

Plan to widen Ctg road to ease gridlock

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) will widen Kapashgola Road up to 60-foot in four lanes with a total length of 2.19km stretching from Bahodderhat intersection to Gani Bazaar Intersection at an estimated cost of Tk 40.18 crore, said the sources at CDA.

With a view to easing gridlock in the port city, Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecnec) at a meeting on

August 25 approved the Kapashgola Road Widening and Improvement Project to be financed by the government.

Under the widening and development project existing Kapashgola road through a densely populated area would be developed as a four-lane one with a width of 50-foot including a two-foot centre divider.

The road would have two five-foot footpath-cum drains on both the sides. Five RCC box culverts will also be

constructed on the road.

The widened and developed Kapashgola Road would facilitate smooth vehicular movement from Kaptai, Kalurghat, Mohra Industrial area to city centre of New Market through Chawk Bazaar and in front of Chittagong College.

It would also form a part of a main road from Bahodderhat to Agrabad Baria Building intersection en route to New Market and Sadarghat.

At present the road that

stretches from Bahodderhat intersection to Chittagong Airport through Agrabad Commercial Area is considered as the lone main road of the port city.

The road, which is also known as CDA Avenue or the Asian Highway, can hardly bear the pressure of vehicles and witnesses a serious gridlock throughout the day, particularly during the rush hours of traffic in the morning and late afternoon.

Despite widening and development of

Sirajuddoula Road at a cost of Tk 24 crore, the 20-year old narrow Kapashgola Road stood as a bottleneck in developing the second main road of the city.

Sources said widening and developing the Kapashgola road would also develop a good communication linkage of Muradpur and Bahodderhat with Chawk Bazaar, Bahodderhat, Chittagong College and Chittagong Medical College areas.

After completion of the road the vehicles from Muradpur and Sholoshahar intersections also would be able to reach Sirajuddoula Road and Anderkilla after passing easily through Chawk Bazaar intersection and in front of Chittagong College where unbearable gridlock hampers both vehicular and public movement until midnight everyday.

The road will reduce travel time, distance and save the fuel.

CDA Chairman Abdus Salam was not available for comment as he was on leave to perform Umrah.

Sources said Tk 28.69 crore, out of the total budget of Tk 40.18 crore, would be spent for acquisition of 2.10 hectares of land and compensation.

Sources said engineering section of CDA has asked the planning section not to give permission further for construction of any sort of private structures along the road at that point. The planning section is also taking steps accordingly, they said.

Roads and Highway Department acquired land along some one kilometer of the road from Bahodderhat intersection to Jangi Shah Mazar in 1954 for widening the Kapashgola road up to 75 feet that are now occupied by a section of people, they said.

When contacted, Sign Pro Director Md



Pedestrians cross the busy GEC intersection in the port city risking their lives as there is no footbridge at this point. The picture was taken on Sunday.

ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER

Construction of eight footbridges uncertain

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR

Construction of the footbridges at eight intersections in the port city has been hanging in the balance for over two years.

Initiative to construct the bridges with the financial help of private organisations was taken by Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) in 2007 to ease traffic congestion and help smooth vehicular and pedestrians' movement.

CCC through newspaper advertisements invited intended parties to construct the footbridges and use the bridges for advertisement purpose without paying any holding tax to CCC for 20 years.

Two advertisement firms -- Sign Pro and AdValley -- responded to the CCC invitation positively expressing willingness to set up the eight footbridges at different intersections in the city.

Sign Pro showed interest to construct three bridges at Bahodderhat, GEC and in front of Bangladesh Woman Association (BWA) School and College near Wasa intersection while the Ad Valley at Badamtali of Agrabad, Dewanhat, Tigerpass, Muradpur intersections and in front of Colonel Hat Bazar.

But, the footbridges could not be constructed yet due to indifference of the CCC itself.

Uncertainty looms over the construction of footbridges now with one of the intended firms facing closure while the other has lost its interest.

When contacted, Sign Pro Director Md

Mujibur Rahman told The Daily Star that

one year has already elapsed since submission of estimate and designs of the over

bridges to the CCC without any response.

Mujibur said they requested the CCC to

remove the electricity, telephone and internet wires and underground gas pipeline from the proposed sites for the bridges. But, nothing has been done till date, he said, adding that approximate cost for each bridge was at around Tk 1 crore and agreed to spend money for the sake of public movement.

He, however, it is now impossible for the Sign Pro to proceed with the project as the firm is now closed over ownership dispute.

On the other hand, Ad Valley Proprietor Mohiuddin Bachchu said his firm is yet to get any response after submitting the estimate and design for CCC approval.

He said it is not possible now to set up the bridges with the previous estimated cost made on the then market price of construction materials and the estimate needs to be revised now.

In this regard, CCC Revenue Officer (RO) Mohammad Shamsul Alam said they sent the file to the engineering department for approval of the design and other related matters around one year ago. The firms can start work after engineering department's approval.

When asked, CCC Chief Engineer Mohammad Nizam Uddin denied receipt of any file in this regard from the revenue section. Nizam refused to talk when he was told that the file is now lying at his office.

There are only five footbridges at Darul Fazal Market, Reazuddin Bazar, Fakirhat and Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ).

Three bridges are unusable as floating people have occupied those when the pedestrians ran risk of falling easy prey to accident while crossing the road and suffered a lot due to gridlocks.



Kapashgola Road .

STAR PHOTO

the week that was

MoU signed to create awareness among female workers

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between Bangladesh Frozen Foods Exporters' Association (BFFEA) and Agrajatra, a local NGO, to create awareness among the female workers of the shrimp processing sector here on Saturday.

BFFEA Vice President Maksudur Rahman and Agrajatra President Neelima Akter Chowdhury signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organi-

sations at Chittagong Press Club auditorium.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal Executive President and lawmaker from Chittagong-7 constituency Molnuddin Khan Badal was the chief guest at the signing ceremony chaired by Chief Fishery Officer Siraj Uddin of Chittagong Region.

Badal in his speech said a huge number of poor people are engaged with the shrimp industry and corporate responsibility is a

must for changes in this sector.

He underscored the need for setting up villages and form cooperative associations for fishermen at the coastal belts for development of their livelihoods.

High officials of the Fishery department and BFFEA were present at the signing ceremony.

The other components of the MoU are Bangladesh Quality Support Programme (BQSP) and Fish Inspection and Quality

Control (FQC) wing of the Department of Fisheries, Chittagong.

Following the MoU, the NGO will mobilise the poor female labourers working in the shrimp processing factories to form small groups, carry out training and motivation activities on labour rules, duties and responsibilities of labour, health education and means of alternative income generation when there will be no work for them.



Visitors admire dresses displayed at an exhibition by designer IV Rahman at the gallery of Doll's House, a fashion house, at Chittagong in the port city on Saturday.

Blood donation on Madhu Purnima

Speakers urged the young generation to play more proactive roles in the social welfare activities.

They were addressing a blood donation programme held on the occasion of holy Madhu Purnima, one of the major religious festivals of the Buddhist community, on Thursday.

Lion Club of Chittagong Progressive West and Leo District 315-B4 jointly organised the programme in association with Bangladesh Bouddha Samity at the Chittagong Buddhist Monastery at Nandankanan.

Samity President Ajit Barua inaugurated the programme at a brief programme with Lions Club Adviser Adarsha Kumar Barua in the chair.

Governor of Lion District 315-B4 Shah M Hasan was the chief guest at the ceremony while District Cabinet Secretary Sirajul Hoque Ansari was the special guest.

Speakers urged all to donate blood regularly for helping the ill people in need.

Lion Club leaders Md Nazrul Islam, Jahangir Mia, Ina Rani Chowdhury, AKM Shafiqullah, Md Showkatul Islam, Leo Club leaders Prasanta Barua, Abu Naser Roni and Leo Club District Secretary Imam Hossain Abid were present on the occasion.

BNP men urged to work unitedly

Bangladesh Jatiyabadi Dal (BNP) city unit Convener and former commerce minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury urged the

BOU students protest irregularities

Students of Bangladesh Open University (BOU) formed a human chain and staged a demonstration on Friday protesting irregularities and problems prevailing in the university.

Babu Chhatra Okiya Parishad regional committee organised the demonstration in front of the BOU regional office near the MA Aziz Stadium.

Students urged the government to take immediate steps to probe the alleged irregularities in the HSC Programme result and demanded supply of books to students of the 2nd semester.

They threatened tougher movement if the authorities do not meet their demands. The parishad also organised a protest rally with regional committee Convener Dhali Mohammad Bashir in the chair.

Parishad central Vice President Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan, Organising Secretary Akbar Hossain Bachchu, Law Affairs Secretary Anwar Hossain, regional Joint Secretary Karina Begum Bijli, Member Secretary Salaiman Shah and Rabindra Kumar Jony spoke at the programme.

Speakers at a seminar emphasised timely development of Electric Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) and e-Navigation here on Friday.

The Nautical Institute Bangladesh (NIB) organised the seminar on "ECDIS and e-Navigation Update" at local hotel.

Captain Forkanul Quader, MNI, a nautical policy lead cum marine surveyor of Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) of the United Kingdom, presented paper at the seminar moderated by NIB Chairman Captain Mohd Habibur Rahman, also principal officer of Mercantile Marine Department.

Development of ECDIS, e-navigation stressed

Speakers at a seminar emphasised timely development of Electric Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) and e-Navigation here on Friday.

The Nautical Institute Bangladesh (NIB) organised the seminar on "ECDIS and e-Navigation Update" at local hotel.

Captain Forkanul Quader, MNI, a nautical policy lead cum marine surveyor of Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) of the United Kingdom, presented paper at the seminar moderated by NIB Chairman Captain Mohd Habibur Rahman, also principal officer of Mercantile Marine Department.