

# Karnaphuli dredging likely to start in Dec

*CPA may float tender by next week to appoint contractor*

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

The much-talked about capital dredging of the river Karnaphuli and construction of a 2.5km marine driveway with bank protection wall along the city side of the river is likely to begin in December.

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) completed pre-qualification bidding and short-listing of bidders last month in this regard where 12, out of 18 bidders, were found pre-qualified.

A consultant team of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) has already prepared tender documentation, project designing and other works required for floating the main tender.

Tender is likely to be floated by next week to appoint contractor for the dredging and construction works under the project involving around Tk 376 crore, said the

sources at CPA.

The implementation of the project is likely to start by December this year to be completed within the scheduled time, they hoped.

The capital dredging became a crying need since navigable capacity of the Karnaphuli decreased seriously in the upstream of Sadarghat lighterage jetty, sources said, adding that it has taken serious turn for lack of capital dredging for over two decades, sources said.

After the last capital dredging was done in 1987, the navigability of the river could be maintained only in front of the jetties and at the port channel through maintenance dredging.

Massive siltation in the upstream of the river posed a threat to movement of inland water transports like cargo and passenger vessels. Deposition of silt in front of several jetties also caused the vessels anchor far

into river to offload cargoes and passengers in Sadarghat area, said the sources.

CPA also took initiative for the capital dredging project back in 2005. But, it could not be implemented due to a reported inflation of the project cost.

Process of implementing the project got a fresh start immediate after the shipping ministry approved the project on October 13, 2009.

Sources said 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 (the 2nd bridge over the Karnaphuli) under the project.

At the same time a 2.5 km marine driveway with bank protection wall and jetties would be constructed along right bank of the river stretching from Sadarghat to upstream, informed Project Director Habibur Rahman.

As per the project profile approved by the shipping ministry, implementation of the project was scheduled to start on July 1 in 2009 to be completed by June 1, 2012, Habibur said.

Instruction has been made to complete implementation of the project within 18 months of commencement and within the scheduled time, he added.

Sources said of the estimated project cost, Tk 190 crore would be spent for construction of jetties, Tk 115 crore for dredging and Tk 50 crore for protection wall or embankments while the rest would be required other heads of the projects.

The cost for protection walls or embankments was earlier estimated at Tk 36 crore. But, it rose to Tk 50 crore since eight culverts required to be constructed before going for construction of the protection wall and embankments, sources said.

CPA took a Tk 74 crore capital dredging project under a Japanese Debt Cancellation Programme for the same dredging and bank protection work back in 2005.

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecneec) approved project concept paper (PCP) of the capital dredging project on February 27 in 2005 while the Department for Project Evaluation Committee (DPEC) okayed the project paper on May 11, 2005.

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

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

## theweekthatwas



Hundreds of people cross the river Karnaphuli by ferry everyday risking their lives. The photo was taken from Firingibazar Bridge Ghat on Monday.

PHOTO ANURUP KANTI DAS

### 'Conserve beauty of city'

"The natural environment and aesthetic settings of Chittagong have to be conserved at any cost," said Chittagong City Corporation Mayor M Manjur Alam here on Monday.

Sitting amidst forest, hills-valles and sea, Chittagong is blessed with a beauty which is rare in Bangladesh but also in the world, he said. The newly elected mayor sought cooperation from all to preserve the beauty in the city.

Manjur was addressing as the chief guest a seminar titled "The natural environment of Chittagong and growth of real estate industry: Present perspective".

Bangladesh Real Estate Directory (BD-RED) organised the seminar at a local hotel on the eve of its four-day real estate fair titled the 8th BD-RED Abasan Mela.

He said the past richness of Chittagong ushers in prospect for the present. But, devouring hills and filling up of water bodies by a section of unscrupulous elements posed a threat to the aesthetic setting of the city, he regretted. He sought cooperation from all, including Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) and other organisation concerned, to develop the city following the Chittagong Metropolitan Master Plan.

Architect Bishwajit Barua presented the keynote paper at the seminar moderated by Dr Captain Masudur Rahman.

Chittagong Wasa Chairman Engineer AKM Fazlullah, Engineer Ali Ashraf, elderly journalist M Nasirul Haq, Engineer Sirajul Islam, businessman Noor Mohammad, Engineer Pulak Barua, Environmentalist Tajminur Rahman and APEX Managing Director Mohammad Ali took part in the discussion.

### Designers hold Eid festival

Designers Forum, a platform of designers of Chittagong, arranged a fair titled 'Eid Festival' at Shah Alam Bir Uttam auditorium of Chittagong Medical College (CMC) on Saturday to aware the local consumers of latest designs of some local design houses on the eve of the coming Eid-ul-Fitre.

A number of works of the designers were displayed at the festival.

The organisers hoped that the forum would work to make the new generation familiar with the rich cultural heritage when an apparent stagnancy prevails in the cultural arena.

Noted designer, researcher and columnist Chandrashekhar Saha and designer of Banglar Melaw and Hoque's Collection Emdad Hoque were present as the guests at the programme.

Later a fashion show was held.

### Call to pick good from IT

Speakers at a publication ceremony in the port city on Sunday urged to pick the good from information technology (IT) and make proper application of them to help build a Digital Bangladesh.

There is a wide use of IT in almost every area in everyday life. Use of IT is meant for bringing in welfare for all, but its misuse can cause damage to the society as well, they said.

Premier University Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Anupam Sen was the chief guest at the publication ceremony of a book titled, "Projukti Abongbidih" (Technology of this kind) by Dr Obayedul Karim.

Prof Dr Md Shahadat Hossain, head of computer science and technology department at Chittagong University (CU), CU Teachers Association President Prof Dr Abul Kashem Chowdhury and Bangladesh Institute of Planners, Chittagong chapter President

Engineer Ali Ashraf spoke at the function at Engineer Abdul Khaleq auditorium of Chittagong Press Club.

Chittagong chamber former vice-president Mahabubul Alam Talukder presided over.

### Five committees to monitor prices during Ramadan

Chittagong district administration and the businessmen at a meeting in the port city on Sunday decided to form five monitoring committees to check prices of essentials during the Ramadan.

Each of the committee would be formed with nine members headed by a magistrate. The committees would start monitoring the markets from August 8, said the meeting sources. The meeting was held at Chittagong Circuit House with Acting Deputy

Commissioner Zaker Hossain in the chair.

The meeting decided to ask the traders to hang price list of essentials in front of their shops.

Four committees would monitor 15 retail markets while the other would monitor two wholesale markets in the city, the sources said.

The businessmen hailed the decision to monitor the markets, assuring the administration of all out cooperation in this regard.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Ehsane-Elahi, Chittagong City Corporation Secretary Md Quamruzzaman, Chittagong Chamber Director SM Mahbulul Islam, Khatunganj Trade and Industry President Mahabub Alam, General Secretary Syed Sagir Ahmed, Federation of Shop Owners' Associations President Salamat Ali and Chittagong Metropolitan Chamber Secretary Abdul Moktadir spoke at the meeting.

### BAFFA polls on August 8

A projection meeting of Shammilito Parishad, a panel for Bangladesh Freight Forwarder Association (BAFFA), was held at a local hotel in the port city on Monday.

Speakers at the meeting stressed the need for bringing change in leadership for betterment of the organisation through the BAFFA 2010-2012 election to be held on August 8.

Thirty-eight candidates in two 19-member panels - Shammilito Parishad and Oikya Parishad -- and two independent candidates are contesting the election.

A total of 533 voters would exercise franchise in the polls to elect a board of directors that formed the International Freight Forwarders Association of Bangladesh (IFFAB) and All Cargo Agent Association of Bangladesh (ACAAB).

Chief Election Commissioner Tanveer Madar introduced the panel of Shammilito Parishad led by Mahbulul Islam, a sports personality and vice-president of Bangladesh Cricket Control Board. The other candidates include Amirul Islam Chowdhury Mizan, ABM Rafiquzzaman Sagar, Ariful Ahsan, Captain (retd) Zahir Uddin Ahmed and Khairul Alam Suzan.



STAR PHOTO

Guests look at the photographs displayed at a five-day photo exhibition titled 'Soulscapes' of noted photographer GMB Akash at Alliance Française in the port city on Sunday.



STAR PHOTO

Models at a fashion show titled 'Eid Festival' organized by Designers Forum at Shah Alam Bir Uttam auditorium in the port city on Saturday.