pieces was found selling at Tk 250 to Tk 350 at retail markets at Reazuddin Bazar, Karnaphuli market and Bakshirhat.

Locally produced 100 pieces of litchi from Bashkhali were selling at Tk 120 to Tk 150, said traders.

Jackfruit, rich in food value, and delicious pineapple are coming from the hilly region of three districts of Chittagong Hill Tracts. These fruits grow well in Burighata, Marishya, Subhalong, Maini, Longadu of Rangamati and other areas of Khagrachhari and Bandarban.

A big sized jackfruit was being sold at Tk 60 to Tk 70 while the medium sized one at Tk 20 to Tk 25 in the wholesale markets of BRTC and Firingibazar last week while the price was Tk 30 and Tk 15 last year.

Traders at Reazuddin Bazar were selling a pair of better quality pineapple from Kanchannagar at Tk 35 to Tk 40 while pineapple from Rangamati was being sold at Tk 12.

Traders said the price will slightly fall within a couple of weeks with arrival of different kinds of best quality mango and other fruits from the northern region.



This large hole at Chowmuhoni Intersection on the ever-busy Agrabad Sheikh Mujib Road may cause accident any time. The photo was taken on Monday.

ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER

theweekthatwas

'Save youths from tobacco addiction'

Speakers at a discussion on Saturday emphasised the need for immediate measures to save the young generation from the destructive tobacco addiction.

They said 11,000 people died everyday across the globe only for taking tobacco while the tobacco also causes at least 30 severe diseases, including lung cancer.

They were addressing the discussion organised by Prattashi, a non-government organisation, at its Training Hall Room, marking the "World No

Tobacco Day."

Renowned Psychiatrist Dr Mohammad Mustafa was the main speaker at the discussion with NGO Worker Monwara Begum in the chair. Organisation's officials Subrata Dutta, Shantanu Barua, Muhammad Nizam Uddin Bayezid and Biddyt Das spoke at the discussion.

CCC conservancy programme launched

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) launched a 15-day conservancy

programme on Saturday to make the city garbage-free.

The CCC Acting Mayor M Manjur Alam inaugurated the programme as the chief guest in the Station Road area in the port city.

The acting mayor sought cooperation from the city dwellers and urged them to dump the garbage at the dustbins and the designated spots.

He also called upon the traders and people concerned not to keep construction materials on the footpaths or roads.

CCC Secretary Mohammad Samsuddoha presided over the function while Chief Executive Officer AKM

Khairul Alam, ward commissioners Reka Alam Chowdhury, Tareq Solaiman Selim, Jamal Hossain and Anjuman Ara Begum were present.

CCCI appeal to govt

Chittagong businessmen on Thursday urged the government for introducing a balanced, hassle-free, transparent and business-friendly overall tax system considering the present economic situation.

The businessmen made this call at a meeting at Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) auditorium to ease the adverse reaction resulting from the VAT payment and process for bringing small businessmen under VAT system.

CCCI President Saifuzzaman Chowdhury in his presidential speech urged the government to realise one time annual Tax/VAT at the previous rate considering the present economic crisis that pushed the existence of small businessmen and shop owners into uncertainty.

The CCCI president also called upon the government to consider the limitation of introducing Electronic Cash Register (ECR) at small and medium business firms.

Bhutanese team visits project on AIDS

A twelve-member delegation Bhutan and Save the Children USA on Thursday visited field level work of Global Fund to

Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) Project in Cox's Bazar.

Young Power in Social Action (YPSA), a non-government organisation, is implementing the GFATM 902 project in Cox's Bazar.

Financed by Global Fund the project is being implemented as a part of a joint programme of National AIDS/STD programme of Health and Family Welfare Department, Government of Bangladesh, and Save the Children USA.

Led by Kezan Decki of non-formal education programme under Education Ministry, Bhutan, the delegation visited healthcare and educational activities and awareness campaign under the GFATM 902 there.

Rinjin Wangmo, Karma Dechan, Decki Saring, Tessi Pema, Publi Maya Das and Save the Children representative Dr Fadia Sultana were among the delegation.

YPSA Co-coordinators Mahbubur Rahman and Siraz Uddin Belal informed the delegation of different activities of YPSA in Cox's Bazar.

Opinion poll on trade body referendum

An opinion poll on trade body Referendum 2008 was held at Familytex (BD) Limited, a joint venture garments factory, at Chittagong Export Procession Zone on Monday.

US ambassador James F Moriarty during his three-day visit to Chittagong observed the polls. BEPZA Executive Chairman Brigadier General Jamil Ahmed Khan

and other officials and US Embassy accompanied the envoy.

Familytex Managing Director Abdul Hamid and Executive Director Subrata Bishwas welcomed the envoy.

'Stop burning unused carbon disulphide'

Speakers at a seminar on Thursday demanded an end to burning the unused carbon disulfide (CS₂) of

Karnaphuli Rayon Chemicals (KRC) as the dumped CS₂ is causing serious threat to the environment.

They said the river Karnaphuli is being polluted due to dumping of the burned CS₂ in it from the KRC, which is threatening the lives of all aquatic animals, human beings and the environment as well.

They said this while addressing the seminar on "Environment of Chittagong at risk due to dumping CS₂ in it from the KRC: Prevention Necessary" organised by Human Rights Enforcement Organisation of

Rangunia upazila at city's Islamabadi Memorial Hall.

Professor Emeritus Dr Jamal Nazrul Islam of Chittagong University was the chief guest at the seminar while litterateur Muhammad Jahurul Anwar presented the keynote paper.

Chittagong Union of Journalists (CUJ) President Mostaq Ahmed was the main speaker at the seminar while Prof Jinobodhi Bhikkhu, Prof Mohammad Mezbah Uddin Ahmed, Prof Idris Ali, Prof Abdul Hal and the organisation leaders also took part in the discussion.



Artist Uttam Kumar Talukder draws a sketch on a canvas after the inauguration of his solo exhibition at Theatre Institute Chittagong (TIC) gallery on May 28. Noted artist Prof Abul Mansur inaugurated the exhibition.

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Chittagong Club Chairman Quasem Chowdhury presents a bouquet to US Ambassador James F Moriarty, third from left, at a reception recently.

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