



PHOTO: STAR
Piling collapse at the construction site at the city's Gulshan-2 exposes the adjacent building to high risk. *Inset*, side view of the building.

Piling collapse makes two buildings risky

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Piling of a construction site collapsed yesterday taking along a boundary wall of an adjacent building at the city's Gulshan-2. The collapse left two adjacent multi-storey buildings at risk.

Residents of the risky buildings were evacuated instantly while sand bags were being dumped to fill up the 24-feet deep pit in efforts to protect the adjoining buildings—one on Road-99 and another on Road-101.

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) Chairman Mohammad

Nurul Huda told The Daily Star that the retention piling of the pit dug to lay foundation of a 12-storey building with a double layer basement fell as the construction firm, DOM-INNO, did not follow the piling design. The pillars were shorter than required.

Rajuk Engineer (Development) Mahbub-ul-Alam said the construction firm also did not take any preventive measures for the piling work.

Rajuk asked the DOM-INNO authorities to take immediate measures for protection of the buildings,

said the Rajuk chairman.

He said they filed a general diary (GD) with Gulshan Police Station and further legal action would be taken immediately.

Locals said they heard a loud bang when the crash occurred around 9:00pm, causing panic among the residents of the two buildings.

Bazlur Rahim Chowdhury, president of the flat owners' association of the building on Road-101, said when the piling collapsed, both the buildings jolted for a while.

All residents left the buildings

following the directives of the Rajuk and Fire Service authorities, he said.

The DOM-INNO officials who were present on the spot declined to comment.

Mohammad Shah Alam, officer-in-charge of Gulshan Police Station, said Sadia Ahmed, one of the owners of the residential building on Road-101, filed another GD.

Earlier on May 21, the piling of another construction site at Nakhalpara in the city's Tejgaon Industrial Area collapsed taking with it an adjacent road and three tin-shed.

BNP provokes evil forces to grab power
Says Tuku

UNB, Dhaka

State Minister for Home Affairs Shamsul Huq Tuku yesterday alleged that BNP, by calling hartal, is provoking evil forces to grab power.

Responding to reporters' questions at Rajarbagh Police Line in the city, he said in the past an evil force got opportunity to come to power through caretaker government.

Tuku said free and fair elections can no longer be held under caretaker government.

He urged BNP to call off hartal and give suggestions in parliament for free and fair elections.

Asked about pre-hartal violence including burning buses, IGP Hasan Mahmud Khandaker said this is an isolated incident.

The IGP said tough actions would be taken against arson and violence in the name of hartal.

Higher tax on tobacco demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some NGO activists yesterday demanded imposition of more supplementary duty on tobacco and tobacco products to discourage its widespread use.

They also demanded the government scrap its decision of giving opportunity to produce smaller packet for bidi (hand-rolled cigarette), saying it would encourage the poorer people to consume it in large scale.

They placed the demand at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU), said a press release.

ATMA convener Ruhul Amin Rushad and Progga executive director Syeed Badrul Karim, among others, spoke at the function.

Introduce e-voting if people say yes

Senior journalists, members of civil society tell EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Journalists and members of civil society yesterday supported Election Commission's (EC) bid to introduce electronic voting machines (EVM) in the next general polls on condition of people's affirmation.

They stressed the need of public opinion in its favour and initiation of necessary measures to further develop technology used in EVM to prevent vote rigging and ensure transparency.

About the decision of main opposition BNP to boycott the dialogue, the media personnel suggested for more of EC's efforts to bring BNP at the dialogue to make it more fruitful.

Both groups expressed their opinion in separate dialogues with EC at

the conference room of National Economic Council in the city as part of EC's ongoing dialogue to be held with 38 registered political parties till July 14.

The commission launched the dialogues on June 7 for opinions on key issues like use of EVM; Representation of the People Order; laws on demarcation of constituencies; and appointment of election commissioners.

Associate Editor of The Daily Star Shah Husain Imam, News Today Editor Reazuddin Ahmed, Samakal Editor Golam Sarwar, Amader Somoy Editor Nayemul Islam Khan and head of news of ATN News Munni Saha attended the two and a half hour long dialogue beginning at 10:30am.

About allocation of EC-proposed

public fund to be spent for electoral campaign, they opined for distribution of money on the basis of total vote ratio of party, rather than individual candidate.

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Dr ATM Shamsul Huda and Election Commissioners M Sohel Hussain and M Shakhawat Hossain were also present.

In response to the BNP issue, CEC said, "We sent them a formal invitation. But they did not reply. We can not go to any party office physically."

In a separate dialogue beginning at 3:15pm, the civil society members suggested giving priority to people's opinion rather than demand of any political party.

If people feel comfortable with the new machine and think that it

would be better for ensuring transparency, the EC can move forward, they said.

Former adviser to a caretaker government Sultana Kamal, noted columnist Syed Abul Maksud, former TIB chairman M Hafizuddin Khan, Sujan Secretary Badiul Alam Mazumder and Democracy Watch Executive Director Taley Rahman attended the dialogue.

They also opined for deployment of the armed force during elections to maintain law and order, but the limit of their authority should be specified.

Earlier, EC met with Communist Party of Bangladesh, Bangladesher Samyabadi Dal, Krishak Sramik Janata League and some other political parties on the issues.



Leaders and activists of ruling Awami League greet party chief and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with bouquet at her official residence Gono Bhaban yesterday marking her Jail Release Day.

PHOTO: PID



Seven left leaning student organisations form a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday demanding recognition of Adivasi people as "indigenous".

Ensure rights of child domestic helps in new policy

Speakers urge govt

UNB, Dhaka

Speakers at a discussion yesterday stressed incorporating the rights of child domestic workers in proposed "Domestic Help and Welfare Policy" to protect them from hazardous works.

Though National Labour Survey 2010 shows 125,000 child labourers aged 5-17 years engaged as domestic workers in the country, actual numbers cannot be ascertained due to lack of registration. Among them, 80 percent are girl children.

Welfare of Child Domestic Help, Bangladesh Shishu Odhikar Forum, Coalition for the Urban Poor, Dawn Forum and Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) jointly organised the discussion at DAM auditorium in the city.

The speakers said Bangladesh government formulated a draft policy for child domestic helps in 2010 as there was none in the country and this would be finalised

through discussion at various stages.

Speaking as the chief guest, Meher Afroz Chumki, chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, said the policy would be enacted into a full-fledged law to protect rights of child domestic workers.

Opinion of people from all walks of life will be taken in the draft policy. In the meantime, the government formulated a policy guideline for women and children, she said.

Moderated by Dawn Forum Chairperson and DAM Executive Director Ehsanur Rahman, the roundtable was addressed by Bangladesh Shishu Odhikar Forum Chairperson Emranul Haque Chowdhury; Dhaka University Social Welfare and Research Institute Associate Prof Dr Rezaul Islam; Terre Des Hommes Country Director Mahmudul Kabir; Aparazeo Bangladesh Executive Director MS Wahida Banu; and Coalition for the Urban Poor President Sabir Hossain.