

Capital dredging of Karnaphuli in the offing

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

The capital dredging of the river Karnaphuli and construction of its 2.5km marine driveway with bank protection wall along the city side are likely to begin soon, sources said.

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) has appointed Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) as a consultant on January 7 with approval of the shipping ministry for implementing a project worth Tk 376 crore, said the sources at CPA.

The Bureau of Research and Testing Authority (BRTA) of Buet submitted a Technical and Financial Proposal (TFP) to CPA on Tuesday in this regard.

CPA Chairman Commodore Reaz Uddin Ahmed said, "Since it is an important and priority project for the port as well as for the country and the TFP is ready we would sign an agreement with Buet soon."

He told The Daily Star on Tuesday that they have already asked Buet to prepare a pre-qualification (PQ) document as early as possible for floating the pre-qualifying tender by this month.

"We want to complete the bidding and short-listing of the pre-qualified bidders by the middle of March so that the Buet team can go ahead with preparation of tender documentation, project designing and other works for floating the main tender to appoint contractor for the dredging and construction works," Reaz said.

He said they expect to float



The Karnaphuli river. The photo was taken from Bangla Bazar area on Monday.

ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER

tender by the end of June or middle of July.

Some 3.5 Million Cubic Meters (mcm) earth would be

dredged from some 3km bed of the Karnaphuli stretching from Sadarghat lighterage jetty towards upstream some 500

meters off Shah Amanat Bridge under the project, sources said.

At the same time a 2.5 marine driveway with bank protection

wall would be constructed along right bank of the river stretching from Sadarghat to upstream, said Project Director Habibur

Rahman.

As per the project profile (PP) approved by the shipping ministry on October 13 in 2009, imple-

mentation of the project was scheduled to start on July 1 the same year to be completed by June 1 in 2012, Habibur said.

CPA took a Tk 74 crore project under a Japanese Debt Cancellation Programme for capital dredging of the river and bank protection works in 2005.

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecnc) approved a project concept paper in this regard on February 27 while the Department for Project Evaluation Committee (DPEC) approved the project profile on May 11 the same year.

But, a Revised Development Project Proforma (RDPP) prepared in June 2006 inflated the cost by a staggering 345 percent to Tk 255.30 crore, prompting the ministry to cancel the previous project.

A fresh DPP of Tk 411.72 crore was prepared in 2008 that was recast and finalised last year to implement the project at Tk 376 crore, sources said.

Habibur said, "In the recasting previously proposed sheet-piling was replaced by RCC pillar, which was less costly, users-friendly and can be made locally, for the bank protection wall. It reduced the project cost by Tk 34 crore.

"As per the new PP the quantity of earth to be dredged stood at around 3.5 million cubic meters (mcm) from 2.9 mcm of the DPP. The recasting also re-fixed the dredging rate at Tk 320 per cubic meter from previous rate of Tk 360 per cubic meter," said Habibur, adding that the other components of the project would remain unchanged.

SHORTAGE OF X-RAY FILMS

CMCH indifferent to patients' sufferings



X-ray machine remains unused for three weeks at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) for shortage of films. The photo was taken on Monday.

DWAIPAYAN BARUA

The X-ray service at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) has remained suspended for over three weeks due to shortage of films, causing sufferings to the patients.

The crisis had begun after the hospital authorities refused to buy X-ray films from the market due to a bit of higher price than the government-fixed price.

The radiology and imaging department suspended the X-ray service for both the indoor and outdoor patients as the store department stopped supplying the big and medium sized X-ray films since January 10.

Store department is supplying small sized films to a very few number of emergency patients.

The patients of the lone tertiary level hospital in the region are now forced to get their prescribed X-ray done from different private centres at higher cost.

Shahadat Hossain, worker of a ship-breaking yard at Sitakunda upazila, who got a bad fracture in his right leg when a heavy plate fell on him while cutting a scrapped ship on January 16, was admitted to the orthopaedics ward No 26.

"On the very first day I could be able to get the X-ray done at the hospital at cheaper rate but after a week when the doctors prescribed for another X-ray I

found it closed," Shahadat said.

"Since I was unable to move at that time my brother hired a person from a nearby private centre named Chittagong Lab Limited who brought a portable X-ray machine to do my X-ray," he said, adding that the private centre cost Tk 800.

"It was expensive for me but I had no alternative as the doctors refused to provide further treatment without X-ray," he added.

While visiting the Orthopaedics ward on Monday morning, several patients were found getting their X-ray done with a portable machine from the same private lab.

Abul Kashem, a rickshawpuller of Rangunia, said he had to get four X-ray done paying Tk 1900 to the private lab. He was admitted to the hospital after a road accident on January 19.

Mokhlesur Rahman, a medical technologist of radiology department, said a patient is to pay Tk 70 for each X-ray in big films while only Tk 55 each in small sized films at the department.

On an average over 200 indoor patients from different wards like Orthopaedics, Neuro-Surgery and Casualty and also outdoor patients use to get the facility at the hospital everyday.

Mokhles said the crisis of shortage of films started when the government introduced a system to procure X-ray

films locally in 2007 instead of the old system of purchasing through Central Medical Store Department (CMSD) in Dhaka.

Dr Anisul Maola, head of the Radiology and Imaging Department, said they got over 70,000 of X-ray films last year. There is no big sized film now in the department or in the CMCH store department, he added.

Sources said the situation worsens since the hospital authorities did not purchase any X-ray film this year as the government fixed rate was bit lower than the market price.

The hospital authorities floated a tender last year to procure medical equipment for 2010 with fixing rate for each 100 pieces of big sized X-ray films at Tk 5,000 while the lowest price was Tk 5075.

The authorities could not solve the problem due to transfer its director in January and failure of the new director to take over.

Senior Store Officer Dr Sheikh Jamal Mostafa discussed the matter with head of Radiology Department on Monday to find a way out for solving the issue.

Acting Director Dr Moinuddin Ahmad said they cannot buy any product exceeding the government fixed rate. He said they are planning to float fresh tender for buying the films after joining of the new director.

theweekthatwas

18 women die of cervical cancer daily

A seminar was held here on Thursday with a call for creating awareness about cervical cancer.

The seminar on severity and prevention of cervical cancer was organised by Chittagong Medical College Obstetrics and Gynaecology Department in association with Glaxo SmithKline.

The speakers at the seminar said 18 women die of cervical cancer in Bangladesh everyday while in every two minutes one dies of the disease in world.

Cervical cancer is caused by persistent infection with a common virus known as Human Papillomavirus HPV, which the body itself is able to fight off in most cases. However, once the infection persists, it turns cancerous within two to 20 years, they said.

The speakers called for creating awareness among the women and recommended vaccination along with regular screening to reduce the risk of developing such cancer.

Prof Dr MA Taher Khan presided over the meeting. Prof Dr Shah Abdur Rahman Chowdhury and Dr Shoyela Shahnaj presented the keynote papers.

Glaxo SmithKline Bangladesh Limited Zonal Sales Manager Sarwar Kamal, Area Executive Aminul Islam Fakir and Senior Medical Promotion Officer KM Abdullah Al Mamun were present at the seminar.

Gym equipment for autistic children

Underlining the need for physical exercise for mental development alongside physical growth, Berger Paints Bangladesh Limited started a programme for distributing gym-equipment to schools.

Berger Paints gave gym equipment like infrared massager, cycle, trampoline, treadmill and gym ball to Dwipaloy Autism Children School -- a school for autistic children in the city's Katalgongj Area, on Saturday.

Branch Manager Nazrul Islam handed over

the equipment to Dipa Mukherjee, headmistress of Dwipaloy School, at Berger paints Chittagong Sales Office at Chatteshwari Road. Appreciating Berger Paint for the support Dipa called upon conscious people to come forward to help run schools promising normal life for all children.

Christmas reunion of Chittagong YMCA held

The Christmas reunion of Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Chittagong was held in the port city on Saturday with a vow to bring about betterment of people irrespective of cast, creed and race.

Addressing the reunion as the chief guest Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) Chairman Abdus Salam assured YMCA members of CDA support and cooperation in its effort for socio-economic development of the people of Chittagong.

Reverend Bishop Lawrence Subrata Howladar of Chittagong Diocese, Symon P Adhikary and Duncan Chowdhury, president and general secretary of YMCA Bangladesh National Council, were special guests at the reunion held on the Chittagong YMCA building premises at CDA Avenue.

Chittagong YMCA Chairman Melvin R Rozario chaired the ceremony moderated by General Secretary Eslyn Charles Dias.

Call to establish human rights

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The discussion titled "Role of police and civil administration in safeguarding human rights" was organised on the occasion of installation of Samajik Paribesh O

Manabadhikar Bastobayon Sangstha, Chittagong unit.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) Commissioner Md Muniruzzaman Mia spoke as the chief guest at the discussion held at Chittagong Zila Parishad auditorium with Sangstha Convener Lion Sajeda Begum in the chair.

Additional DIG Maqbul Hossain Bhuiyan, Advocate Rafiqul Quader, Chittagong Development Action Committee Secretary General Prof Mamtazuddin Chowdhury and the organisation's Secretary General Sujjan Dey were the special guests.

Sangstha Central Chairman Lion HM Ibrahim Bhuiyan inaugurated the installation ceremony.

Speakers at the meeting said a few dishonest were always up to deprive and oppress the poor and underprivileged poor. They urged all to make united efforts to establish human rights and build a better world.

BITA workers' conference ends

Speakers at a workers' conference emphasised coordinating the development activities run by the non-government organisations with government initiatives.

They were addressing the concluding ceremony of the two-day conference of Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts (BITA) on Sunday.

Deputy Commissioner was the chief guest at the ceremony held on the Shilpakla Academy premises.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Md Ehsane Elahi and District Primary Education Officer (DPEO) Debesh Chandra Sarker were present as the special guests.

BITA arranged the conference for the second time with a view to building more friendly relationship among the staffs working across the country.

The DC in his speech termed the programme 'exceptional' and hoped that it would enhance the relation among the BITA activists.

Earlier on Saturday, BITA member Synthia D Rosario inaugurated the conference. A discussion meeting was also held where BITA Director Shishir Datta, Policy and Collaboration Director Moushumi Chowdhury, Prof Israfil Shahin spoke.



Artists of 'The Student Performing Art Troupe of Yunnan', a cultural organisation from China, perform dance at Theatre Institute of Chittagong (TIC) on Thursday.

STAR PHOTO