



Residents of Uttara Sector No. 10 in the city use this makeshift bamboo-made bridge at Road No. 12 as the area remains waterlogged during the monsoon, but the authorities concerned have turned a blind eye to the woes of the road users.

Land price marks unusual rise

Low-cost buildings remain a dream for middle-income people

UNB, Dhaka

As the cost of land in Dhaka city has marked an unusual rise for lack of control over the land market, developers can no longer construct low-cost buildings for the middle-income group.

According to a study, a fierce competition by real-estate companies for land, age-old land record system, taxation structure and cumbersome land transfer procedure have made the whole land system in the city unmanageable.

It says, "The situation has reached such a stage that these days most people cannot dream of owning an apartment let alone building houses with the help of lending institutions, as their monthly salary cannot meet installment requirements."

The study says the pressure on limited land in Dhaka has not only

intensified urbanisation, it has also led to indiscriminate filling of lowland in the deltaic flood plains to make way for urban development.

"We're virtually forced to opt for the constructions of high-rise buildings because of high prices of land," President of Real Estate & Housing Association of Bangladesh (Rehab) Tanvirul Haque Probal told UNB.

"Although the high-rise building is the key to resolving housing problem in Dhaka city, we face various objections from the Civil Aviation Authorities to building skyscrapers," he said.

Asked about the risks for high-rises in an earthquake-prone area like Dhaka, Tanvirul said the city's soil condition is good enough to construct multistoried buildings. Even many earthquake-prone countries like Japan have adopted the policy of high-rise building, he added.

"The construction cost is increasing day by day with the rise of prices of construction materials. Moreover, developers have to build high-rise buildings on costly land," the Rehab President said.

About dwindling land area in the city, he said that the government should take steps to expand capital Dhaka and develop transport facilities in adjacent areas so that people can easily come to the capital from outside to attend their offices and businesses.

The government recently fixed the prices of land in Dhaka city to keep the price within the capacity of the city dwellers. However, the market prices of land in all parts of the capital are three to 15 times higher than the prices fixed by the government.

The minimum selling price of one katha of land has been fixed at Tk 10 lakh for Gulshan and Banani, Tk 3 lakh

for Uttara, Tk 6 lakh for Mohammadpur and Tk 8 lakh for Mirpur.

But in reality, one katha of land is selling at more than Tk 1 crore at Gulshan and Banani and more than Tk 50 lakh at Lalmatia, according to developers.

Tanvir said the land price has increased five times in the last five years, as the gap between demand and supply is enormous.

He emphasised reconstruction of buildings by demolishing the old and unplanned ones owned by individuals.

Tanvir said about 15 percent of buildings in Dhaka city are constructed by Rehab and the remaining buildings had been constructed by individuals.

He said these owners have built low-rise buildings to serve their own purposes, not considering the commercial side.



An artist paints at a programme titled 'Blood-stained canvas' on the Central Shaheed Minar premises in the city yesterday with a call to execute the verdict in Bangabandhu murder case immediately. Mukti Joddhar Santan organised the event.

Ctg Wasa to increase water supply

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD, Ctg

To ease water crisis before the holy Ramadan, Chittagong Water and Sewerage Authority (CWasa) will increase its water supply by one crore litre daily.

The authority has also started a process to install express lines to ensure uninterrupted supply of power to its deep tube wells.

To increase water supply CWasa will complete the installation of four new deep tube wells and regenerate five others before the Ramadan.

The four new deep tube wells are being installed at Dampara, Bashundhara Residential Area of Halishahar K-block, Pashchim Madarbari and Mohora with the total production capacity of 65 lakh litres of water, said the sources.

Regeneration of five tube wells, all in the city's Kalurghat heavy industrial area, would increase production by 35 lakh litres of water.

The four new tube wells are being installed under the 3rd interim water supply project that CWasa took up back in 1999 for the installation of 60 deep tube wells at a cost of Tk 59 crore.

Fifty-one of these tube wells were installed since 2003 raising the number of deep tube wells of CWasa to 74.

Of the rest nine deep

tube wells, four are being installed now, said the sources in CWasa.

While talking about different measures to ease sufferings of the city dwellers during the Ramadan the newly appointed CWasa Chairman AKM Fazlullah said, "Installation of four new deep tube wells could take some 25 days. But, our men are working round the clock to install them before the Ramadan."

"We would install other five deep tube wells by next three months," he added.

To ensure uninterrupted power supply CWasa is getting express lines for some of its deep tube wells, said the chairman while talking to this correspondent at his office on Tuesday.

"We have already handed over Tk 5 crore to Power Development Board (PDB) for this. The express lines will cover some 15 deep tube wells," he added.

"We would also bring some changes in the time schedule for ensuring supply of water during Sehri and Iftar," said the chairman.

"Besides, all the 11 vouchers (vehicles used to carry water on emergency basis in exchange for money) will be kept stand by for Sehri and Iftar," he added.

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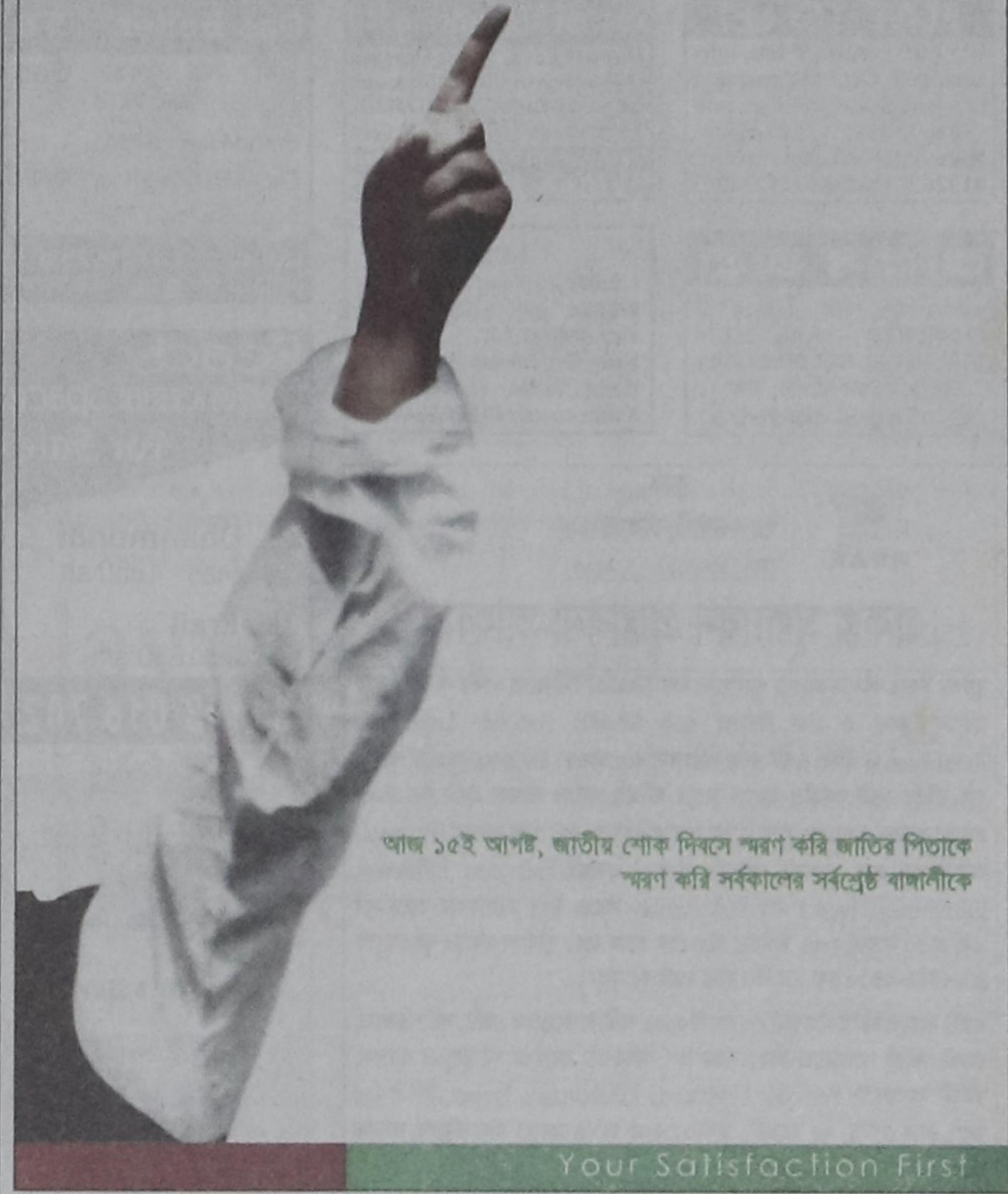
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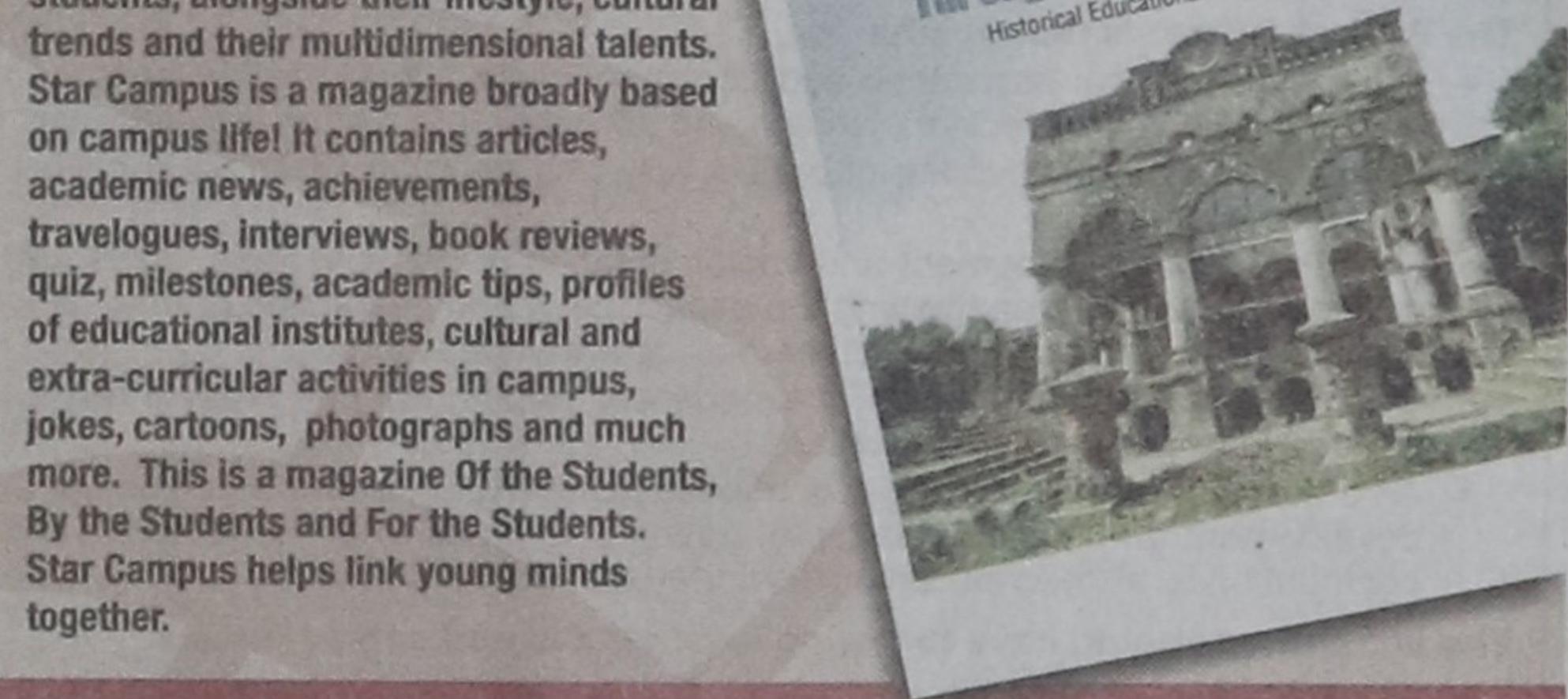
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