

MC COLLEGE ARSON
Reconstruction
to cost Tk 6cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,
Sylhet

Reconstruction work of burnt Murari Chand College (MC College) hostel will start soon. Quoting officials of Bangladesh Education Engineering Department, Dhires Chandra Sarker, principal of the college, yesterday said tender for the work would be floated within 15 days.

With a cost of about Tk 6 crore the hostel's blocks would be renovated by maintaining its original structure, he said adding that 42 rooms of 3 blocks were burnt totally while 70 others were burnt partially. There were 6 blocks in the hostel built in Assam type structures during the British regime.

CCC mayor completes second year amid unfulfilled expectations

PRABIR BARUA CHOWDHURY, Ctg

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor M Manjur Alam completes the second year of his five-year office term today, still struggling to address his major election commitments.

The 56 points of his election manifesto included steps to address traffic jams, garbage management and footpath encroachment. Solving the perennial waterlogging problem topped the list.

But, as if a reminder of his failure, major areas went under waist-deep water on June 26 and July 15 almost paralysing two-thirds of the port city.

The areas include Chawk Bazar, Bakalia, Kapashgola, Bahaddarhat, CDA Avenue, Halishahar, Badurtala, Patenga, Muradpur, Sholashahar, Mohammadpur, Agrabad, Chandgaon and Nasirabad.

CCC officials said they excavated 144 kilometres of 17 canals crisscrossing the city. But city planners said new canals must also be dug to avoid waterlogging.

One city planner, Engineer Ali Asraf, said Chittagong Development Authority's (CDA) Drainage Master Plan of 1995 recommended digging up of at least three canals, but not a single one had been created.

If the mayor had been more active, the three bridges over Chaktai Canal would have been constructed on time and waterlogging in the area could have been avoided, he added.

Mayor Manjur said the proposal to dig a canal at Bahaddarhat area, that would reduce waterlogging in the city to a great extent, at a cost of Tk 296 crore was awaiting government approval.

Blaming siltation for the recent waterlogging, he said implementing the Drainage Master Plan would completely remove the city's waterlogging problem.

Meanwhile, the mayor's commitment to relieve city dwellers of traffic jam with the construction of bypasses, parking lots and wider footpaths and introduction of a modernised bus service remains unimplemented.

On waste management, a resident of

Aturer Depot, Rashidun Nabi, had only sore tales to tell.

"If anyone goes to areas like Reazuddin Bazar, Kazir Dewri, Agrabad, Aturer Depot or any other parts of the city at any time, he will see mountains of waste lying on the roadside," he said, adding that there was no fixed schedule to remove the waste.

Moreover, CCC showed no progress in evicting illegal establishments on footpaths, mainly in New Market, Agrabad and CEPZ areas, forcing pedestrians onto the streets, he added. City planners put the blame on the mayor's lack of planning and implementing capacity and failure to collect funds from the government and donor agencies for development works.

URBAN HEALTH SERVICE'S DISMAL CONDITION

Three months' salary of some 500 staff of Asian Development Bank-funded Urban Health Service programme of CCC has been due, caused by delays by CCC to renew the contract with ADB.

The contract expired in March and CCC signed the renewal this month, extending the programme till December, said sources.

When contacted about the issue, the mayor asked to talk to the CCC health officer, Dr Mohammad Ali, who said the delay was due to "official formalities" and the dues would be duly paid.

EDUCATION QUALITY FALLS

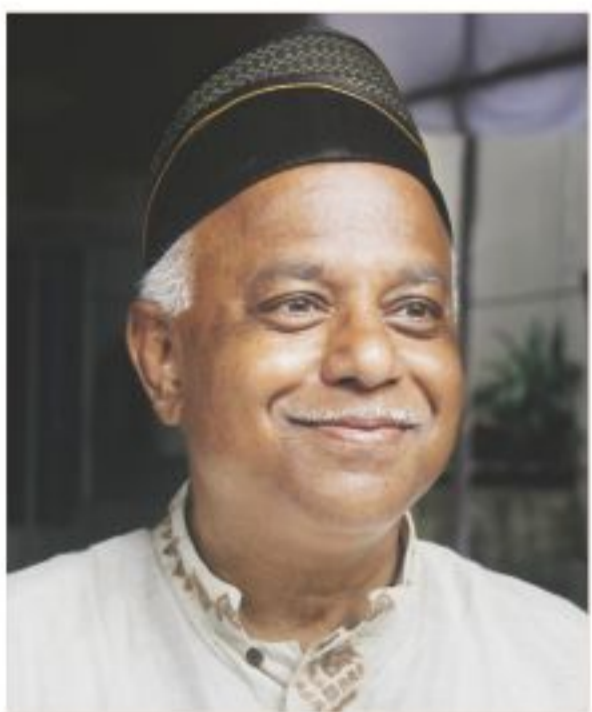
Students and guardians of schools under CCC complained that the education standard was falling as the authorities concerned were failing to run the institutions properly.

CCC officials said only four schools had 100 percent pass rate in this year's Secondary School Certificate exam while last year it was 16.

CCC Chief Education Officer Md Nurul Alam Nizami said the fall was due to poor pre-test marks and that the SSC exam's questions were not "easy".

On this issue, the mayor said he had built three colleges and one school and enabled double shifts in four schools.

Former mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury refused to remark on Manjur's successes, saying, "If Mayor Manjur asks me for help, I am ready to extend it."



Two hit by shotgun pellets in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least two pedestrians were hit by shotgun pellets in the capital's Badda yesterday after goons hired by a housing company opened fire on people of a local influential, Bulbul, who were filling up a land with earth, said Badda police.

The injured, Sharif Hossain, 55, and Mohammad Samrat, 14, residents of Berait area of Badda, were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The goons fled afterwards. Additional police were deployed in the area to avert further deterioration of law and order.

Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg



Rehman Al Jami Zawad, 5, is suffering from cancer in left knee. Doctors advised for amputation of the leg above the knee to save his life.

It needs about Tk 20 lakh. His family is now exhausted as they have already spent about Tk 25 lakh for his treatment in home and abroad in the last one and a half years.

Zawad's family is unable to bear the cost and requests the affluent and generous people of society to come forward with financial assistance.

Contributions can be sent to Diderul Alam, Savings Account Number 100024471, Sonali Bank Limited, Port Branch, Chittagong.

HC throws away charges against former CCC mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday quashed the proceedings against former mayor of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury in two separate corruption cases filed in 2003.

The now defunct Bureau of Anti Corruption had filed the cases against Mohiuddin and the owner of Nupur Cinema Hall in Chittagong on charges of misappropriating a total of Tk 6 lakh in 1996-1999 fiscal years by reducing holding tax of the cinema hall to Tk 5.5 lakh from Tk 17.55 lakh.

The BAC's investigation officer pressed corruption charges against Mohiuddin on

November 12, 2003 and subsequently the Chittagong Divisional Special judge took the charges into cognisance on November 30, 2003.

The Chittagong court, however, granted bail to Mohiuddin.

Later Mohiuddin filed two separate petitions with the HC, seeking the proceedings of cases to be quashed.

The HC then stayed the proceedings of the cases and issued a rule asking the government to explain why the cases should not be quashed.

After holding hearing on the rule, the bench of Justice Borhanuddin and Justice Mahmudul Hoque came up with the verdict.

RISING Stars

This week we have giant birds on cover blocking out the sun while the Finding Bangladesh team goes into tales of stolen terracotta

plagues. We got penguins of Madagascar 3 entertaining you and celebrating Amelia Earhart's bravery. To top it off we got books on wheels.

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