

Cwasa fails to meet demand for water

PRABIR BARUA CHOWDHURY

The residents in the port city are facing acute water crisis as Chittagong Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Cwasa) is able to supply only 42 percent of the total demand daily. They said they get Cwasa supplied water for two to three days a week for two hours only leaving them to depend on private deep tube wells for water to continue their daily work for rest of the days.

Cwasa cannot even maintain the water supply in its network regularly, the city dwellers said, adding that it, sometimes, supplies water once in two days.

Sabiha Akter, a resident of west Madarbari, said Cwasa supplies water for two to three days for two hours a week which is quite insufficient for daily use. During the dry season, it becomes worse as sometimes they do not get Cwasa-supplied water for two to three weeks, she added.

Faridul Alam of Halishahar area said like other parts of the city they are also facing the water crisis as they have water supply for two days a week due to technical problem of the deep tube wells.

"The economically solvent people have set up their personal deep tube wells which is not possible for every one. Wasa should establish more tube wells or create alternative arrangement for water," Faridul added.

Chwakbazar, Dewanhat, Bakulia, Bohadherhat, Nasirabad and GEC area in the port city are facing the same problem for water, said the local people.

When asked about the poor condition



PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

City dwellers wait for Wasa water keeping their containers in a long queue. The photo was taken from Enayet Bazar Railway Colony in the port city recently.

of water supply in the port city, Cwasa Managing Director Engr AKM Fazlullah said Cwasa could not do any remarkable job in water production or supply in the port city due to

negligence to Cwasa by the successive governments for long. He said Cwasa is now very sincere to solve the water crisis.

Cwasa sources said Cwasa not only has

the problem of production or supply but also has the problem in pipe lines. The official said there is a 615-kilometer pipe line in the city with very poor networking for water

supply.

Cwasa officials said under the Emergency Water Supply Project, Cwasa is installing a 20km pipe line to be completed within 2011 admitting

that it would not cover the city. On the other hand, Cwasa Chief Engineer MD Sadiullah said they have no plan to expand pipe line network in recent future.

Fazlullah, however, hoped to bring a radical change in water supply within 2015 when the on-going projects like Karnaphuli Water Supply project, Mohora Extension Project, Mohora-Kalurghat Water Treatment Plant Rehabilitation Project and some other small projects will be completed. He said they will be able to meet 98 percent of total demand after completion of the projects.

Cwasa was established in 1963 to serve the city dwellers with pure drinking water and ensure the sewerage system here. But the 47-year-old Cwasa could not establish the sewerage system till now, failing to fulfill even 50 percent of total demand for water in the port city.

Cwasa fulfilled 70 percent of demand for a very brief period in 1980 producing 30 million liter of water per day. With the population increasing, production and supply of water could not be enhanced. Establishing the Mohora plant to purify the surface water from Halda River in 1988, Cwasa brought a little change in production. In early 90s, the supply of water reached 54 percent which was reduced to 41 percent in 2000. According to Cwasa, demand for water in the city is 500 million liter per day with capacity of providing 210 million liter. Of 210 million liter, 120 million comes from deep tube wells and 90 million from Mohora plant. Due to shortage of supply of water, urban life in the port city has become miserable.

An endless agony for CU students



PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Female students crammed in a 'Mass Room' of Pritilata Hall of Chittagong University. The picture was taken recently.

SHAHADAT HOSSAIN

With number of students increasing, residential problem in Chittagong University (CU) is mounting day by day.

Around 15,000, out of 20,000, students are deprived of residential facilities causing unbearable suffering to them.

The third largest university of the country started its journey in 1966 with seven teachers and 202 students.

There are only around 4,231 seats in ten dormitories, seven for male and three for female students.

Large number of students are facing serious accommodation crisis as they find it difficult to get a place in the dormitories. The residential halls remain crammed with students of previous years due to session jams.

Financially insolvent students and female students are the worst victim of this crisis. A large number of students are being forced to reside in the city mostly with their own management which is not easy for a female student.

It takes around one and a half hours to reach the campus as the university is situated 22km away from the port city. The students are to spend more than three hours a day to reach the campus everyday. Sometimes, it becomes difficult for the students to attend their academic activities residing in the city because of a long journey from the campus.

Besides, around 2,500 students reside in 70 private cottages adjacent to the campus to avoid the journey from the city. Students face multifarious problems in the cottages like congested rooms, water crisis and unhygienic bathrooms, campus sources said.

Moreover, transport crisis is also acute as the shuttle train is the only means of transportation for CU students. For over 14,000 students, there are four university-bound shuttle trains in the morning with capacity of maximum 1,100 students each.

Students, living outside the port city, are serious victim of accommodation crisis. Female students, especially the freshers, are the worst sufferers.

Around 110 female students are residing in the 'Nine Mass Rooms' of three female dorms facing difficulties, hall sources said.

Tawhida Raihan, a first year student, hailing from Mymensingh, was very much delighted getting scope to stay in a mass room of Pritilata Hall although facing difficulties as she has none in Chittagong.

"I have to spend over four hours in the transport daily as I have to attend my classes from my village home at Patiya upazila. I could not manage a seat in the hall. It is very much tiresome for me to go to the campus daily from a long distance," said Chandrima Biswas, a first year student.

"I am now very close to the end of my university life but I am yet to manage a seat in the halls. I had to pass last four years in messes in the port city. For managing the mess cost I had largely to depend on private tuition," said Mamun-Ar-Rashid, a masters student.

The residential facilities in the university are not sufficient, said Prof Dr Mohammad Sekander Chowdhury, general secretary of CU Teachers Association. For accommodation problems, most of the students are forced to reside outside the campus, especially in the city, he said, adding that as a result they have to withstand sufferings to attend classes on the campus daily. Prof Sekander said to address the residential crisis of the students more halls should be constructed.

Acting Vice-chancellor Prof Dr Mohammad Alauddin said they are trying best to solve the problem which is not possible overnight.

Prof Alauddin said two new dormitories, one for male and another for female students, will be constructed. He said the construction work will begin in September this year.

the week that was

Jamuna Oil Company AGM held

The 35th annual general meeting (AGM) of Jamuna Oil Company (JOC) was held at Hotel Agrabad in the port city on Saturday.

The meeting was told that the company earned Tk 56.41 crore post tax revenues and approved 30 percent cash dividend and 20 percent stock dividend, out of profit, for 2009-2010.

The company also deposited in the national exchequer Tk 19.37 crore as vat, income tax and other statutory charges in 2009-2010.

Additional Secretary Mohammad Abu Taher of Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources also Chairman of Board of Directors of JOC Limited presided over the meeting.

Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation Chairman Major (Retd) Muqtadir Ali and members of National Board of Revenue Md Muhammed, Aminur Rahman, Md Sefaul Alam, Joint Secretary of Energy and Mineral Resources Division (EMRD) Abu Yusuf Mian, Deputy Chief of EMRD KM Hassan Kabir Arif and Mizanur Rahman, director and managing director of JOC spoke at the meeting.

'Formulate pro-people budget'

Speakers here on Sunday said the government should formulate a pro-people budget so that the desires and expectations of the people are reflected.

Terming budget an essential part of national life, they said education, health, agriculture and women sectors should be given priority in the upcoming budget to develop the country.

They were speaking at a pre-budget discussion organised by Sushasaner Jonno Pracharabhijan (Supra) at YPSA office in the port city.

Agrabad Mahila College Principal Prof Anwara Alam presided over the meeting.

Shaurav Barua, chief executive of Sansaptak, women leader Nurjahan Khan and Mostafa Kamal Jatra, chief executive of Unite Theatre for Social Action (UTSA) also spoke at the meeting.

Painting workshop begins

A workshop on painting and drawing for the poor children began in the port city on Sunday.



Children of Frobel Play School perform 'vegetable song' at a graduation programme at Theatre Institute in the port city on Friday.

World Vision Bangladesh and Patenga ADP organised the workshop at Kathgor Jalaliya Govt High School and Patenga Airport High School.

Painter Shawkat Zahan inaugurated the workshop.

On the occasion, World Vision gave bags, colours, pencils, art papers and board clips to the poor children free of cost.

Nationalisation of jobs demanded

The teachers and employees of non-government schools in the port city on Wednesday demanded of the government to nationalise their jobs.

They made the demand at a rally following a human chain at Chittagong Press Club.

Demanding implementation of its nine-point demand Federation of Bangladesh Education Institute Employees' Unity organised the rally and formed the human chain.

Organisation's President Saymal Chakraborty presided over the meeting. Female councillors Rehena Begum Ranu and Jannatul Ferdousi Poppy, Federation Secretary Md Akkas Mian and Vice-President Abdul Baten spoke at the rally.

Santos to supply gas

John Chamber, president of Santos Sangu Field Limited, at a view exchange meeting on Thursday with Chittagong Chamber and Commerce and Industry (CCI) hoped to supply gas from the offshore of Bay of Bengal to Chittagong within the first quarter of 2012.

CCI organised the view exchange meeting on "Direct sales of gas from the Block-16 field to the consumers in Chittagong region" with CCI vice-president Mahabubur Rahman in the Chair.

Vice president of Santos Ajay Nambiar also spoke at the meeting.

Santos president said they would drill three wells in Block-16. They are capable of supplying the gas in a rational price to its consumers, he added.

Ajay Nambiar said they would try to fix a reasonable price of gas for the consumers. But it will not be less than \$4.50, he added.

Ajay also said they have been looking for big consumers. If they get this they would make individual line for them. But in the primary stage they would use the line of Petro Bangla, he added.

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