RAMCHANDRAPUR CANAL

50 makeshift illegal structures removed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Wasa removed around 50 makeshift structures and knocked down illegal portions of six concrete buildings to free Ramchandrapur canal from illegal occupancy in the city's Mohammadpur area yesterday, almost a year after the last attempt.

However, the unauthorised extensions of four of the buildings were demolished partially keeping the foundations intact.

Locals apprehended such minor action might allow the encroachers to rebuild the partly flattened illegal portions.

Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) launched a three-day eviction drive near Nobodoy Housing along Dhaka Embankment to free a 1.5-kilometre stretch of the three-km long canal from Mohammadpur Shia Mosque to Gabtoli from encroachment.

Leading the drive, Executive Magistrate of Dhaka Wasa Kazi Wasi Uddin said they would demolish the illegal portions of the buildings during the ongoing drive.

"After completing the drive, we will build a walkway to demarcate the canal permanently and the illegal foundations will be removed at that time," mentioned Ruhul Amin, executive engineer at drainage division of Wasa.

A private housing company has built a half-kilometre road encroaching into the canal and it has been carpeted by Dhaka City Corporation, he added. "But we cannot demolish the road immediately without making an alternative arrangement."

Wasa officials said around 200 makeshift structures and 15 concrete buildings and boundary walls have been erected encroaching into the canal.

In last October, Wasa had to abandon a scheduled eviction drive to recover the canal as the district administration backed off in the face of opposition by a group of 'freedom fighters,' who still allegedly occupy a stretch of the canal with illegal structures.

Official sources said this time the government high-ups gave the go-ahead to the removal of illegal structures.

Day labourers carried out the drive manually and the law enforcers helped maintain law and order.

The national taskforce on canal and river protection by the end of September last year decided to free six Dhaka canals including Katashur, Kalyanpur Ka, Kalyanpur Ga, Shyampur, Ramchandrapur and Hazaribagh canals from the clutches of grabbers.

Eviction drives have so far been conducted in the Katashur and two Kalyanpur canals.



Dhaka Wasa removes illegal makeshift structures from Ramchandrapur Canal at Mohammadpur in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Prof Mahatab passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof AKM Mahatab Uddin, acting treasurer and former chairpman of Horticulture Department of Sher-E-Bangla Agriculture University, passed away due to liver related complexities at Birdem Hospital in the city on Friday at the age of

63, says a press release. He left behind his one son and two daughters to mourn

his death. He was buried at the Azimpur graveyard after his second namaz-e-janaza at the Azimpur Chhapra Mosque. His first namaz-ejanaza- was held at Sher-E-Bangla Agriculture University central mosque.

Relatives, students, colleagues and well-wishers are requested to pray for salvation of his departed soul.

Bangla-US disaster response exercise begins today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Armed Forces Division of Bangladesh and the United States Army Pacific will begin a five-day Bangladesh Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange (DREE) in the city

US Charge d' Affaires in Dhaka Nicholas Dean, US Army Major General Raymond Rees and Bangladesh Air Commodore Humayun Kabir will attend the inaugural session at the Lakeshore Hotel, says a

press release. The DREE, a comprehensive effort focusing on building multilateral interoperability in disaster response between the US and Bangladesh, is part of Pacific Resilience, the United States Army Pacific Humanitarian Assistance

and Disaster Relief Initiative. The goal of Pacific Resilience is to bring together disaster response stakeholders from government, military and civilian agencies to discuss their varied perspectives and build working relationships for future relief endeavours, particularly in the areas of medical, logistical and civil-

military operations.

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladesh parliamentary delegation has urged the expatriate Bangladeshis in South Korea to work hard with utmost sincerity and dedication to uphold and further enhance image of the country abroad.

The delegation led by Suranjit Sengupta made the call while addressing the expatriate Bangladeshis at a view exchange meeting on the embassy premises in Seoul on September 23.

Sengupta, chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, thanked the expatriates for contributing immensely to the economic development of Bangladesh through remitting foreign exchange.

He encouraged them to bring foreign investment in the country and use their acquired skill and capital for the cause of their motherland.

Other members of the delegation are State Minister for Law Advocate Qamrul Islam, Jatiya Party leader Advocate Fazle Rabbi and Nurul Islam Sujan, says a press release received from Bangladesh embassy in Seoul yesterday.

Qamrul in his speech assured the expatriates of all possible support who are keen to bring business and investment back home.

The expatriates urged the government to be more sensitive to the needs of the expatriate Bangladeshis who remit their hard earned money to Bangladesh.

The delegation had a series of meetings with Korean leaders and other important personalities, including Jeong Sun-Tae, Minister for Government Legislation of Korea and Ms. Kim Young-Ran, chairperson of the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission of Korea.

The Korean minister proposed to establish long term partnership between the two governments, especially in the area of legislation, through signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two ministries.

Work hard to enhance image People to ignore govt muscle power: Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has alleged the government is trying to obstruct the opposition's democratic movement using muscle power.

"But our movement for upholding people's rights cannot be stopped by showing pistol or using muscle power," Fakhrul said at a party rally in city yesterday.

The city unit of BNP organised the rally, held in front of the party central office at Naya Paltan, to protest "repression of police and Awami League men" during the Thursday's hartal called by BNP.

Mizra Fakhrul said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman could not continue to hold power by banning all political parties and almost all news-

papers. Even military dictator HM Ershad could not retain power by repressing people. The government is plotting to

keep BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique Rahman from participating in the next parliament election. And it is filing cases against them to serve its purpose, the BNP leader said.

On the increase in fuel prices, he said the government has done this for misappropriating money.

Presiding over the rally, Convener of city BNP Sadeque Hossain Khoka demanded a judicial probe into the "killing" of a party leader in Gournadi upazila of Barisal during the recent hartal.

Speaking at a seminar in the city yesterday, Mirza Fakhrul said the government has failed to secure the interest of the country due to its incompetence, and lack of skill and coordination.

The seminar on Manmohan's Visit: Failure to Protect Interest of Bangladesh was organised by Group 2009 and held at the Jatiya Press Club.

Fakhrul alleged that the framework on cooperation signed during the Indian premier's visit is more harmful for Bangladesh than any previous treaties.

Bangladesh Kalyan Party Chairman Maj Gen (retd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim said water of the Teesta river is Bangladesh's right while transit is the demand of India. "But our government mingled the two different things during negotiations", he added.

Leader of the Opposition in **Parliament and BNP** Chairperson Khaleda Zia addresses the central leaders at her Gulshan office in the city yesterday.



Constitutional anomalies to go if elected again: Inu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

If the grand alliance government comes to power again, it will remove all the anomalies in the constitution including the indigenous and secularism issues, said Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) President Hasanul Haque Inu yesterday.

"The constitution was changed by military rulers repeatedly over the previous decades. Now we need more time to remove the anomalies imposed by those amendments," he said. Inu was speaking at a discussion styled "Action to protect

land rights of the indigenous" organised by Caritas Mymensingh Region Perlam-MJF project in the city's YWCA auditorium. He demanded formulation of an Indigenous Rights Act to

protect the rights of indigenous people and to uphold their

values, cultures, norms and traditions by establishing a

National Indigenous Commission. Inu, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee for post and telecommunications, also demanded amendment to the vested property act to resolve land disputes.

Addressing the function, lawmaker Shawkat Momen Shahjahan warned that if the government failed to implement the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, it would again create unrest in the hills.

He also stressed the need of educating indigenous people to make them aware of their rights and to help them develop their lifestyle.

Bangladesh Adivashi Forum General Secretary Sanjeeb Drong urged the government to keep holding dialogues with the indigenous people to resolve different disputes over the

indigenous issue. Caritas Bangladesh Development Director Atul Francis Sarkar and Manusher Jonno Foundation Director (rights) Rina Roy also spoke at the function.

Sit-in

Bangladesh Diploma Bekar Nurses Association will organise a sit-in; Venue: in front of Department of Social Services, Motijheel; Time: 9:00am.

Human chain

Bangabandhu Adarsha Mullayan & Gabeshana Sangsad will organise a human chain; Venue: in front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:00am.

Roundtable

Bangladesh Shamajik Sangskritik Sangstha will hold a roundtable meeting; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.

Launching ceremony Bangladesh Enterprise Institute

will organise a launching ceremony; Venue: its conference room; Time: 3:30pm.

Two killed in city road accidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two people, including a boy, were killed and nine others injured in separate road accidents in Dhaka yesterday. The deceased were identified as Md Saikat, 10, son

of Abul Kalam, a slum dweller of Beri Bandh area in Mohammadpur, and an unidentified man aged around 52. A passenger vehicle "Leguna" hit Saikat in the

area around 1:30pm. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctors declared him dead, said police. The unidentified man was crossing the road in

front of Farmgate Police Box when a crane working for Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority hit him around 5:00pm. He was rushed to the adjacent Al Rajee Hospital where doctors declared him dead, said police.

In another accident, Falguni Akhter, 7, a student of Hajaribagh Ideal Academy at Char Waispur, was hit by a motorcycle near the school around 10:30am, said police. She was admitted to DMCH, where doctors stated her condition to be critical.

Meanwhile, a bus hit a CNG-run three-wheeler before crashing into a tree near High Court premises around 11:00am, said police. Eight passengers of the vehicles were being treated at DMCH, said hospital sources.

Fund for LDCs a must to fight climate change

Dipu Moni tells G-77

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni has called for further strengthening of unity and coordination of the Group of 77 (G-77) on important global and contemporary issues like climate change.

Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of G-77, which was held on the sideline of the 66th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

She made the call on Friday at the 35th Annual

She said climate change threatens the existence of majority of the countries. She is attending the UNGA with the Bangladesh dele-

gation headed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

According to a foreign ministry press release from New York yesterday, Dipu Moni laid emphasis on the need to provide resources to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to face the adverse impact of climate change.

As per the Special Ministerial Meeting of the G-77 and China on the occasion of its 25th anniversary, the deliberations of the 35th Annual Meeting of Foreign Ministers of G-77 and China took place through an exchange of views and interactive dialogue on issues for eventual consideration during the 66th UNGA.

Dipu Moni also attended the Annual Co-ordination Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of

Islamic Conference (OIC) on Friday. In her speech there, she highlighted on the challenges faced by the Muslim Ummah, and urged for constructive dialogue and efforts towards peaceful solutions in the spirit of the Charter of OIC.

She also attended a discussion meeting between the business delegation accompanying the entourage of the PM and the representatives from US business firms, investment houses and entrepreneurs.

Organised by US-Bangladesh partners, the meeting

was held at City University in New York. Dipu Moni, who was the chief guest, touched on Bangladesh-USA business relations terming the US as the largest trading partner both in terms of trade & commerce as well as investment.

She also highlighted Bangladesh's consistent economic growth as recognised by global leading banks and financial institutions like City, Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan, Moody's and S&P's. The foreign minister assured the US businessmen that

Bangladesh can offer a win-win situation for foreign investors.

She underlined on the need for duty free access to US market of RMG products of Bangladesh.