

## 24MW rental power plant goes into operation next week

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR

The 24 Megawatt (MW) rental power plant of Regent Power Limited at Barabkunda under Sitakunda upazila will start generation of power from the next week.

Regent Power Limited, one of the nine private firms, got permission to generate power in November 2007.

Habib Group set up the plant at a cost of Tk 130 crore on 2.5 acres of land. Construction work of the plant started in May last year alongside the Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) Sub-Station in the Barabkunda area.

After completion of construction of infrastructure in February, the plant completed installation of equipment including generator, transformer and distribution lines under the supervision of the local and foreign engineers in April.

The authorities as of Monday tested five of the eight generators, each 3MW capacity, successfully and sent the generated power to the national grid informally, said the company Director (Finance) AKM Ilias.

He said they would go for formal generation next week after examining the generators successfully and getting optimum performances. He said they are giving final touch on everything targeting the formal generation within shortest possible time.

Habib Group Managing Director Yasin Ali said as per agreement with the government they would sell the generated power to the PDB and the power will directly go to the national grid through the Barabkunda Sub-Station.

He said if the government allows they would be able to generate up to 100MW within three months.

Chittagong PDB Chief Engineer Joytish Chandra Biswas told The Daily Star that the plant already was distributing power

to the grid informally and they got 15MW on Monday night.

Though its capacity is little it would help reduce power crisis to some extent, he said.

He also emphasised the need for setting up more rental power plant to address the on going power crisis immediately.

Consumers of Chittagong PDB have been facing 200MW load-shedding on an average as six power units, out of 10, in Chittagong region remained closed due to lack of sufficient gas supply and fall in water level at the Kaptai Lake for long.

Of the active units, two units of 420 capacity at Raozan Thermal Power Plant are generating on an average 280MW to 300MW while two other units of the Kaptai Hydraulic Power Plant are contributing 70MW to 80MW at night.

With this, the PDB gets on an average 120MW power from national grid to meet the total demand of around 600MW in peak hours while national grid also takes power from Chittagong units sometimes, sources at the PDB said.

Besides, construction of two other power plants, rental and state-run, is going on in full swing to go into operation by June this year and April next year respectively.

Of them, private-firm Energies Power Corporation Limited is setting up a 73.8MW capacity furnace oil-fired plant at Shikalbaha on other bank of the river Karnaphuli under Patiya upazila.

According to the agreement with the government, PDB will get 55MW power from the plant while the rest will be rented to private firms.

On the other hand, the government is setting up a 150MW Peaking Power Plant in the same area at a cost of Tk 534 crore. The double source, both fuel and gas, plant is expected to go into production by April next year.



A boat race was held at the Karnaphuli river on Sunday demanding immediate dredging of the river and steps to save the river from pollution and illegal encroachment. Chittagong Regional Cultural Academy in association with GrameenPhone, a mobile phone operator, organised a two-day cultural festival, including boat race, Kabial conference and folk song in this regard. Folk song lyricist Moloy Ghosh Dastidar was awarded in the programme for his contribution to folk song in Chittagong dialect.

ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIDDER

## CNG-run autorickshaws still cash in on passengers' woes

DWAIPAYAN BARUA

The CNG-run autorickshaws continued to charge high and extra fare from the passengers in the port city ignoring the Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) traffic rules.

The police launched several drives to force the drivers to follow meters to charge fare without any results. The commuters are yet to get benefits of installation of meters in the three-wheelers. The drivers are reluctant to follow fare structure according to meter.

The drivers got enraged when CMP traffic department launched a drive on April 21 to check violation of rules, including non-use of meter.

Around 6,000 drivers staged demonstrations on April 27 and enforced a wildcat strike demanding an end to police harassment.

They also went on the rampage and ransacked more than 50 vehicles on the day. They were also locked in a clash with the automobile traders at Sheikh Mujib Road, leaving at least 30 people injured.

The strike continued for three days and the situation became normal after arrest of some 27 drivers and seven leaders

of Chittagong Metropolitan Autorickshaw and Auto-tempo Workers' Welfare Union on April 29 during the strike.

Though around 13,000 CNG-run auto rickshaws are registered with Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), the number of the

2007, sources said.

The government raised fare for the CNG-run autorickshaws and other CNG-run transports to cope with the new price of Compressed Natural Gas on April 26 in 2008 two days after the CNG price was hiked.

Under the new fare structure, initial charge

CMP traffic department official.

While talking to this correspondent, the drivers blamed the attitude of the auto-rickshaw owners, meter installation companies and members of law enforcement agencies as well as passengers for non-use of meter.

Harun, a driver, said

meters while travelling short distance they deny it and pressure contract fare while travelling to long distance especially to the outskirts, said driver Hashem, adding that they earn a very little since the metropolitan area in Chittagong is shorter than the capital city.

Driver Jashim blamed the meter installation companies for providing below quality meters as they become out of order only one month after repair.

He said police never take any action against the owners or meter installation companies.

CMP (traffic) department at a meeting with owners, drivers and meter installation companies on May 6 directed the owners to receive Tk 450 per day from the drivers according to the government fixed rate.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) (traffic) Mainul Islam said the owners are to issue receipts to the drivers for the money.

The DC said they informed the drivers about the decision as well as urge them to complain against the owners if they (owners) violate it.

He said they would take action against the drivers, owners and meter installation companies to streamline the service.



Autorickshaws plying city streets.

STAR PHOTO

## theweekthatwas

### 'Implement new education policy'

Implementation of the new education policy of the government would help move the country forward keeping pace with the modern education system of the world.

Chittagong Education Board (CEB) Chairman Prof Dr Mohammad Yusuf said this while he was addressing as the chief guest the annual prize giving ceremony of Bakolia High School on Sunday.

He said the government formed a 16-member committee to formulate an education policy. He said it would submit a modern and timely education policy soon. He urged all to implement the new policy to

raise the standard of education of the country.

With school governing body Vice-President Emdad Ullah Babul in the chair, educationist Kalim Sarwar and Prof Shamsul Alam also spoke at the function where Headmaster Subash Chandra Palit made the address of welcome.

### Reception to CU teacher

The Fine Arts Department of Chittagong University (CU) accorded a reception to Prof Mansur-Ul Karim, a teacher of the department and a renowned artist, on Sunday on his receiving the Ekushey Padak-2009.

Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Abu Yousuf was present as the chief guest at the function at gallery-2 of Arts Faculty with Prof Mizanur

Rahim in the chair. Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Md Alauddin was present as the special guest while Prof Jasim Uddin and Prof Saiful Kabir spoke.

Prof Yousuf in his speech highly commended artist Mansur-Ul Karim for his works and said the university feels honoured for his recognition with prestigious Ekushey Padak.

### Media urged to help garments sector survive

Media can play a vital role in helping the garments industry survive the economic recession across the globe.

Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) First Vice President Nasir Uddin Chowdhury said this while

exchanging views with the journalists at Chittagong Press Club (CPC) in the port city on Saturday.

Nasir, also the managing director of Eastern Group, said the garments sector is facing a serious threat due to the global economic recession. Referring to the involvement of some 35 lakh workers in the garments sector, he called upon the journalists to help the sector overcome the crisis and survive.

CPC President Abu Sufian made the address of welcome at the meeting where Ataul Hakim, Asif Siraj, Nazim Uddin Shyamol, Rashed Rouf and Mohsin Chowdhury also spoke.

### ICAB workshop, seminar held

The Institute of Chartered

Accountants of Bangladesh (ICAB), Chittagong region organised a workshop on "Implementation of audit practice manual (APM)" and a seminar styled "New quality assurance requirements for practising members" for its members in the port city on Monday and Tuesday.

Juris Reinhardt, head of Twining Project ICAEW, was the chief guest at the functions while Nick Reynolds, of quality assurance department ICAEW, presented keynote papers.

Showkat Hossain, vice president of ICAB and resident partner of Hoda Vasi Chowdhury and Co, chaired the programmes. Modassar Ahmed Siddique, chairman of ICAB, and Subrata Kumar Bhowmick, honorary secretary, also addressed.

### Ctg Newspaper Hawkers' Union executives

Rois Mia and Jinal Abedin were elected president and general secretary of Chittagong Newspaper Hawkers' Union at the biennial election of the organisation on Monday.

Mahabur Rahman was elected publication secretary while Harunur Rashid, Jahed Hossain, Jaman Patwary and Ranjit Kumar Nath were elected members.

Earlier, Babul Chandra Nath was elected vice-president, Subal Chandra Nath joint secretary, Osman Gani organising secretary, Mohammad Abul Bashar treasurer and Hefazatur Rahman office secretary unop-

posed.

A total of 285 voters, out of 322, exercised franchise in the Monday's polling that continued from 8:00am to 5:00pm.

### 'No alternative to moral teaching'

Prof Dr Jamal Nazrul Islam said there is no alternative to moral teaching for building up a nation. So, the students are to be educated in moral teachings and come forward to help build the nation, he added.

Prof Dr Jamal Nazrul was addressing as the chief guest the prize giving ceremony of a quiz competition at Theatre Institute Chittagong in the port city on Monday.

Youth Wave Students Society

organised the competition.

Bangalees are regarded as an optimistic nation happy with a very little. So, everyone should go ahead with that hope and inspiration, he said.

Presidency International School Principal Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Ziauddin Bir Uttam presided over the function where Chittagong Government College former principal Prof SM Shahidullah, Youth Wave Students Society Chief Coordinator Md Asadullah, central president Abdullah Al Masud, Chittagong city unit president Minhaz Uddin also spoke.

Principal Ziauddin in his speech reminded of the rich cultural heritage the Bangalees have and called upon all to save this heritage as well as the country from the aggression of foreign culture.