

New building rules in the offing

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The new building construction rules prepared by the Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) await approval from the ministry of law.

The new rules were aimed at checking unplanned construction and facilitating orderly growth of high-rise buildings as well as planned growth of the city.

The draft of the building construction rules has already been approved by the housing and public works ministry.

The draft incorporates the provision of 'floor area ratio' (FAR) to determine the ratio between open space and building space to protect the physical environment of the city, CDA sources said.

A twenty-member committee headed by former CDA chairman Mahmudul Islam prepared the draft in 2005 in line with the building construction rules of the Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB), they said.

As per new rules, a prospective building owner will have to obtain clearance for use of land and a plan for the foundation first and then seek approval for construction after completion of the plinth (base). He will get an 'occupancy certificate' only after construction of two floors following the BC rules properly.

A one-stop service centre will facilitate and expedite the process of design approval for simple structures in the residential areas or in the areas having complete layout.

The committee responsible for providing the occupancy certificate will be formed with members from PDB, Wasa, Chittagong and BGS (Bakharabad Gas Systems Limited) as well, said the sources.

A building will not get utility services without occupancy certificate after construction, they said.

"It would help us monitor construction of a building from the very beginning and there will be no scope to raise structures in deviation of the approved plan and design," said CDA Chief Town Planner Shahinul Islam Khan, also member secretary of the draft preparation committee.

"Besides, the engineer, architect and the building owner concerned will be held responsible for any deviation," he said.

CDA will then ask the organisations like IAB or IEB to cancel the certificates of its enlisted architect or engineer, he added.

CDA Chairman Shah Muhammad Akhter Uddin said there is also a provision in the draft BC rules which requires large and special projects like construction of over 7500 sq metres of land or beside highway and riverbank to seek permission from a proposed urban development committee.

The committee will be formed with representatives from the Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB), Institute of Engineers Bangladesh (IEB) and Institute of Town Planners (ITP) and civil society members, Akhter told The Daily Star.

The rules will also have a provision for taking action against the constructions that may harm architectural heritage, he added.

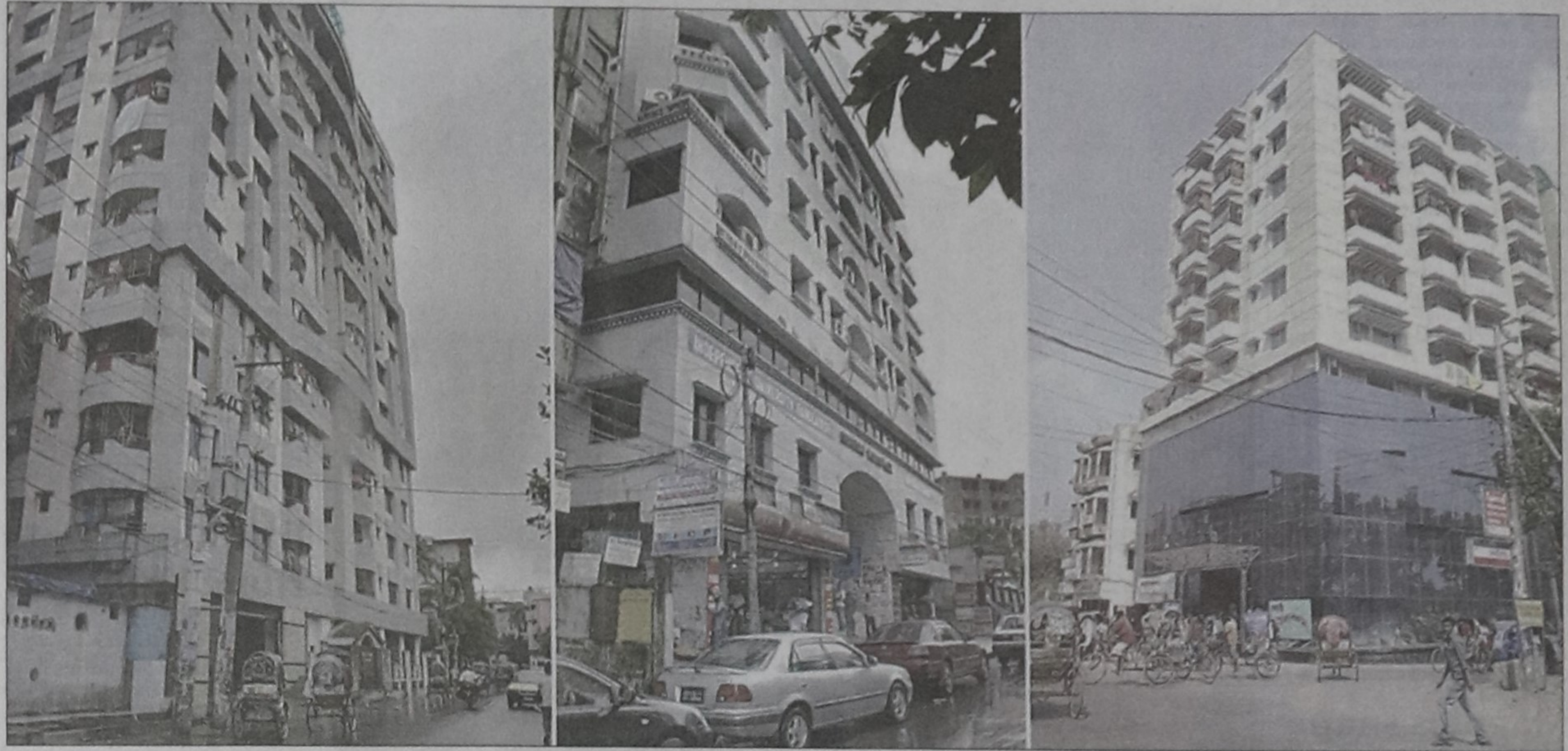
The provision of 'floor area ratio' will determine the area and height of a building and compel one to leave open space in proportion with permitted area for construction of a high-rise building, the sources said.

They also said that the revised CDA Building Construction rule of 1996 has no guideline for construction of multi-storey buildings.

It allows ground coverage ranging from 70 to 75 percent of the plot area for construction of a building where the height is determined considering the width of the road it (the plot) stands on.

Disregarding the open space and pedestrian passage, the existing development pattern left the city choked with concrete jungles. Lack of adequate parking lots and entry spaces or ramps of the buildings coming down on the roads hinder smooth movement of vehicles and public to cause traffic congestion.

The all-pervading concrete coverage of the ground also prevents infiltration of water into the ground.



High-rises now dot many areas in the port city. The Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) has prepared new building construction rules to check unplanned construction of multistoried buildings.

At the same time, wetland and parks are also disappearing fast due to unplanned construction

and the situation might worsen further.

For the construction of a residential building under the new rules, owners of up to two kathas

of land will get the highest 67.5 percent ground coverage, owner of two to three kathas of land will get 65 percent ground coverage, an owner of three to five kathas

will get 62.5 percent, an owner of five to nine kathas will get 60 percent, an owner of nine to 12 kathas will get 57.5 percent, an owner of 12 to 14 kathas will get

55 percent, an owner of 14 to 18 kathas will get 52.5 percent, and an owner of 18 to above 20 kathas will get 50 percent ground coverage, the sources at CDA said.



An iron fence has been erected on Shah Amanat Bridge in the port city to prevent heavy vehicles from crossing the bridge. But this also makes it difficult for minibuses to negotiate it, leading to tailback.

Project to ease power crisis in Ctg

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR

Chittagong Power Development Board (PDB) will install 350-kilometre power distribution lines and renovate 153-kilometre old electricity lines in Chittagong division under a project this year.

Once the Tk 118 crore project is implemented, the people of remote areas in Chittagong division will get new power connections and the frequency of loadshedding in the port city will decline to some extent, PDB officials said.

The existing power lines face tremendous pressure because of the increasing demand for power and lack of initiative to renovate the lines. As a result, new connection seekers have to wait for long to get electricity connections, PDB sources said.

Under the new project, subscribers of Hathazari and Satkania upazilas under Chittagong and Chakaria under Cox's Bazar, Laksam and Choudagram under Comilla and Burishchar under Brahmanbaria will get new power connections while some areas outside Feni, Comilla, Noakhali, Brahmanbaria and Khagrachhari towns will also reap benefits after a span of 25 years, they added.

Besides, five new sub-stations of 33/11 KV capacity and 174 new transformers will be installed under the project in the division.

The project was approved by Ecneec at a meeting in March and the process for planning, estimation and other related work will start this month, said PDB Superintendent Engineer Khandaker Azizur Rahman.

PDB acting Chief Engineer Shibu Kumar Chowdhury said the project aims to address the increasing demand and smooth supply of power in Chittagong region.

However, generating power in an affordable rate for the subscribers is needed to get rid of the acute power crisis facing the country for long, Shibu said, adding that the shortage of gas is the main reason disrupting power generation to a large extent.

He also said relocation of the garment factories and heavy industries outside the city will improve the situation in urban areas.

On the other hand, the Greater Chittagong Power Distribution Project (third phase) at a cost of Tk 870 crore has almost been completed last month.

Under the project, three 132/33 KV new substations at Julda and Shahmipur on the south bank of the river Karnaphuli and Bakalia in the city while two other 33/11 KV substations at Rampur and Muradpur in the city were installed.

Besides, 1161-kilometre new distribution lines were installed and 1124-kilometre old lines were renovated under the project while 1500 distribution transformers were also installed in Chittagong and Cox's Bazar.

Khandaker Azizur Rahman, director of the project, said people of the port city have already started getting benefits from the project.

He said implementation of the two projects will help the people of this region avoid unexpected power disruption.

the week that was

'Form commission to bring war criminals to book'

Chief Coordinator of the Sector Commander's Forum and former army chief Lt Gen (ret'd) Harunur Rashid called for forming a commission like Anti-Corruption Commission to try the war criminals.

He was addressing as the chief guest at a reception ceremony for noted personalities, organised by the Alorin, a monthly publication, on the occasion of

its founding anniversary at Chittagong Press Club on Friday.

Lt Gen (ret'd) Harunur Rashid said honest, brilliant and patriot persons have to be honoured as they work for the welfare of the country. Freedom fighters, the best sons of the country, should also be given due honour at first, he added.

He also said the war criminals and local collaborators of Pakistani army must be brought to book for the sake of the country's development.

"We are not asking to take action against any particular person. Rather, we are demanding trial of all those who were involved in the killing of three

million people, violation of four lakh women and plundering of huge properties during the war," he said.

Alorin Adviser and Bagdad Group Chairman Ferdous Khan Alamgir presided over the ceremony while former city mayor Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury inaugurated the celebrations.

Prof Dr Jamal Nazrul Islam, Principal Jalal Uddin Al Quaderi, freedom fighter MA Mansur, advocate Syed Md Kamal Uddin and Abdus Salam also spoke.

Portrait celebrates 18th anniversary

Portrait, a cultural organisation of the port city, celebrated its 18th anniversary with a colourful ceremony at Studio Theatre auditorium on Saturday.

Chittagong Press Club President and ATN Bangla Chittagong Divisional Chief Ali Abbas was the chief guest at the ceremony while Acting News Editor Abu Taher Mohammad of the Purbokone, Portrait Adviser Jahangir Alam and Designer Rowshan Ara Chowdhury were present as special guests.

The speakers lauded the role of Portrait in promoting the culture and heritage of Chittagong.

They also called on the organisation leaders to continue their activities in the greater interest of people of the region. Later, a cultural programme was

held. Anamika and Prothoma Das performed dance numbers while singers Alauddin Taher, Anannya, Ishita, Ahsan Habibul Alam and Shahriar Khaled enthralled the audience with their melodious numbers.

A fashion show and drama were also staged.

Call to incorporate new tech into edn system

Vice Chancellor of Chittagong University (CU) Prof Dr M Badiul Alam underscored the need to incorporate recent technological development into the education system in order to survive in the competitive world.

He also said it is possible to develop the Chittagong University by equipping it with modern amenities through concerted efforts.

The vice chancellor was addressing at the inaugural ceremony of installation of sound system in the conference room of VC office on Thursday.

He said that good working environment helps increase the efficiency of the people.

Prof of fine arts department Mizanur Rahim delivered the welcome address. Deans of different faculties, syndicate members, hall provosts, chairmen and directors of different departments and institutes under the university were present at the ceremony.

Aramit declares 45pc dividend

Aramit Limited, the corrugated cement roofing sheets and pipes manufacturing industry, has declared 45 percent dividend for its shareholders for the year 2007.

The dividend was announced at the 37th annual general meeting (AGM) of the company held at Chittagong Club on Thursday.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the company Md Ziaul Hoque Khondker presided over the meeting while Managing Director Saifuzzaman Chowdhury and Executive Director and Company Secretary Md Ibrahim Khalil spoke.

Company Directors Md Humayun Kabir, Aminul Islam, Md Abdur Rouf, Md Kazi Shahanal Hoque and a number of shareholders were present at the meeting.

The company earned net profit before income tax of Tk 77.87 million and net profit after income tax of Tk 56.41 million for the year ended on December 31 in 2007, said a press release.

Int'l Leasing opens branch

International Leasing and Financial Services Limited (ILFSL) opened a branch in the port city last week.

Chittagong Chamber of Commerce



Cultural activists take out a procession in the port city on June 26 to mark the death anniversary of Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam.

Tribute paid to Jahanara Imam

Speakers at a discussion paid tribute to Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam, recalling her significant contribution to the political movement in the country.

The nation now needs a dedicated leader like Jahanara Imam who never deviated from her goal.

Chittagong district unit of Ektattor Ghatok Dalai Nirmul Committee organised the discussion at the concluding session of a two-day programme marking the 14th death anniversary of Jahanara Imam at Chittagong Academy auditorium on Friday.

Chittagong Committee President Prof Helal Uddin Nazami presided over the session.

The speakers said Jahanara Imam appeared in the political stage of the country as a symbol of unity when the pro-liberation forces were divided into different groups and the anti-liberation forces emerged and established themselves in politics.

Prof Dr Gazi Saleh Uddin, CPB leader Shah Alam, Awami League leader Chaman Ara Tyeb, city unit commander of Muktiyoddha Sangsad Mozaffar Ahmad, liberation war researcher Dr Kajal Kanti Das, freedom fighter Jadu Gopal Baishnab and Nirmul Committee general secretary Kamrul Hasan Badal took part in the discussion.



Shreyashi Roy sings at a cultural evening at the Alliance Francaise auditorium in the city on June 25. Panthajan organised the event.