

NEW DNCC WARDS

13 canals to be revived: Atiqul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Mayor Md Atiqul Islam yesterday said they will recover occupied portions of 13 canals from encroachers in 18 extended wards of DNCC.

"We will evict illegal structures through CS, RS and Citi Survey," said the mayor while visiting Sutivola canal and Kodda canal in Bhatara, Satarkul and Badda areas.

He said residents of the areas, who face severe waterlogging just after light rain, will benefit of the widening of the canals.

"I have already asked city corporation workers to clean all drains of the area and asked officials to take necessary steps to widen the drains," he said.

Atiq said they will do 29km of canal recovery work, re-excavate the canals, protect the banks, make cycle lanes, walkways and plant trees under the project.

"A project worth around Tk 4.24 thousand crore to develop the extended areas has already been passed in the

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Two workers sit on top of a loaded truck bearing the name of Dhaka North City Corporation, with nothing to protect them from accidents, or even bumps on the road. Disregard of safety is not an uncommon sight, but it is particularly disappointing to see it on the part of authorities. Aminbazar area on the Dhaka-Aricha Highway yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

PARLIAMENT SESSION

Two MPs demand school reopening

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two ruling Awami League lawmakers yesterday demanded that the government take measures to reopen all educational institutions, as the long closure of schools and colleges are hindering students.

Motahar Hossain said students' education life is being greatly hampered due to long shutdown of educational institutions. "Although virtual class are taking place, students of villages and rural areas are not getting benefit of it. Therefore, the government should take immediate measures to reopen the educational institutions as soon as possible," he said.

While participating in the thanksgiving motion on the President's speech, Solaiman Haque Joarddar also made the same demand.

He said the ministry should take a final decision on reopening educational institutions, adding that the institutions should be opened in compliance with health rules.

On a different note, AL MP Anwarul Abedin Khan expressed his displeasure over irregularities in constructing roads in the country, despite spending a huge amount of money.

"It takes Tk 85 lakh to construct one kilometre road. But the roads become damaged within six months of construction," he added.

He also expressed his disappointment as the use of eco-friendly bricks in different government works was not ensured.

Anwarul said a law was passed in Parliament in 2019 on the use of

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CLUSTER ADMISSION TESTS

Four engineering univs at odds over specifics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four public engineering universities who had earlier agreed on a cluster admission test system, are divided on the question of where the exam would be held.

Opinion is also divided on which university the chairman of the admission committee will come from.

The issue surfaced in a virtual meeting between top officials of four universities and the University Grants Commission (UGC) yesterday.

The four universities are Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), Chattogram University of Engineering and Technology (Cuet), Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet) and Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (Kuet).

Vice chancellors from the four leading engineering universities could not reach to a consensus regarding chairmanship of

admission test committee and test centre to hold the cluster admission tests, a UGC statement said.

One of the vice chancellors said Buet authorities reiterated that their representative would always be chairman of the admission committee, and the exams be held at Buet only.

The statement said the authorities of Ruet, Cuet and Kuet proposed to nominate the chairman and test centre gradually following alphabetic order. "But pro-vice chancellor of Buet informed the meeting that they will take final decision to this end within a week after holding an urgent academic committee meeting."

Earlier, all four universities had agreed to join the uniform admission test titled "Central Admission Test".

VCs of 19 public universities decided that they would hold central admission

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Standing up to the oath of sacrifice

Rab official who lost hand while detonating bomb decides to retire

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

It was early morning on September 15, 2019.

Sergeant Md Shahidul Islam went to Abhaynagar Police Station in Jashore with members of the bomb disposal unit of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-6).

Abhaynagar Police Station officials sought support to deactivate Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). Police recovered six IEDs during the investigation of a case.

Wearing a bomb suit and with necessary equipment, Shahidul got ready to respond to the call to deactivate IEDs. But he was facing difficulties touching the IEDs wearing bomb suit gloves, so he switched to regular gloves. At the beginning of the deactivating task, a bomb went off.

Shahidul fainted for a few seconds after being hit by a bomb splinter. When he regained consciousness,



Sergeant Shahidul with his prosthetic arm.

PHOTO: STAR

he saw that the wrist of his left hand was severed. He was taken to Jashore Combined Military Hospital (CMH) with his hand tied with a towel.

On the day, Bangladesh cricket team was playing an international match. Shahidul's first enquiry after being moved to a cabin from the operation room was about

Bangladesh's performance in the match, despite undergoing complicated surgery.

Shahidul recalled how surprised the doctor was after hearing his question about the match.

He said, "Many people are victims of accidents and mutilation. I went to work for the country and

became crippled. I am proud to have been able to work in service of the nation."

"We take an oath of self-sacrifice for the needs of the country during our training," Shahidul said.

"Even though I didn't understand the matter then, but I feel it now," he said.

Shahidul thinks he survived the operation thanks to the bomb suit and iron block.

The good news is, after a long treatment, Shahidul is now somewhat healthy. Under the supervision of Rab, he has been given a prosthetic hand.

It works with a sensor that can reach forward through the veins on the upper arm, according to a Rab official.

Shahidul was recognised for his bravery and received the Bangladesh Police Medal (BPM).

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RAPE CASE

HC orders former TV producer to surrender to court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed Aslam Shikder, a former programme producer of private TV channel ATN Bangla, to surrender before the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Tribunal-7 of Dhaka in a case filed for raping a dancer in 2018.

The tribunal has acquitted Aslam of the case on October 20 last year, Deputy Attorney General Sarwar Hossain Bappi told The Daily Star.

It will be known when Aslam will have surrendered after the HC's written order is released, he added.

Yesterday, the HC also called for the record of the case from the tribunal and accepted the appeal against the acquittal verdict for hearing.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman came up with the order after a primary hearing of the appeal filed by the state challenging the verdict acquitting Aslam Shikder.

University student missing in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 23-year-old Bangladeshi youth, also a student at Malaysia's Asia Pacific University (APU), has been missing for a week since he left his home in the capital's Bashundhara Residential area on January 13.

The missing person's name is Sadman Sakif aka Rafi. Sadman's mother filed a general diary (GD) with Vatarra Police Station in this regard.

According to the GD, Sadman left the house on the morning of January 13 without telling anyone. Since then he did not return home. The mobile number used by him is switched off.

Sadman's mother Monowara Hossain told reporters that her son returned to Dhaka from Malaysia in September 2019. After that he could not return to Malaysia due to coronavirus situation.

Among three siblings, Sadman is the youngest. He was born and raised in Saudi Arabia. He was admitted to APU in Malaysia three years ago.

Sadman's mother claimed that he does not have a group of friends in Dhaka and does not know the city well.

Vatarra Police Officer-in-Charge (OC) Moktaruzzaman said, "Sadman was preparing to return to Malaysia. He asked his father to arrange money for this. But he left home before that. CCTV footage shows Sadman leaving the house with a laptop bag."

Sudip Kumar Chakraborty, deputy commissioner of

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Dreaming anew with jute

Career training for people with disabilities concludes at CRP

AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH, Savar

On June 15, 2017, a section of a clay wall crashed and fell on 18-year-old Sabina Yeasmin, paralysing her from the waist down. The incident happened just when she was about to sit for her HSC exams, and set her education back by two whole years.

It had devastating consequences for her family. Her farmer father, stricken by poverty, was initially at a loss over what to do. He eventually took her to Savar's Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP). This proved to be move in the right direction for Sabina. To this day, she is getting treated there, albeit in a different capacity these days.

After being a patient for a year-and-a-half, she joined CRP's basketball team. Though still on a wheelchair, the new role brought her a lot of relief -- it is not only a milestone for her path to full recovery, but came with a steady income.

Although somewhat helpful, the meagre amount she made there was not enough to cover all of her costs, which is

why she was still on the lookout for some additional income.

This correspondent met Sabina at a training session organised by the e-Commerce Association of Bangladesh (e-CAB), Spinal Cord Injuries Development Association Bangladesh (SCIDAB), and People with Disabilities Aid Foundation (PDAF). The training programme began on Sunday and concluded yesterday.

The programme was aimed at teaching persons with disabilities how to make jute products such as bags, pots, rugs and blankets and make a living out of it. Alongside Sabina, a total of 30 people took part in it.

Talking to The Daily Star, Sabina said, "The accident put me on a wheelchair and threatened to bring my life to a halt. My father gradually became unable to bear my treatment costs."

"At least some of it was relieved when I joined the basketball team, but I was looking for something more substantial," she continued. "And this is when the opportunity to become jute product maker

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COUPLE'S DEATH ON ROAD
Bus driver remanded

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed a driver of Ajmeri Glory Paribahan on a one-day remand in a case filed over the death of a couple in the capital's Airport area.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury passed the order after Investigation Officer Imran Hossain, also sub-inspector of Airport Police Station, produced the driver Tasikul Islam before the court with a five-day remand prayer.

The magistrate also denied bail to Tasikul after a petition was filed with the court, seeking bail.

A team of Criminal Investigation Department arrested Tasikul Islam at Mouchak in Gazipur on January 19.

He had long been driving heavy vehicles like bus although he had professional licences for driving light vehicles only, police officials said.

The couple -- Akash Iqbal and his wife Maya Hazarika -- were on their way to work when the bus of Ajmeri Glory Paribahan hit their motorbike on January 18.

The driver attempted to escape driving over them.

Maya's father Manik Miah filed a murder case with Airport Police Station, following the incident.



It's a challenge to navigate the narrow streets of Old Dhaka, whether on foot or on vehicles. There's no defined walking space or footpaths for pedestrians, and shops have taken up space on the side of the road, pushing the pedestrian and hose on vehicles together. Especially during the busy hours of the day, walking through one of the alleys can feel like an obstacle course. This photo was taken on Tuesday from Alauddin Road.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

'Save the ponds of Sylhet'

Activists demand at human chain

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Environmental activists and locals demanded at a human chain yesterday that the Majumdar Bari Dighi (large pond) and others ponds in Sylhet city be saved from grabbing and destruction.

The human chain was jointly organised by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) near the pond at Majumdar area in the city.

At the human chain, speakers expressed grave concern over grabbing, filling and polluting city ponds that play vital role for environment of the city.

According to Bela and Sylhet City Corporation, there are only 36 ponds still in the city.

This number was over 60 a decade ago, they said.

Most of the surviving ponds are in peril, including the historic Majumdar Bari Dighi.

According to act-36 of year 2000 on the conservation of natural waterbodies and Bangladesh Environment Conservation Rules 1995, a pond must be protected from being filled up or grabbing, speakers said.

Bapa Sylhet's General Secretary Abdul Karim Kim, Bela Sylhet Regional Coordinator Advocate Shah Shaheda Akhter and Sylhet District Press Club President Al Azad were present at the human chain among others.

In memory of Mrs. Ismat Ara Sadique, MP



Today January 21, 2021, we remember with great sorrow and love, our beloved mother Ismat Ara Sadique, who departed this world a year ago. Her love, respect and dedication for her family, friends, her country, and the Awami League shall be missed dearly. She will be mourned and remembered as the devoted MP of Kesubpur Jashore, and as a respected State Minister of Public Administration. Though she is gone forever, she will always be in our hearts, our thoughts and in our prayers. May Allah grant her Eternal Peace.

On this occasion, we request all her relatives, friends, colleagues, and acquaintances to remember her departed soul in their prayers, and should they wish to share any memories, we would be honored to receive them at memoryofismatarasadique@gmail.com.

Tanvir Sadique
Naureen Sadique