

Save century-old Henza Pukur from grabbers



ANURUP KANTI DAS

The century-old Henza Pukur (pond) of Dhopa Para at Halihsahar in the port city.

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY

The land grabbers are occupying the century-old Henza Pukur (pond) of Dhopa Para at Halihsahar in the port city by earth filling while the authorities concerned end their duty only issuing notices to the encroachers when the locals inform the matter to them. The locals alleged that three influential people -- Jebal Hossain Royel, Mohammad Safi and Mohammad Ishaque -- are filling up the century-old pond, constructing structures and renting those. They said the grabbers are daring to continue such kind of activities due to inaction by the authorities concerned. The water body is being filled up causing immense sufferings to the locals as it is their only source of water for daily uses. Semi-pucca houses have been built

and rented, a two-storey building is also being built on another side of the pond. Besides, many illegal tin-shed houses have been built on the other sides to occupy the water body area. The locals said they have submitted memorandums to Department of Environment (DoE), Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) and Fire Service and Civil Defence to save the water body, but no action has yet been taken against the grabbers. They said water supply from the Wasa is not available so water crisis makes the locals suffer seriously during the dry season as they have no alternative to the pond to collect water. Around 100 families of the area use water of the pond for bathing and the daily household activities. There are 10 small ponds in the area on which the common people depend for

their daily water related activities so water crisis will hit the local residents if the water body is filled, said the locals. At least 20 people are the owners of the Henza Pukur, said M.I Faruqui, a resident of the area, adding that local people submitted petitions to the authorities concerned to save the water body from illegal grabbing. He said a case was pending with the court in this connection. He said the grabbers continue their activities defying the court order that directed not to fill or change the shape of the water body. Locals said CDA served notices to Royel, Safi and Ishaque for violating the court order and constructing structures, filling ponds and renting those in the area. CDA Chief Engineer AGM Selim said they will ask the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of

Halihsahar Police Station to remove the illegal structures on the pond and to take action against the sections who are constructing structures. Selim said coordination is needed among DoE, police department and CDA to implement laws against the grabbers. DoE Director Jafar Alam said the department will take steps against the grabbers if the matter comes to their notice. Md Ruhul Amin, deputy director of Fire Brigade and Civil Defence, said their officials visited the spot and prepared a report to stop filling up the water body. When asked Assistant Commissioner (AC) Tanbhir Arafat of Double Mooring Zone said, they had got a notice from CDA in this regard. If DoE magistrate takes action against the grabbers they would help, Tanbhir added.

Stalking on rise on CU campus

SHAHADAT HOSSAIN

"I do not feel comfort to roam on the campus as a section of students as well as outsiders always waylay girl students and pass downright lewd comments," said Tonni, a resident student of Pritilata Hall of Chittagong University (CU). "So I do not generally go outside the hall in fear of becoming victim of sexual harassment although I have also a desire to wander on the hilly and picturesque campus during my leisure," said Tonni (not her real name). It is not only Tonni but many female students who are to frequently endure a lewd stare, sly whistle and the humming of indicative songs by a section of students and strangers. Even female teachers are not getting respite from them on the campus. At least five incidents of stalking occurred on the campus during the last three months, newspapers reports said. The stalkers took Tk 60,000 and assaulted at least four students for protesting the incidents of stalking. According to newspaper reports, police arrested two students -- Asif Sikder and Nazrul Islam -- for passing filthy comments to two female students at Kata Pahar on the campus on March 10. Later, members of university proctorial committee got them released giving written undertaking to police of not stalking in future. On March 22, two female teachers became victim of stalking harassment by three outsiders in front of Pritilata Hall. Police arrested the stalkers and Hathazari Upazila Nirbahi Officer fined each of them Tk 20,000 day after the incident. The stalkers are Mizanur Rahman, 25, Md Khorshed, 26, and Md Nayem, 28, of East Dewanbag of Hathazari Upazila. On April 17, Ayan Barua, a student, was beaten up by Shaon, also a student, and his friends for stalking Shaon's girl friend. On April 25, a student of Islamic History and Culture department became victim of sexual harassment by a group of unruly students. The unidentified stalkers also beat up Md Zahirul Islam for protesting the stalking. On May 26, a girl student of Computer Science and Engineering Department became victim of stalking in front of Pritilata Hall by Noman of Applied Physics department and his friends. The stalkers also stabbed two students -- Shantanu Barua and Ahmed Afif -- for protesting the incident. Shahrin Ferdousi, a student of economics department, said the girl students are being victim of stalking almost daily which is increasing alarmingly not only on the campus but also across the country. She said to end the menace, change in attitude of male chauvinism is very important alongside the proper enforcement of law. A female teacher, also victim of stalking on the campus, said university authority should be more cautious about stalking and vigilance should be increased on the campus. She said the stalkers should be punished instantly and their family members should be informed about the matter to prevent recurrence of the shameful task. A change in mentality is required to stop the crime and for this, there is no alternative to counselling the students, she added. Proctor Dr Mohammad Akter Hossain said they are very strict against stalking and they take action against the stalkers according to the university rules. Prof Akter said many of the victims do not inform about the incidents fearing social stigma. If the victims do not inform them, how they will take action against the culprits, he added. He, however, said to uproot this social disease, there is no alternative to social movement.

theweekthatwas

'Ctg neglected in budget'

Lawmaker Moinuddin Khan Badal on Saturday said there is everything in the budget except the allocation for Chittagong as the planners and decision-makers are confused about Chittagong. He said this while he was speaking as the chief guest at a meeting on budget organised jointly by Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) and Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) Chittagong chapter at Chittagong Club with BEA Chittagong chapter president Prof Joety Prokash Dutta in the Chair. CPD Executive Director Mustafizur Rahman, former Chittagong University vice chancellor Alamgir Mohammad Sirajuddin, East Delta University Vice Chancellor Prof Sikander Khan, Prof Moinul Islam, former Chittagong Chamber and Commerce Industries president (CCC) Farid Ahmed Chowdhury and BGMEA First Vice President Nasir Uddin Chowdhury also spoke at the meeting. Referring to the power sector, Badal said government is very much active to buy electricity at Tk 15 per unit but there is no interest in improving the condition of Kaptai Hydro Electric Power Plant where the rate for electricity is Tk1 per unit. Prof Moinul said Bangladesh economy is ready to take off but some government activities like weakening the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) are obstacle to the progress.

Call to develop Ctg as commercial capital

Minster for Primary and Mass Education Afsarul Amin on Saturday urged the experts to give specific suggestions to the government to develop Chittagong as the commercial capital. He was addressing a conference as the chief guest organised by 'Broader Chittagong Development Struggle Committee' (BCDSC) at Muslim Hall in the port city with a slogan 'We want development of Chittagong for the greater development of the nation'. Former adviser to the caretaker government Hossain Zillur Rahman inaugurated the conference. Minister Afsarul Amin said for the structural development of the city government already allocated Tk 2000 crore for Chittagong Development Authority (CDA). Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) Chairman Abdus Salam, Advocate Rana Dasgupta, Chittagong Press Club (CPC) President Abu Sufian and BDCDSC Secretary Prof Md Montaz Uddin Chowdhury also spoke as the special guests with BDCDSC Chairman Architect Taslim Uddin Chowdhury in the chair.



Environment and Forests Secretary Mesbahul Alam distributes saplings at a programme in the port city on June 25 organised by Bangladesh American Tobacco Company (BATC).

Call to cancel PSC with US co

Speakers on Saturday at a rally here urged the government to cancel the agreement with US-based oil company ConocoPhillips for oil exploration in deep sea for the sack of the country. They demanded of the government to use the state run Petro Bangla to explore the resources, saying that Production Sharing Contract (PSC) with the company will not bring any good result for the country. They were speaking at the rally following a human chain programme organised by Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SSF) on the Shaheed Minar premises in the city. SSF Secretary Al Kaderi Joy, Vice-President Tajnahr Ripon, Organising Secretary Biplob Bijoy Das and Chittagong University SSF Secretary Tawhidul Islam also spoke at the programme. SSF President Satyajit Biswas presided over the meeting.

Death anniversary of Jahanara Imam observed

Speakers here at a commemorative programme said Jahanara Imam is the leader of the freedom fighters of new generation and who want a non-communal secular Bangladesh. They said issues of war crimes should be solved through political process. In observance of the 17th death anniversary of

Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam, Prama Abritti Sangathan organised the meeting at District Shilpakala Academy on Sunday. The programme also featured poetry recitation, recitation from the 'Ekatturer Dinguli' and solo and chorus performances. Dr Mahfuzur Rahman, Prof Hossain Kabir, Journalist Riaz Haider, Councillor Rehena Begum Ranu, Group Theatre Federation Presidium member Sucharit Das and artist Shaharier Khaled spoke on the occasion. Prama President Rashed Hasan presided over the meeting. **Mohiuddin wants unity for development** Former Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury called for unity for the development of Chittagong. He said difference of opinion may be there about the way of development but it should not create division. He was speaking as the chief guest at the Tree Fair-2011 organised by CCC on Friday at MA Aziz Outer Stadium. Chairman of CCC Standing Committee for Environment Development Md Jahir Ahmed Shah presided over the meeting. Councillor Jobaida Nargis Khan, director of Department of Environment of Chittagong Jafar Alam, divisional forest officer Uttam Kumar Shaha and Prof



Narcotics Control Department forms a human chain in city's New Market area marking the "Anti-Drug Day" on June 26.

Mossaref Hossain also spoke at the meeting.

Debate workshop held

A debate workshop held at Theatre Institute in the port city on Sunday organised by Drishty Chhatragram and Lions Club of Chittagong Bengal City. First Vice-Governor of Lions Club International District 315B-4 Lion Prof M D M Kamal Uddin Chowdhury inaugurated the programme with Masud Bakul, president of Drishty Chhatragram, in the chair. Prof Kamal said there are many ways of acquiring knowledge, but the best way is debate. He said debate also creates argumentative man and the argumentative are honoured in the society. A total of 170 students from 21 schools of the port city participated in the workshop. The 19th Inter-school Debate Competition of Drishty will start from July 1.

Olympic Day Run-2011

Olympic Day Run-2011 was held on Friday in the port city with the slogan "Let us build pollution-free society." Organised by Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA), a colourful procession was brought out from the office of Chittagong Divisional Sports Council in the morning. BOA Vice-President and General Officer Commanding (GOC) of Bangladesh Army, Chittagong Cantonment, Major General Ashabuddin inaugurated

the programme at MA Aziz Stadium. He urged the students from different schools and colleges to participate in games and sports more as games and sports refresh mind and body. Chittagong Divisional Sports Council organised the programme while council's Vice-President Alef Uddin delivered the address of welcome. Council's General Secretary Sirajuddin Md Alamgir, Hafizur Rahman, Aminur Rahman and AZM Nasir Uddin Chowdhury were present at the inaugural programme.

Withdrawal of tax on tyre, tube demanded

Tyre-tube importers and dealers here on Thursday urged the government to withdraw the proposal of increasing tax on tyres of bus and other vehicles in the budget. They said tax has been increased from 12 percent to 25 percent in the proposed budget that is excessive and it will leave great impact on general people as directly and indirectly transport sector attaches with the people's day to day life. At a rally following a human chain in front of Chittagong Press Club (CPC) the owners and the dealers demanded cut in taxes on tyres and tubes. Organized by Chittagong Tyre-Tube Importers and Dealers Group the rally was addressed by its General Secretary Rashid Ahmed and Adviser Dr Zia M Jahangir.