

Move to ease gridlock in port city

The road from Barik Building to Bahaddarhat to be made off-limits to rickshaws from January

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY

Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) will make the road from Barik Building to Bahaddarhat off-limits to rickshaws from January next year in order to reduce traffic jam in the port.

The police have also asked four educational institutions in the area to arrange their own transports.

CMP and Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) will also launch a joint drive against the rickshaws plying the city roads without licence.

The CCC will also mark separate lanes for fat and slow moving vehicles within six months to implement the decisions, said the city corporation sources. Separate roads will also be constructed for different modes of transport.

Chittagong Development Authority (CDA), CCC, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), transport owners and workers' organisations and high officials took the decision at a meeting at the CMP headquarters on Sunday.

To create awareness among the drivers and the helpers, a training programme will also be

organised within two weeks with the help of BRTA, CCC and CMP, sources said.

A team will also monitor the training programme and evaluate it.

The city corporation has been asked to mark zebra crossing on the roads within six months to create a pedestrian-friendly environment in the city.

CMP Commissioner Abul Kashem told The Daily Star that the decision was taken to lessen the gridlock on the road from Barik Building to Bahaddarhat, life-line of the city.

Construction of parking zones in specific areas is necessary for developing the traffic system in the port city, he said, adding that the CDA had approved designs of parking zones of many commercial organisations. But they had constructed their buildings without keeping adequate parking space that caused traffic congestion in the city, the commissioner said.

"Many schools, colleges and universities are mushrooming the roadside areas without arranging their own transports", he said. The guardians also create gridlock during the institutions' starting and closing hours as they take their children by their own transports.

Stressing the need for maintaining own



PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Vehicles regularly get stuck in gridlocks in front of reputed educational institutions in the port city just before and after school hours.

transportations, he said many reputed educational institutions have no central transportation system for their students.

Kashem said roadside schools are causing gridlock.

Mohammad Kamrul Islam, a resident of Jamal Khan, told The Daily Star that the streets in the area get stuck in a severe gridlock during the school and college hours due to parking of the private vehicles, obstructing the vehicular movement.

Shahin Khan, a resident of Two Number Gate area, said it takes from one hour to two every day to go to Agrabad from Bahaddarhat due to traffic jam, without which it would have taken only 25 to 30 minutes.

CMP Deputy Commissioner (Traffic) Faruque Ahmed said, "If we could free the busy

intersections from rickshaws, 80 percent of the traffic congestion in the city would be reduced."

Seven educational institutions have been identified due to which the traffic congestion occurs in the port city, CMP sources said. Of the seven, four have been asked to arrange their own transportation for their students, CMP sources said.

The schools are Isphani Public School and College, Khastagir Govt Girls' High School, Bangladesh Mahila Samity Girls' High School and Chittagong Grammar School.

CMP Assistant Police Commissioner (Traffic) Muhammad Shahidullah told The Daily Star that giving priority to the problem, they are making a plan for the rickshaws.

Engineer Subhash Barua, a town planner

and also an expert on road and traffic management, said decisions had been taken many times before which did not see light of the day.

Terming the decisions time befitting, Subhash said the city corporation should take necessary steps, including alternative rickshaw ways for the benefit of the rickshaw-pullers before implementing the decisions. He stressed on mass transportation to lessen the traffic congestion in the city.

The number of rickshaws plying the city streets are triple to what the streets can handle.

Around 35,000 rickshaws are registered in the port city but CMP traffic department and CCC say that around 1.5 lakh rickshaws ply the city roads.



theweekthatwas

Healthy mothers a must for meritorious generation

Lamaker Moinuddin Khan Badal at a roundtable on Sunday said, "If we want scientists and economists for our new generation then we have to provide nutrition to our mothers as a good mother is needed for a good child."

The roundtable titled "Review on the service of government and non-government organisations for safe maternity and child health" was organised by Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts (BITA) at the auditorium of Chittagong District Council.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (Education and Development) Khaled Mamun Chowdhury, Deputy Director of Department of Health Dr Kazi Shafiqul Alam, Dr Sheikh Rukunuddin, councillors of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Rekha Alam and Gias Ahmed also spoke with BITA Executive Director Shishir Dutta in the chair.

Tribute paid to Swapan Chowdhury

Industries Minister Dilip Barua at a memorial meeting as the chief guest on Saturday said the country was yet to be established free from all kinds of exploitation that was the demand of the War of Liberation.

"New generation must come forward with responsibility for completing the unfinished task of the War of Liberation for which the freedom fighters and patriotic man like Swapan Chowdhury sacrificed their lives", Barua said.

Shaheed Muktiyoddha Swapan Chowdhury Smaran Sabha Udjapan Committee organised the meeting at the auditorium of Chittagong Press Club, marking the 40th martyrdom of Swapan Chowdhury, the then Bangladesh Liberation Front (BLF) central commander and one of the members of the nucleus of building independent Bangladesh.

Lawmaker Mainuddin Khan Badal, former Chittagong City Corporation mayor also Chittagong City Awami League President ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Muktiyoddha Research Centre Chairman Dr Mahfuzur Rahman, CPC President Abu Sufian, JSD leader Indu Nandan Dutta, Muktiyoddha Sangsad district Commander Md Shahabuddin, FF commanders Golam Rabbani and BLF Commander Anwarul Azim also spoke at the discussion with

Committee's Convener Mazharul Haque Shah Chowdhury in the chair.

Discussion on river management held

A two-day long programme including exhibition, discussion and film screening on the river and coastal management was held at auditorium of Alliance Française de Chittagong in the port city recently.

Alliance Française de Chittagong in collaboration with the Institut Français and its Biodiversity Club organised the programme titled "Aquatik".

Dr Samuel Berthet, Director of Alliance Française de Chittagong, inaugurated the programme as the chief guest.

The first day of the programme highlighted

Bidhan Barua, Q Rokan U Ahmed, coastal hydraulic engineer Md Mobassarul Hasan, The Daily Star Bureau Chief Raisul Huq Bahar, Prof Md Mozammel Haque and Denis Carlier spoke at the discussion.

Contribution of Bhupen Hazarika recalled

A memorial meeting was held in the port city on Saturday to pay homage to the famous singer of the sub-continent Bhupen Hazarika.

Speakers said the music genius, also revolutionary singer, told stories of the people deprived of humanity and rights through his singing.

Chittagong Cultural Academy organised the event on the DC Hill premises where Premier University Vice Chancellor Prof Anupam Sen

Bangladesh Dignity Forum, Chittagong formed a human chain followed by a rally on the Chittagong Press Club premises marking the day.

The Forum Convener Dr Syed Didarul Munir Rubel presided over the meeting while East Delata Vice-Chancellor Muhammad Sikandar Khan spoke as the chief guest at the programme.

Speakers at the rally urged the government to establish dignity of the people from all walks of life like rich, poor, the persons with disabilities, different cast and races.

Forum Member Secretary Salauddin Kabir Suman, Bangladesh Manobadhikar Kalyan Sangstha President Lion Mahruful Haque Chowdhury, Barnali President Saroj Kanti Das, Jano Uddiyag Coordinator Sharif Chauhan, Sanshaptak Chief Executive Shaurabh Baua, Park Chief Executive Nazrul Islam Manna, NGO Forum, Chittagong local Executive Md Rafiqul Islam spoke at the rally.

JUDO champion in PU debate

Jahangirnagar University Debate Organisation (JUDO) became the champions of the first National Debate Festival of Premier University Debating Society (PU DS), defeating PU Nalanda team held on the PU Wasa campus in the port city on Sunday.

Saifuddin Munna of Premier University (PU) and Matuor Munna of Chittagong University (CU) won the award of the best debater of the final and best debater of the competition respectively.

Premier University Vice Chancellor Dr Anupam Sen spoke as the chief guest at the concluding ceremony of the festival. Journalist M Nasirul Haque and Dristi Chittagong President Masud Bokul were present as special guests with Dean of Faculties of PU Dr Iftekher Uddin in the chair. Convener of the festival Sanjoy Biswas and PU DS President Arman Habib also spoke at the meeting.

Dr Anupam said, "Logic is the base of knowledge and debating helps practise of logical knowledge. It also plays a significant role in growing confidence among the students which will help them do better in personal life.

Later, Dr Sen distributed awards among the teams.

A total of 24 teams from 18 private and public universities from across the country took part in the debate festival held on the PU campus from December 1-4.



Guests inaugurate the Arindam Drama Festival by releasing pigeons at Shilpakala Academy in the port city on Friday. The festival was organised marking 40 years of independence.

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exhibition and a discussion on "Rehabilitation of the Mont-Saint Michel's Maritime Character".

The discussion focused on anti-salt and anti-silting dam which has been successfully built in the Mount Saint-Michel Bay, a world heritage site under Unesco for its exceptional natural and architectural quality.

Shajid Hossain, director of Bangladesh Marine Academy, Adil Husain, president of Alliance Française de Chittagong and Dr Ashok K Kesari of Asian University for Women spoke at the programme.

A roundtable titled "Dams and River Management in France and Bangladesh" on the second day.

Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (Cuet) Vice-Chancellor Dr Shyamal Kanti Biswas, Cuet Assistant Professors Reaz Akter Mullick and Dr Aysha Akter, Engineers

addressed as the chief guest.

Dr Anupam said now young generation was deprived of hearing songs of Bhupen Hazarika.

Begum Mushtari Shafi and columnist Kamrul Hasan Badal spoke at the event with Mahbulul Alam Talukdar in the chair.

Rashed Hasn and Mili Chowdhury recited poems and Shahrier Khaled, Aklima Akhtar and Golam Sarowar rendered songs of Bhupen Hazarika.

The programme was ended with screening a documentary titled "Bhupen Hazarika".

World Dignity Day observed

The "World Dignity Day -2011" was observed in the port city on Monday with a call to establish dignity for all.

Violence against women on rise

ARUN BIKASH DEY

Incidents of violence against women are increasing in Chittagong day by day, although different rights groups have been continuing campaign to create awareness about the menace.

A recent research conducted by Chittagong Social Development Forum (CSDF) on "Violence against women in Chittagong" revealed 2,367 incidents of torture, rape, kidnapping and violence against women that were recorded by different courts on repression of women and children in Chittagong from January 2011 to November 2011.

Of them, 422 women were raped, 38 kidnapped and 337 committed suicide following torture by family members and the rest were tortured by their husbands or others over dowry.

This research reveals that about 47 percent of women are tortured during their conjugal lives by their husbands and relatives of their in-laws' houses.

The women rights activists said the figures do not show the real scenario of violence against women as the actual number of incidents is much more than the figure recorded in the research. Many of the victims do not even file complaints with police as society is yet to stand strongly by women tortured by men, they said, adding that many women, after being tortured, do not complain against their husbands or other members of their in-laws' houses for the sake of maintaining their conjugal lives.

The research says that incidents of torture against women are not properly addressed as the society is male-dominated. Moreover, lack of exemplary punishment of such incidents encourages the perpetrators to repeat the crimes.

Jesmin Sultana Paru, a human rights activist and general secretary of CSDF, said women have been tortured since the primitive age. "As women now have become more conscious than before they make complaints against this type of unjust treatment to rights activists like us and so we come to know about these," she said.

Premier University Vice Chancellor Dr Anupam Sen said, "Our society is now a transitional society. It is turning into an industry-based society from agricultural one."

He said as urbanisation was going on rapidly, tension hammers people in their day to day lives that triggered husbands to torture their wives over trivial matters.

Safia Gazi Rahman, principle of Sunshine Grammar School and College, said it is the duty of institutions to teach people to honour women. As the institutions are not playing proper role in this regard, women are being tortured in many ways and the incidents of torturing are increasing day by day, she said.

Safia said members of her institution are taught about the equal rights of men and women. They are also taught to respect every person irrespective of their race, sex, religious belief and economical or social status, she said.