

## BURHANI BSRM SCHOOL

# A ray of hope for slum kids



PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY

"If Burhani BSRM School was not established in the area, my kid would have remained illiterate," said Sajeda Begum, a slum dweller of Debar Par in the Nasirabad Industrial area.

Many children from families like that of Sajeda's are studying in the school as there is no any other educational institution within a radius of 1.5 km of the area.

Burhani BSRM School is the only educational institution in the area where the underprivileged children have access to free education.

Located at Debar Par of Bangla Bazar surrounded by slums, the school started its journey in 2006 with 128 students with the classes -- nursery, one and two.

The school, an initiative of BSRM Group of Companies, started its academic activities with only three teachers while currently there are 13 teachers and two staff in the school.

A total of 386 students are now studying in the institution. Of them, 196 are boys and 190 girls.

Free education with books, uniforms, stationeries and medical assistance, whenever needed, are provided to the students from the institution.

Cultural activities, drawing and painting competition and participation in drama have also been incorporated into the curriculum.

All the students of class five secured GPA 5 with 100 per cent pass rate in primary terminal examination, popularly known as Primary School Certificate examination, this year.

Terming it a good success, Headmaster Md Abdul Kader said, "It is a good result for our institution as all of our students come here from needy and underprivileged families which have no ability or time to guide or monitor their children."

"They all complete their homework or everyday work in the school with the help of teachers," he added.

Aklima Sultana, a teacher of the institution, told The Daily Star, "I feel very proud when I think I teach under-



Burhani BSRM School

STAR PHOTO

privileged students coming from very poor families."

Aklima, joining the institution from the very beginning after her graduation, said, "The kids of the institution are very attentive. They have good reading and writing abilities and can understand class lectures very easily."

"Though they did not get any facility from their families like students of other schools, they have achieved good results," she added.

Sajib Talukdar, a student of class seven, said, "Teachers help us in all the tasks during school hours."

Sajib, whose father is a rickshaw-puller, said when he was sick, free medicine and other medical facilities were provided to him from the school.

The school has opened class VI this year, said Tehseen Zohair, director of BSRM Group and head of the school management committee. "Development of the existing building is going on and it would be expanded to four-stories due to the increase of students," Tahseen said.

Now the families of the slum areas are very much eager to get their children admitted to the institute, she added.

She said the extension work of the building would be completed by February.

"There are many meritorious students in the slums but they get no opportunity to receive education," Tehseen said.

# CMP blames politics for traffic chaos

PRABIR BARUA CHOWDHURY

The traffic department in the port city has failed to improve the traffic system in 2011 due to its inability to implement several decisions under political pressure, persons concerned in the sector said.

Calibration of fare metres of the CNG-run auto-rickshaws, introduction of counter-ticket bus service system and off-limits to rickshaws from Barik Building to Bahadderhat intersection and stopping the practice of illegal parking are among the notable initiatives that the Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) has failed to implement successfully.

The CMP fixed the date thrice for the CNG-run auto-rickshaw owners in April, 2011 to calibrate the metres. But the initiative failed as the fare chart was not prepared.

It also experienced difficulties in setting up counter-ticket bus service with the help of different transport owners' organisations.

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor M Manjur Alam launched the service on July 25. The service was postponed on the first day of its launching due to groupings among the public transport owners and political leaders.

A senior CMP official said a group of bus owners belonging to political parties used the transport staff to create chaos in the sector and vandalise many public transports on July 27 in the port city in a bid to stop the service.

Belayat Hossain, general secretary of Chittagong Metropolitan Transport Owners' Group, denying the allegations, said CMP and the local administration were responsible for the failure to make the sector stable. Referring to the counter-ticket bus service, he said they gave all information about the agitators to the deputy commissioner of CMP traffic but no initiative was taken.

Belayat said he was the only public transport owner who had been maintaining the counter-ticket bus service in the port city. But he is to stop the service for non-cooperation from the traffic department.

He said CMP held a meeting with the public transport owners, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, CCC and Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) to make the road from Barik Building to Bahadderhat intersection off-limit to rickshaws from January 1. The CMP postponed the decision under pressure from the rickshaw-pullers and political leaders, he said.

He said the CMP could not implement many decisions for lack of proper planning and political pressure.

Engineer Subhas Chandra Barua, general secretary of Forum for Plan Chittagong, said barring rickshaws from plying is a sensitive issue and CMP should consider many things before taking such a decision.

He said the CMP has no specific plans to reduce traffic jam in the city. He suggested separate lanes for buses and stopping the practice of illegal parking on the roads.

Faruk Ahmed, deputy commissioner of CMP (Traffic), said they tried a lot to keep the traffic system normal in the city.

When asked about the calibration, he said they were not responsible for this. The initiative for calibration was stopped for the time period as the price of gas was increased twice at that time, DC traffic said.

Faruk blamed non-cooperation from the bus owners for failure to continue the counter-ticket bus service in the port city. He sought cooperation of all concerned to restart the service.

He said they were not well-prepared to implement the decision to make the road from Barik Building to Bahadderhat intersection off-limit to rickshaws.



Nagorik Odhiker Andolon form a human chain in front of the Chittagong Press Club on January 1 demanding occupant-free footpaths and protesting adulteration of foods and reckless driving.

STAR PHOTO

## the week that was

### Youths' role in establishing peace stressed

Speakers at a seminar on Monday stressed the need for encouraging the role of youths and responsibilities for establishing peace and harmony in South Asia.

They were speaking at a seminar titled "Building Social Peace and Harmony in South Asia: Initiatives by the Youth" at the Chittagong University (CU) library auditorium.

South Asia Youth for Peace and Prosperity Society (SAYPPS) organised the seminar.

The speakers said the first and foremost task of the youth is to raise their voice against all kinds of conflicts in South Asia.

Urging the youths to fight state hegemony and corruption, they said youth of South Asia should work as a watchdog with the civil society for establishing a stable democratic atmosphere.

"Youth should take oath for saying 'no' to terrorism and drug and involve themselves in socio-cultural activities", they said, adding that the government should pay attention to the youth as they are the future of the nation.

Nazimuddin Shyamol, General Secretary of Chittagong Union of Journalists, Sarwaruddin Ahmed, bureau chief of The Daily New Nation, spoke at the seminar as special guests.

Md Faridul Alam, chairman of Department of International Relations, Md Morshedul Islam, chairman of Department of Communication and Journalism, Dr Mohammad Zahidur Rahman, associ-



Tirjok Naityodal stages 'Bishorjon' of Rabindranath Tagore at Theatre Institute, Chittagong (TIC) on December 31.

ate professor of Department of History, and journalist Omar Faruque also spoke at the seminar.

Prof Dr Abdullah Al Faruque presided over the seminar.

### 'Construct deep sea port soon'

Speakers here on Sunday urged the government to construct deep sea port as early as possible for development of the country's economy as well as the region.

They stressed the need for modernising the port city as a city of inter-

national standard to make it a regional commercial hub.

They were speaking at a seminar titled, "Development of Chittagong: Past, present and future" organised by 'Kriti Parishad, Chittagong, at the auditorium of Theatre Institute, Chittagong (TIC).

East Delta University Vice-Chancellor Prof Sikandar Khan spoke at the programme as chief guest with Sachetan Nagorik Committee (Sanak) of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Convener Advocate Akhtar Kabir Chowdhury in the chair.

Prof Sikandar in his speech said

Chittagong has a great potentiality to contribute to the country's economy so government should take projects related to the development of the city as well as the port.

SM Jamaluddin, M Kafil Uddin, Monwar Hossain and artiste Sharier Khaled were honoured for their significant role in movements for development of Chittagong.

Engineer Tareque Moinul Islam, Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry Senior Vice-President Mahbulul Alam Chowdhury, Prof Gazi Saleh Uddin and journalist Mostaque Ahmed spoke at the programme.

### Workshop on drum playing held

"The drum popularly known as 'dhol' in Bangladesh is a musical instrument that has a power to attract the young generation as well as entertain the people from all walks of life", said the speakers.

They said the "dhol" has potentiality to compete any international instrument in the world.

They were speaking at a workshop on "Dhol playing" organised by Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts (BITA) on its Cultural and Communication Trust premises at Patiya in Chittagong on Thursday. Noted drum players Ashok Kumar of India, Babul Jaladas of Bangladesh and Jitendra Vishvabandhu of Sri Lanka conducted the workshop.

### Plea to stop use of formalin in food items

The right activists in the port city on Sunday at a rally demanded an end to the use of formalin in food items.

Citizen Right Movement organised the rally on the city's Chittagong Press Club premises where leaders and activists of progressive socio-cultural organisations were present.

Speakers at the rally said use of formalin in food items ultimately causes the death of human being.

"Formalin-treated foods and fruits affect kidney and other human organs", they said, adding that the government should take steps against the persons involved in the crime.

Organisation President Dr AQM Sirajul Islam presided over the programme.

Journalists Arun Dasgupta, M Nasirul Haque and Omar Kaisar, Advocate Akhtar Kabir Chowdhury, Prof Hossain Kabir, cultural activist Kamrul Hasan Badal, Khelaghar Organising Secretary Dilip Das, Progressive Doctors' Forum organiser Dr Susanta Barua, Panel Mayor Chowdhury Hasan Mahmud Hasni and councillor Helena Begum Ranu spoke at the rally.

### Digital transport sector emphasised

Mahbulul Alam, senior vice-president of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), on Monday emphasised the digitalisation of the transport sector to solve the problems and bring discipline in the sector.

Mahbulul said this while he was addressing the inaugural ceremony of A R Computer Scale, IT, (CCTV Live Telecasting), a sister concern of M R Group. The programme was held at the office of Antozila Malamal Paribahan Sangstha Truck and Covered Van Malik Samity, Chittagong. Terming Chittagong as the gateway of trade and commerce of the country, Mahbulul said the transport owners in the sector are playing a vital role in the economic development by carrying the imported goods properly all over the country.

PHP Group Chairman Sufi Mohammed Mizanur Rahman, M R Group Managing Director Mohammed Farid, Ghat-Gudam Malik Samity Vice-President Niazur Rahman, Antozila Malamal Paribahan Sangstha Truck and Covered Van Malik Samity Chairman Sirajul Islam, President Munir Ahmed and General Secretary Din Mohammed were present on the occasion.