

'SOBAR DHAKA' APP

70pc complaints resolved in first month: DNCC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seventy percent complaints of residents of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) that were filed through "Sobar Dhaka" smartphone app were solved in the last month.

Some 4,073 residents downloaded the app since it was launched on January 11, and sent 429 complaints to the DNCC through the app, says a press release.

DNCC has solved 318 of the complaints.

Among the complaints, 113 were about repairing roads, 94 about setting up street lights, 78 to evict illegal structures, 57 for lack of mosquito control activities, 46 related to waste management, 35 for drainage problems and three of waterlogging problems.

The 111 other complaints which they failed to solve are under consideration and will be solved gradually, said the press release.

The main objective of the app is to improve the living standards of DNCC residents by ensuring that services are delivered and accurate information is provided.



An artisan puts finishing touches on idols of Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of knowledge and education. With Saraswati puja a little less than a week away, the artisans at Bagdia village under Barishal's Bakerganj Upazila are spending busy days.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Cleaners threaten strike in Dhaka north

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Conservancy workers yesterday threatened to go on a strike if their contractual recruitment through tender is not cancelled and the approval of the waste management firms that hired them is not renewed in a week.

They threatened to stop collecting waste from households in Dhaka North City Corporation area and go for tougher programmes if their demands are not met.

Leaders of Primary Waste Collection Service Providers (PWCSP), a platform for cleaners, made the announcement from a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in the morning.

Hundreds of cleaners took part in the human chain, many of them wearing shrouds.

The waste collectors' demands include cancellation of the decision to appoint cleaners through tenders, renewal of permission for organisations involved in waste collection and reintroduction of certificates by PWCSP in this regard.

According to a press release signed by PWCSP president, DNCC gives permission for waste collection every year and last year's deadline expired in December but the city corporation is yet to start the renewal process. DNCC is planning to recruit cleaners through tenders, the press release said.

PWCSP president Nahid Akhtar said though the DNCC mayor had given them assurance, in many wards influential and political leaders are controlling the work.

She said as they did not get the renewal, they are failing to get any legal and administrative assistance.

Asked, Commodore M Saidur Rahman, chief waste management officer of DNCC, said they have decided to bring discipline to the door-to-door waste collection system.

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Cops wary as Rohingyas rent houses in port city

Law enforcers say refugees running criminal activities from there; urge landlords to be cautious

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, Ctg

Police officials in Chattogram have expressed their concern as they said Rohingyas have been renting houses in different areas of port city as well as upazilas hiding their identities and getting involved in various criminal activities.

Apart from that, a section of unscrupulous landlords have been renting out their houses to Rohingya refugees for money despite an embargo of law enforcement agencies, putting internal security at risk, they said.

Talking to The Daily Star, several officials of Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) said they have information that the Myanmar nationals have been renting houses in different areas after fleeing from their camps in Cox's Bazar.

They are also using fake Bangladeshi NID cards to dodge law enforcers, the officials said.

Following reports of crimes in the city and district, this issue came to light. Law

enforcers have asked the homeowners not to rent out their houses to Rohingya people.

"We came to know about it after arresting four Rohingyas over several criminal activities last year," Shah Md Abdur Rauf, additional deputy commissioner (south) of CMP's Detective Branch, told The Daily Star recently.

According to law enforcement agencies, Rab-7 in a drive on November 9 arrested a Rohingya couple from a flat in port city's Chandgaon area with around Tk 1.17 crore and 5,000 yaba pills.

Rab officials said they had been living in the city using fake NID cards for several years and were involved in yaba business.

On January 30, police recovered the body of a missing Jatiya Party leader from his farmhouse in Lohagara upazila.

During investigation, police found out that two Rohingya youths, who used to work for the JP leader, murdered and

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Six cops placed on 2-day remand in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A court in Chattogram placed six constables of Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) on two-day remand. They were arrested on Sunday for extorting money from a businessman.

The court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Md Shahidullah passed the order after Anwara police station force members produced the six constables before the court seeking remand, said Chattogram Court Inspector Md Humayun Kabir.

The arrested constables are: Md Abdul Nabi, Md Eskandar Hossain, Md Monirul Islam, Md Shakil Khan, Md Masud and Morshed Billah.

The abduction and extortion incident happened at Safi Talukdar Bari under ward-8 of Boirag union under Anwara upazila on February 4 but the matter came to light after the victim lodged a complaint to police on February 7.

According to the case statement, the plainclothes men entered the house of a contractor named Abdul Mannan, identifying themselves as members of Detective Branch (DB) of police and detained him.

Eight men, including six constables, on four motorcycles took him to "Koigram Rastar Matha" area under Patiya upazila, said the statement.

They threatened to kill him and demanded Tk 10 lakh, said the statement.

Mannan phoned his relatives and arranged Tk 1.80 lakh. They later released him and fled the scene, added the statement. The six were suspended while departmental cases were lodged in this connection.

HC issues status quo on KU teachers' termination

STAR REPORT

The High Court yesterday (Tuesday) issued an order of status quo regarding the termination of three teachers of Khulna University (KU).

The court also issued a rule asking the authorities concerned of KU and government to explain in four weeks why the termination of three KU teachers should not be declared illegal.

The three teachers are Lecturer Hoymonty Shukla Kabery of History and Civilisation department; Assistant Professor Abul Fazal and Lecturer Shakila Alam of Bangla department.

Yesterday, the HC bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Md Kamrul Hossain Mollah came up with the order of status quo and rule following a writ petition filed by the three KU teachers challenging the KU authorities' decision to terminate them.

Barrister Jyotirmoy Barua, a lawyer for the three teachers, told The Daily Star that the three teachers had filed a writ petition in the high court last Thursday seeking reversal of the decision of the university

syndicate meeting. The writ hearing was held four days later.

The lawyer mentioned that since the three teachers have not yet handed over their responsibilities, there is no legal impediment for them to continue working. "The mistreatment of the three teachers is unacceptable and a blow to their academic freedom," said Barrister Jyotirmoy.

Meanwhile, Deputy Attorney General Nawroz MR Chowdhury and Assistant Attorney General Golam Sarwar Pavel told this correspondent that the three teachers cannot continue teaching as the HC has not stayed their termination.

During hearing on the petition, Jyotirmoy Barua told the HC bench that the KU authorities have terminated his clients from mala fide intention and without following any lawful procedures.

KU authorities on January 28 decided to terminate the three teachers as they had expressed their solidarity with a student movement at the university in 2020, which does not make any offence, argued the barrister.

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Training for returnee female migrants begin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh ITO Naoki yesterday inaugurated a training course at Bangladesh-Korea Technical Training Centre (BKTTTC) for returnee women migrant workers, who were forced to come back to Bangladesh when the pandemic broke out last year.

The course, titled "Training on Women's Economic Leadership", was inaugurated under a project of UN Women undertaken last year, titled "Women and Girls at the Centre of Covid-19 Prevention".

The project created alternative income-generating sources for women and was supported by the Government of Japan, with Bangladesh Nari Samik Kendra (BNSK) as the implementing partner.

As part of the project, they have been producing masks and running a "Women Cafe" in BKTTTC as an alternative livelihood.

"What impressed me the most is the level of coordination and cooperation between UN Women, BNSK, GoB and Japan Government. Japan came out with the concept of 'Human Security' that

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MYMENSINGH

Quran learning centre for hijras inaugurated

OUR CORRESPONDENT, M'singh

Members of the hijra community have started an Al-Quran learning centre in Mymensingh city, the first of its kind in Mymensingh division.

The three-month course, with 20 students currently enrolled in the first batch, has started and will, in phases, continue to include all members of the forum responsible for the initiative.

Hafez Maulana Mufti Mohammad Abdur Rahman Azad inaugurated the centre, Dawatul Quran, at the office of Setubandhan Kallyan Sangha, a forum of the hijra community, at the city's Khachari Ferry Ghat area on Saturday.

Ahmed Ferdous Bari Chowdhury Foundation, based in Dhaka's Kamrangirchar, will support the centre financially. Such a learning centre has been running at Kamrangirchar under the foundation and Maulana Abdur Rahman Azad is its founding director, said sources.

Mymensingh Municipality Mayor Ekramul Haque Titu was chief guest at the inauguration, and Tanu Hijra, the forum's president, was in the chair. Among others, the centre's teachers Mufti Golam Bhuiyan, Maulana Abdul Aziz Hosseni, Maulana Mamunur Rashid and Prof Md Nasir Uddin were present.

Talking to this correspondent, Tanu said with a goal to improve the community's lifestyle, they recently decided to start the centre, and finally, were successful in doing so.

"There has been a negative attitude among common people regarding our lifestyle, and we cannot easily march with mainstream society, resulting in negligence and deprivation in all respects," she said. "The learning will also develop our religious values."

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Off the streets and back to school

After photo in Star, social org lends hand to Nayeem, father

CITY DESK

A few days ago, commuters would come across a boy, aged around nine to 10, selling cigarettes and betel leaves from a heavy metal box suspended from his shoulders, on the roads near the capital's Muggda Medical College and Hospital.

Now, the same boy, Nayeem, cannot be seen on the roads anymore. He is waiting for the day schools reopen, the day on which he will carry his backpack and rush to class once again.

Nayeem garnered some attention after The Daily Star published a picture of him on December 21. Following the photo-story, Facebook-based social organisation "Songjog: Connecting People" decided to help him out.

Members of the organisation admitted him to Manda Government Primary School in Muggda and declared to take responsibility for all expenses of his studies till 10th-grade.

Son of rickshaw-puller Liton, Nayeem had no other option but to help his family earn some bread since the start of the pandemic, especially



This photo of Nayeem was taken from the capital's Muggda area, published on the front page of this newspaper on Dec 21.

STAR FILE PHOTO

because his mother fell ill and could not continue work as a domestic help.

With such financial difficulties, his hopes of going back to school were dwindling.

In December last year, when asked about school, Nayeem had explained, "I really do want to go to school. But the Tk 200-300 I make, working four-five hours a day, is immensely helpful for my family."

Songjog also handed over a new

rickshaw-van to Nayeem's father, so that Nayeem, now enrolled in first-grade, does not come under any financial difficulty.

Engineer Imtiaz Ahmed Suhan, co-founder of Songjog, said, "We are glad to be able to stand beside Nayeem, but there're many like him in society. If all affluent people come forward, it'll be possible to assist more children like him, and change the unequal state of our society."



Just a year ago, this bangle seller at Dhaka University area would have been surrounded by students, who would stand there for ages, contemplating on which coloured bangles to take home. Then the pandemic arrived and the students left, but the seller remains at the same place. With next to no sales, she resorts to taking a nap, now surrounded by her baskets full of bangles.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

SANITATION, WATER ACCESS

WB, Bangladesh sign \$200m deal

UNB, Dhaka

The World Bank and Bangladesh yesterday signed a \$200 million financing agreement, to help 3.6 million people access hygienic sanitation facilities and about 600,000 people access clean water in rural areas.

The Rural Water, Sanitation, Hygiene (WASH) for Human Capital Development project will help improve water and sanitation services in rural areas in 78 upazilas, covering Sylhet, Chattogram, Rangpur, and Mymensingh divisions, says a press release.

The agreement was signed by Fatima Yasmin and Mercy Tembon on behalf of the government and the World Bank, respectively.

Following a market-driven approach, the project will help build a more hygienic model, offset pit latrines for safe sanitation; and large and small piped water schemes for clean water.

It will provide microcredits to both the households and entrepreneurs for water and sanitation facilities. About 309,000 of the poorest households will receive

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20 km of Dhaka-Aricha highway to be 10 lanes

Says Obaidul Quader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, SAVAR

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday said the government has taken the initiative to develop about 20 kilometres of Dhaka-Aricha highway, from Gabtoli to Nabinagar, to make 10 lanes. Work of its feasibility study has been completed, and process of selecting investment organisation is underway.

The minister said this after inaugurating construction work of Salehpur Bridge-2 (four lanes) at Savar's Aminbazar via video conference.

Quader, also Awami League general secretary, said the Gabtoli bridge is highly busy and not in good condition, so authorities want to renovate it. Therefore, it will be developed to have eight lanes. The process to develop it is ongoing, and work will start soon.

The highway from Nabinagar to Paturia will be developed to have four lanes, on government-to-government basis with funds of Japan. Moreover, special measures have been taken for kitchen markets by the highway to ease traffic congestion, the minister said.

Construction cost for Salehpur Bridge-2 has been estimated to be Tk 40.30 crore, and its estimated implementation time was fixed at 24 months. As such, construction work is supposed to finish by February 1, 2023. At present, there is a four-lane bridge at the area.

Meanwhile, Salehpur bridge's Dhaka-bound lanes remained closed since January, due to several cracks found on its girders. Roads and Highways Department started repair work on January 15.

executive engineer (Dhaka division) at RHD Shamim Al Mamun had earlier told The Daily Star that repair work will be completed within three weeks. Yesterday, he said work is almost over and the bridge will be open for vehicular movement within two days.