

CHITTAGONG CITY RING ROAD PROJECT

Implementation to start by year-end

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

With the government emphasising development of Chittagong, preparation is nearing completion for implementation of the Chittagong City Ring Road project involving around Tk 10,000 crore with the financial assistance of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

A JICA appraisal team is likely to arrive in the port city this month to discuss different aspects, including loan conditions, and finalise an agreement for the first phase of the construction of the road at an approximate cost of Tk 2000 crore.

JICA is expected to sign an

agreement with the government for the first phase of work by the end of this year, said the sources at Chittagong Development Authority (CDA), implementing agency of the project.

State Minister for Housing and Public Works Advocate Abdul Mannan Khan at a workshop here on May 23 said the government would take steps soon for implementing the outer ring road. He also assured of taking steps for rehabilitation and compensation of the affected people due to implementation of the project.

Addressing the workshop Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury also urged the

government to start work of the outer ring road project soon to get better service from Chittagong Port.

JICA engaged resettlement specialist Dr Hafija Khatun at the workshop on 'Rehabilitation of the affected people due to implementation of outer ring road and land acquisition' said around 2,239 families might be affected for implementing the project in the first phase.

Sources said a 14.702km road stretching from Patenga to Sagarika would be constructed in the first phase under the Coastal Road Project, one of the three major components of the Chittagong City Ring Road Project.

Three feeder roads of 6.891km would also be constructed to complete the missing links with internal roads of the city in the first phase of the project, sources said.

Implementation period of the Coastal Road Project is five years, including three years for construction. Construction work is to start in 2011 to be completed by 2013, they said.

JICA would provide funds as soft loan for construction of the Ring Road diverting the city centre while the government would have to bear the land acquisition and rehabilitation costs that would be 20 to 25 per cent of the total project cost, sources said.

The appraisal team will arrive here following the report submitted by a five-member JICA team that visited Bangladesh on a two-week fact finding mission on April 11. The JICA team discussed the final report on the first phase.

"We are now doing some fact finding work and provid-

ing information responding to queries of JICA," said Project Director Kazi Hasan Bin Shams, the superintendent engineer 1 of CDA.

Earlier, JICA appointed Special Assistance for Project Formulation (SAPROF) team carried a study and submitted final report on Coastal Road Project on March 19.

The draft final report of the SAPROF study also provided outlines for Karnaphuli River Road and Flood Protection Project and Chittagong Bypass and Road Construction Project, two other components of Chittagong City Ring Road Project to be implemented in the second and the third phase.

Under Karnaphuli River Road and Flood Protection Project a 13.02km long four lane Karnaphuli River Road would be constructed along the river Karnaphuli stretching from Sadarghat to Kalurghat bridge.

Chittagong Bypass and Road Construction Project would include construction of the 4th Karnaphuli bridge on the upstream and a road linking the bridge with Oxygen-Quish road and Kalurghat bridge.

To assist in overall development of infrastructure and road network under a private sector infrastructure investment project Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), which merged with JICA in October last year, carried out a feasibility study in two phases in 2005 and 2006.

Following the study, JBIC signed an agreement with the Economic Relation Department (ERD) in 2007 to develop Chittagong City Ring Road project titled "Multi-sector infrastructure development in Chittagong."



Untreated effluents from some 100 industrial units at Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ) continue to pollute water of the nearby canals and find ultimate destination in the Bay of Bengal. The Photo was taken from a CEPZ adjoining canal on Sunday.

ADMISSION TO GOVT COLLEGES

Fate of many GPA-5 achievers uncertain

DWAIPAYAN BARUA

Dreams of many GPA-5 achievers in Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations under Chittagong Board for admission to the city's renowned government colleges have been shattered for lack of seats.

Beside the seat crisis, pressure on the college authorities for admitting students chosen by different political organisations has also frustrated many.

A total of 43,132 students, out of 61,964, came out successful from the board with a percentage of 69.61 this year while it was 72.62 in 2008, 57.94 in 2007, 63.87 in 2006, 60.92 in 2005 and 46.55 in 2004.

Though the pass percentage has decreased by 3.01 percent compared to the previous year the number of GPA-5 (Grade Point Average) achievers have increased. A total of 4,529 students secured GPA-5 this year while it was 4,316 last year.

Of them, 3,402 achieved GPA-5 from science group, 1,083 from commerce and 44 from arts group.

Many of those smiling faces have started getting different looks as the admission process began last week in the city's government and non-government colleges.

Fate of many GPA-5 achievers from science

group are uncertain as they may not get scope to study in any of the four government colleges -- Chittagong College, Hazi Muhammad Mohsin College, City College and Nasirabad Women's College -- due to shortage of seats.

These colleges can accommodate only 1650 students in science group against the 3402 GPA-5 achievers.

Tahrina Nasrin Chowdhury, a Golden GPA holder from Bangladesh Women Association (BAWA) School, has become frustrated as she has failed to get admitted to Chittagong College.

Tahrina said, "I could console myself and could blame me if admission test was held. But I can't take it easily as some students with almost similar result in the SSC like me got the chance and I missed it."

Like Tahrina most of the 922 students who submitted admission forms at Chittagong College with Golden GPA as only 450 could smile at the end.

Hasan Bin Mahub got GPA-5 from Collegiate School could not get admitted to Chittagong College and Mohsin College. City College was his last option for studying in a government college. His admission was also uncertain as his name was in the third waiting list at the college.

Students from commerce group are, however, in relief since four government colleges Commerce College, Hazi Md Mohsin College, City College and Nasirabad Women's College have 1950 seats for them.

College authorities are making result sheet according to a new system based on grade points. They also have an option to send the total list of applicants along with their transcripts containing grade points to the computer section set up in the Dhaka Education Board if the number of students with similar point stands much higher than required seats.

Eight computer centres have been set up there to prepare the result sheet for the colleges under eight educational boards.

Failing to get the result sheets from the computer centre in time, the authorities of different colleges prepared result sheets themselves manually which created suspicion among the guardians about irregularities.

Disagreed with such allegation, Mohsin College Principal Prof Md Humayun Kabir said they are trying to make the list first and would immediately send the list to Dhaka if face any problem.

Besides, different political organisations have started creating pressure on the college authorities to admit students of their

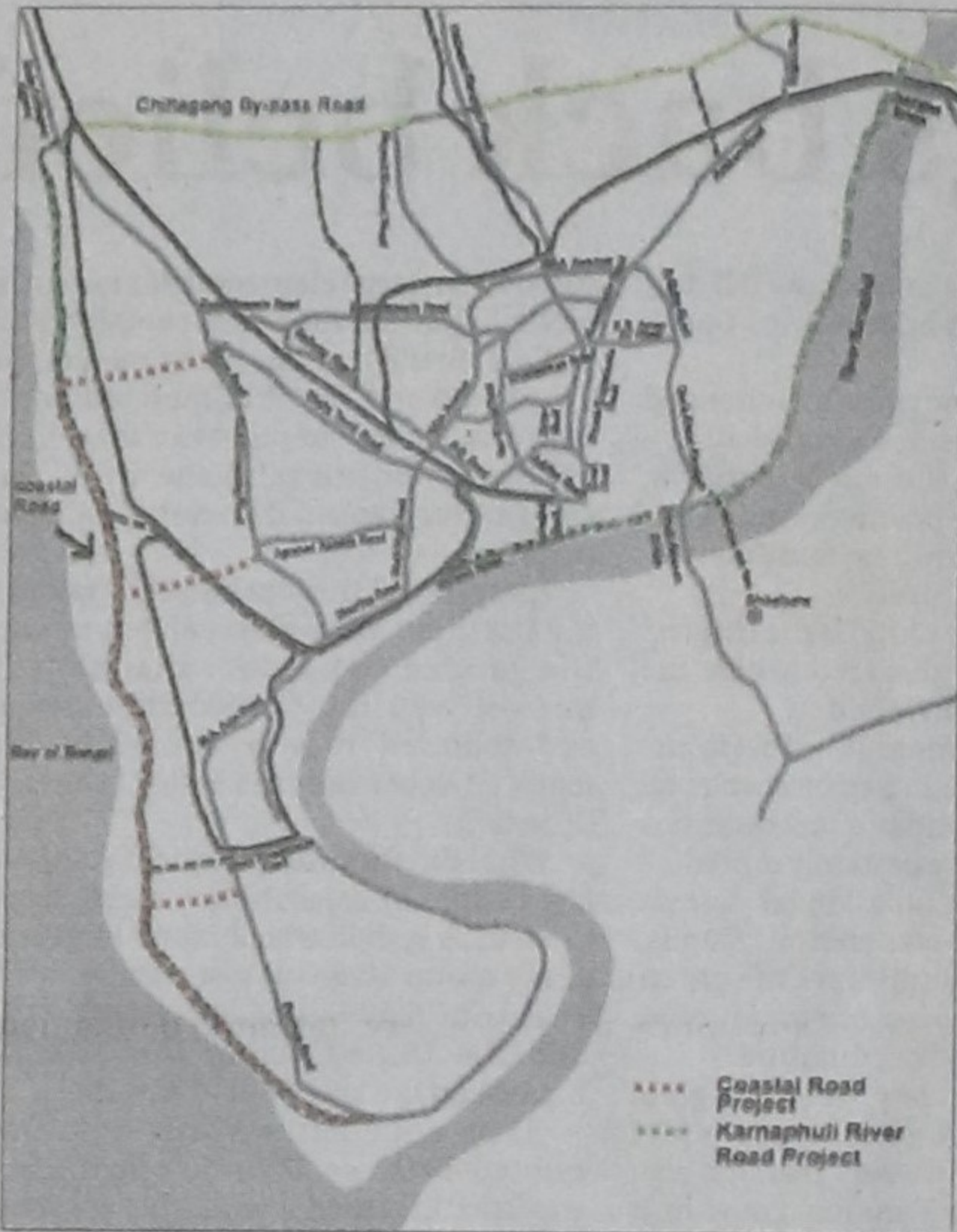
choice. Admission process at Commerce College remained suspended for more than two hours on June 25 following a clash between two groups of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) over dispute centring admission.

A guardian preferring anonymity said many admission seekers ran out of the campus during the clash. He said at least 57 students chosen by a BCL faction got admitted to the college violating the serial in the result sheet, which Principal Prof Guru Gobinda Ray denied.

He said some student leaders demanded admission of their choice which the college authorities refused. Prof Gobinda said they suspended the admission process for some time and resumed again.

Another factor that has frustrated many is the "quota system" that aims at giving scopes to the students who have passed from rural schools. As per the new system, at least 12 percent of seats in city colleges will be reserved for the students who passed from rural areas.

Prof Humayun said the present admission system is more logical but the admission crisis will not be resolved without setting up more government colleges and ensuring quality education.



Hindu devotees pull a chariot during a Rath Jatra festival in the port city on June 24. The picture was taken from the Kazir Dewri intersection.

the week that was

Workshop on environment ends

A three-day training workshop on environment and environmental laws concluded in the port city on Monday.

Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers' Association (BELA), Chittagong divisional unit organised the workshop in cooperation with the Manusher Jonno Foundation for school and college teachers.

A total of 20 teachers from government and non-government schools and colleges participated in the workshop.

Role of teachers and students in conserving environment, different aspects of environmental degradation, global warming and impact of climate change were discussed in the workshop.

Premier University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Anupam Sen was the chief guest at the concluding ceremony held at a city restaurant.

Chittagong University Acting

Registrar Professor Dr Shah Alam and Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences Prof Dr Mohammad Mohiuddin were the special guests with BELA Chittagong Division Coordinator Anwarul Islam Chowdhury in the chair.

VoIP equipment seized

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) equipment worth around Tk 15 lakh and arrested one person in this connection from a flat at city's Chanmari Road on Sunday.

Acting on a tip-off, a squad of the Rab-7 Chittagong raided a flat on third floor of Monwara Mansion at the Chanmari Road under Khuishi Police Station at around 5.30pm and seized the illegal VoIP equipment.

The seized equipment included two channel boxes, two quantas, a battery, an IPS, 30 antennas and 30 SIM cards of Warid mobile phone operator.

Rab arrested Shahjahan Bhuiyan, 54, son of Jate Sheikh Ahmed from

the spot for running the VoIP business illegally.

Tk 85.12cr CU budget approved

Chittagong University (CU) Senate at its 21st annual meeting on Sunday approved Tk 85.12 crore budget for 2009-2010.

The Senate also approved a revised budget of Tk 79.70 crore for the fiscal year of 2008-2009.

Of the budget, Tk 74.18 crore would come as allocation approved by University Grants Commission (UGC) while the rest Tk 10.94 crore from the internal resources of the university.

Of the budget, Tk 53.10 crore has been allocated for salary and allowances of the teachers and employees, Tk 12.50 crore for pension, Tk 8.48 crore for education and others and the rest Tk 11.04 crore for students' welfare, higher study of the teachers, and transport.

Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Abu Yusuf presided over the meeting

held at the Conference Room of Administrative Building.

Ctg customs to ease procedures

Chittagong customs is taking steps to ease procedures relating to export and help the garments industry overcome the negative impact of the global economic recession.

The steps are to ensure easy entry of export information in the pass book, unhindered quality checking and stuffing at the off-docks (Inland Container Depots or ICDs) at the night time, air shipment of garments products from Chittagong through Zia International Airport and to ease delivery process of imported garments raw materials at Green Channel.

Chittagong Customs Commissioner (Export) AHM Sahabuddin Nagri gave assurance in this regard when Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA)

leaders led by First Vice-President Nasir Uddin held a courtesy meeting with him at Chittagong Customs House conference room here on Monday.

After thoroughly discussing the problems the garments industries facing, the meeting took decision in principal to take the steps to ease the export procedures.

The customs authorities assured the BGMEA leaders of immediate steps to engage preventative officers in checking and stuffing of export goods, conduct taxation and physical examining of export items at Chittagong customs house before air shipment through Zia International Airport and to avoid cutting inspection for imported fabrics of lower price.

BGMEA Leaders Md Liakat Ali Chowdhury, Hasanuzzaman Chowdhury, former first Vice-President and Chairman of BGMEA Standing Committee on Chittagong customs affairs Moeenuddin Ahmed Mintu, standing committee Co-Chairman ANM Saif Uddin, Co-Chairman Mazharul Islam Chowdhury and member Md Shah Newaz spoke at the meeting.



Proma Abritti Sangathan, a recitation organisation, takes out a procession from central Shaheed Minar in the port city on June 26 marking the 15th death anniversary of Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam.