

## Town protection embankment in bad shape

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR

Lack of proper maintenance puts the town protection embankment in bad shape, posing a threat to life and properties in the coastal areas of the port city.

Experts said displacement of earth in the bottom during the tidal surge is causing breach in the embankment at many points. This may lead to a severe disaster claiming life and properties during any cyclonic storm in the low-lying coastal areas and repeat a devastating cyclone the city dwellers witnessed on April 29 in 1991.

Apart from this, seepage of saline water through the worn out embankment might cause loss of fertility of the croplands in the coastal areas, said Assistant Professor Mohammad Shahadat Hossain of Institute of Marine Science and Fisheries at Chittagong University.

Besides, at present the sea is rising three to four feet higher than what used to be during the high tide 10 to 12 years ago.

"If increase in the sea level remains constant, it would be a matter of great concern for us," said Shahadat, who is doing research on mitigating impacts of climate change with the help of British Council.

"After breach in the embankment saline water would replace the fresh water destroying the aquatic animals, mainly the fishes, apart from damaging the grassy land in the locality," he said.

Sources said the breach has developed at least at 20 points of the 21.70 kilometre embankment stretching from city's Naval Academy to Fouzdarhat coastal area under Sitakunda upazila due to repeated upsurges during depressions in the sea.



ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER

The town protection embankment is in bad shape due to lack of maintenance.

The condition of the embankment is very bad in the Patenga, Halishahar and Kattali areas. Huge portions at Khenjurtal, Narikel Tala, Ananda Bazar beach and the area adjacent to Patenga sea beach have already been taken away by the sea.

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Ward Commissioner Mohammad Joyal Abidin said the sea damaged the Ulka Ghati of Bangladesh Navy and Char Para on the south of his ward seriously that need immediate repair to save life and properties in the locality. He said they have informed

in vain the matter to Water Development Board (WDB), Chittagong deputy commissioner and acting mayor for immediate measure in this regard.

Sources at WDB said no massive repair work was done on the embankment after the cyclone 'Sidr' damaged the coastal area on November 15 last year.

Besides, several cyclonic storms and the latest 'Reshmi' accompanied by tidal upsurge damaged the embankment seriously, said the sources.

WDB Operation and Maintenance Division-1 Sub

Assistant Engineer Mohammad Mosharrif Hossain said they have identified four points on the embankment damaged hugely while 16 points affected by the cyclonic surges more or less in recent times.

He said a tender for a Tk 2.15 crore project for its repair has been floated in this regard.

WDB Acting Executive Engineer Ashraf Jamal said selecting the bidders to implement the project is under process and work will start within shortest possible time.

It is one of the embankments built in mid-sixties

under the then Coastal Embankment project in the Patenga, Halishahar and Kattali areas with the financial assistance of USAID. The project was completed in 1970 that began in 1965.

Cyclones of 1970, 1985, 1988 and 1991 caused widespread devastation of infrastructures, loss of human lives and properties in the embankment area.

Later on, repair was conducted during 1992 to 1996 under the Coastal Embankment Rehabilitation Programme with the financial assistance of World Bank at a cost of Tk 113 crore.

## Pollution takes serious turn at Kaptai Lake

SHANTIMOY CHAKMA, Rangamati

Pollution at Kaptai Lake is taking a serious turn due to open defecation by the slum dwellers and unabated dumping of garbage and wastes everyday, causing waterborne diseases like diarrhoea, dysentery and jaundice.

The people in Rangamati and Kaptai may face disasters if water pollution and crisis of safe drinking water continue. It also may cause environmental disaster any time, environmentalists said.

Dumping of wastes, open defecation by the slum dwellers and the passengers of water transports are the prime causes of pollution at Kaptai Lake, sources said.

They said several lakh people living in the lake areas in Rangamati and Kaptai are facing the problem as they use water of the lake in daily household and other purposes. Many of the families, including indigenous people, used to drink lake water directly.

Rangamati unit of National NGO Forum, working on safe water and sanitation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), also found very alarming result during its survey and test on lake water.

Its officials have collected water from the most polluted areas of the lake. Total Coli Form (TCF) and Facile Form (RCF)

were 800 and 300 respectively in per 100 millilitres in the Rajbari area, 500 TCF and 350 FCF at Banarupa while 600 TCF and 450 FCF in the Reserve Bazar area, according to the test. TCF and FCF level should be zero in water, said Alak Bikash Dewan, an official of the NGO Forum.

Md Anwar Hossain, environmentalist and secretary of Rangamati Environment Conservation and Development Organisation (RECCDO), said immediate step is needed to save the lake from pollution. Otherwise, it may cause disastrous situation in future.

He said due to the pollution, waterborne diseases are spreading fast as many depend on the lake water for their bathing and drinking.

Following this, number of patients with waterborne diseases at the Rangamati General Hospital was also increasing, district Civil Surgeon (CS) office sources said.

"In 2007, around 12,492 were attacked with diarrhoea. Of them, four died at Rangamati Hospital. It's likely to increase this year as the number of diarrhoea patients has already reached 9,939 until September. Besides, about 8,837 suffered from dysentery and 772 from jaundice last year. The number of dysentery patients is 5,344 and jaundice are 445 this year (January-September)," they

said. Kazi Nazrul Islam, a member of Kaptai Lake Control Committee, said it's right time to take immediate and necessary coordinated steps to save the lake from pollution and encroaching as well.

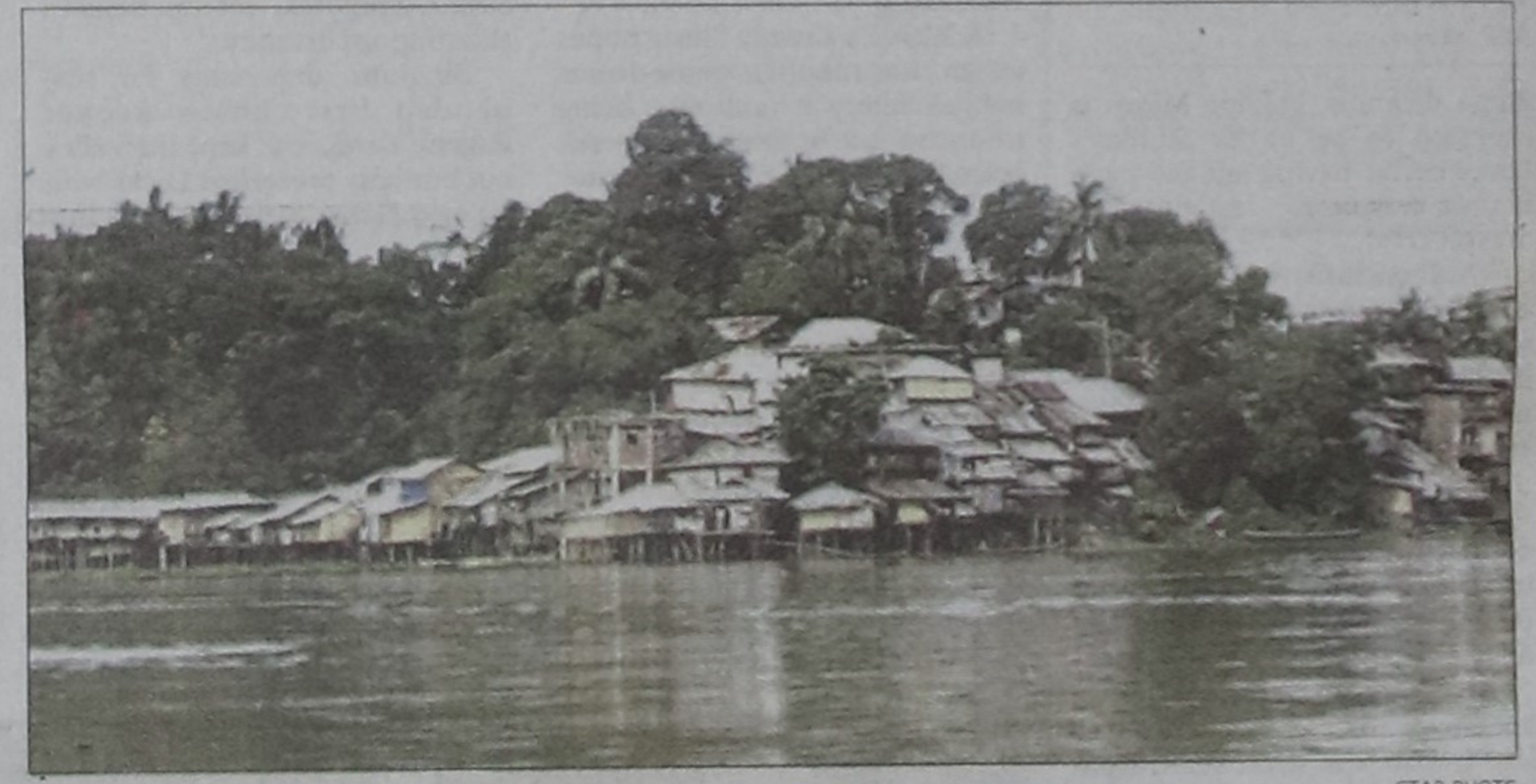
Md Firoz Miah, subdivisional engineer of Department of Public Health Engineering, said they are only entrusted with testing supply water not the lake water.

The department, however, is currently supplying 15 lakh gallons of water daily to the people against the demand of 18 lakh gallons from its three water treatment plants in the town, he said.

But many people said the water, the department supplies, often augurs bad smell of bleaching powder for which they do not drink it.

Defending the department, Executive Engineer Md Abu Khaled said they use acceptable level of bleaching powder with its supply-water and its not harmful to health.

The Kaptai Lake having 700sq km vast water body was created after building Kaptai Hydroelectric Power Plant (KHPP) in 1960. The dam was constructed at Kaptai upazila for generation of electricity, development of waterway and largescale fish production, sources said.



STAR PHOTO

A slum at Reserve Bazar Chengi Mukh in Rangamati town.

## theweekthatwas

### More use of Bangla underscored

Eminent litterateur Hasnat Abdul Hai underscored the need for more use of Bangla to establish its dignity.

He said only emotion is not enough in this regard.

He was addressing the publication ceremony of a book titled 'Mohan Ekushey Suborbanajoyonti Grantha'.

Adorn Publishers published the book for Amar Ekushey Book Fair in February this year. The book comprises 28 chapters each having writings of more than 300 writers.

Editor of local daily the Azadi MA Malek chaired the programme at Theatre Institute Chittagong (TIC) on Saturday.

Editor of the Book Mahub Ullah made address of welcome.

Principal Md Hossain Khan, Prof Imran Hossain, Prof Md Golam Mostafa, Syed Md Shafi, Md Nasiruddin and proprietor of Adorn Publications Syed Zakir Hossain participated in the discussion.

Expressing dissatisfaction over lack of use and practice of Bengali language, litterateur Abdul Hai said the long-cherished demand of establishing Bangla in every sphere of life could not be materialised since necessary academic books for higher studies could not be published in Bangla.

### Seminar on physiotherapy held

Speakers at a seminar on Sunday emphasised the need for individual and non-government initiatives to provide medical services to the distressed people side by side the government activities.

They were addressing a seminar on physiotherapy at Lions Anwar-Taher Physiotherapy Clinic in the port city on Sunday.

Presidency Lions Club organised the seminar in cooperation with the clinic.

Lions District Governor SM Ishak was the chief guest at the seminar with Presidency Club President Dr M

Zakirul Islam in the chair.

Former district governor Najmul Haque Chowdhury and Kazi Akram Uddin were special guests while Dr M Alam was the main speaker at the seminar.

Speakers urged the club members to increase publicity of different services provided by the clinic so that more people can get the service.

Organisers said the clinic had long been providing treatments to the patients who are completely and partially paralysed or people with complaints like joint and bone pains at cheaper rates.

Club Cabinet Secretary Prasun Kumar Barua, Treasurer Md Jahangir Alam, Region Chairman Md Nurul Islam and Abdul Alim Lohani were present at the seminar.

### Women Expo Bangladesh held

French Ambassador Charlet Caueret said women entrepreneurs of Bangladesh can play a vital role in making progress in the economic sector of the country.

He said this while he was exchanging views with the directors and members of Chittagong Women Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CWCCI) on Monday.

Earlier, the ambassador along with his wife visited an exposition titled 'Second Women's SME Expo Bangladesh '08' at Railway Polo Ground.

They admired the display of pottery at different stalls.

CWCCI President Monwara Hakim Ali made address of welcome at the meeting while CWCCI Director and Chairperson Angella Baishakhi Mendez gave the vote of thanks. CWCCI directors Sharmin Hossain, Syeda Jinat Ara Nilpan, Wahida Jesmin,

Jesmin Akhter, Kohinur Kamal and former directors of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CCC) Abdul Mannan Rana were present.

### Publication ceremony held

Speakers said physical exercise is essential for mental development and attaining success in life.

"Most of the schools and colleges in city areas lack open space for physical exercise forcing the students to grow up in the concrete cages," they said.

They were speaking at the cover unveiling ceremony of a body building handbook and Compact Disc (CD) titled "Iron Man (Part-1)" organised by Sound Health Club at Chittagong Press Club auditorium on Monday.

Premier University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Anupam Sen was the chief guest at the ceremony while Prothom Alo Resident Editor Abul Momen, USTC Business Administration Faculty Dean Dr Mohammad Solaiman, Chittagong Press Club General Secretary Eaz Yousufi and Family Medicine Specialist and Dietician Dr Sheikh Shafiqul Azam were present as special guests.

The speakers urged all to be aware of health at the very beginning of life and practise physical exercise to keep the mind and health fit.

Writer of the handbook Mohammad Mujibul Haque Shyamal briefed about the background of writing the book and different aspects of physical problem that develop due to wrong exercise.

Later, the guests unveiled the cover of the handbook and CD.

Sound Health Club Founder and President Kazi Rashed Ali presided over the function while the Club Vice President

Humayun Kabir and Multi Fitness Centre Trainer Minnomy Dharspok

### 'Stop domestic violence'

Speakers at a discussion urged the young people to come forward for stopping domestic violence through protesting and preventing such incidents.

They were addressing a discussion on 'Role of Young Generation against Domestic Violence' on Sunday.

Sajan, a non-government organisation, organised the discussion at Chittagong Port Girls' High School.

Headmistress Rafia Khatun was the chief guest at the discussion while senior teacher Ismat Ara and field trainer of Young Power in Social Action (YPSA) Sanjida Akhter were the special guests.

Sajan Senior Executive Piyara Akhter Prabha was the chief discussant.

Speakers said young people should not remain silent in this regard and should show zero tolerance to any sort of domestic violence occurred in their surroundings.

### Mosquito net distributed

Speakers urged the Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) mayor to immediately start anti-mosquito drive in different areas spraying lervicides in the drains and other breeding spots to save the distressed people especially street children from mosquito menace.

They said this at a mosquito net distribution programme by a non-government organisation, Bangladesh Child Development Human Rights Forum, on Friday.

The organisation distributed 90 mosquito nets among the distressed families, orphans and poor children at

10 places in the city.

The spots were Chwakhbazar, Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) gate, Bahodderhat Moor, DC Hill, Nasirabad School gate, GEC Intersection, Chatterwari Road, Firingibazar, Siraj-Ud-Doullah Road and Chittagong

College Hostel gate.

Principal Sanaulah, Chairman Rezaul Karim Talukder, General Secretary Sohail Md Fakhrudin, Chairman of Greater Chittagong Development Struggle Committee SM Abul Jamal Uddin and Mahmud Ullah also spoke.



STAR PHOTO

Poet Abul Momen, chief executive of Fulki, speaks about different aspects of the integrated educational-cultural programme of Fulki at a view exchange meeting with the journalists at Theatre Institute Chittagong (TIC) on Tuesday.



STAR PHOTO

Baul singer Madhusudhan Baul perform songs at a function organised by Indian Assistant High Commission at Muslim Institute Hall in the port city on Sunday.