



Working at scary heights without adequate safety gears is a recurring problem of the construction sector. It's all the more dangerous when a worker is sent out to repair the arched top of a foot overbridge with threadbare safety precautions. This photo was taken yesterday from the capital's Paribagh area.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

MORE NEWS

10.76pc pass DU 'Ka' unit entry exam

DU CORRESPONDENT

The admission test results of "Ka" unit, under science faculty of Dhaka University, for 2020-21 session was published yesterday with a pass rate of 10.76 percent.

DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman unveiled the results at the registrar Building on the campus.

As many as 10,165 examinees, out of a total 94,509, passed the test -- for 1,815 seats. The results can be seen on the university website -- admission.eis.du.ac.bd -- or via SMS.

Encroachers beware, says Taposh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday said they will evict all the encroachers gradually to make the city liveable.

He made the comment while inaugurating Kalabagan playground and its adjoining Shaheed Sheikh Russel Children Park.

"Many parts of Dhanmondi lake were encroached, and we have started work to recover the lake to bring back its aesthetic beauty based on the design of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina taken in 1998."

Symbolic protest to save trees in Sylhet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, SYLHET

"Oh wayfarer, an attempt to kill me is in progress. I save you by supplying oxygen; save me"-- read a banner on a hundred-year-old tree in Chowhatta area of Sylhet that was attempted to be felled by Sylhet City Corporation but was eventually saved by green activists.

Bapa and Bhoomishontan Bangladesh organised this symbolic protest to condemn SCC's indiscriminate felling of trees. They announced a public hearing on November 13 at Sylhet Saheed Minar.

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Rampant river-grabbing by influential persons mixed with reluctance on the authorities' side to take steps against them, squeezed into a corner, the Bhairab river stands as a major waterbody being completely given to grabbing and pollution.

When this correspondent visited both sides of the river recently, he saw at least 300 business establishments -- including factories, warehouses, and some high-rise structures -- at Jaikhana ghat, Rupsha ghat, Delta ghat, Khalishpur Burma Eastern ghat, Digholia, Shiromoni and Phultala ghat areas.

As an added woe, nearly 500 shops from the neighbouring Baro Bazar, and some factories and mills throw their waste straight into the river.

Abdul Mazed Mollah, a resident of the city's Kalibari area, told The Daily Star, "The river has become like an 'orphan', with no authority doing anything to free it from the indiscriminate pollution and grabbing."

"I've never seen any integrated work to save the river," he added. "Without a free-flowing Bhairab, Khulna city would be inundated by

Bhairab in peril



Banks of the Bhairab is ravaged by a combination of organic waste, industrial chemicals, and encroachment. An additional pressure comes from the nearby Barobazar, as traders of the kitchen market use the river as a free dumping ground.

PHOTO: DIPANKAR ROY

ISSUES

- » Rampant encroachment
- » Indiscriminate waste dumping
- » Authorities' indifference

RECOMMENDATIONS

- » Integrated efforts
- » Regular eviction drives
- » Action against encroachers, polluters



waterlogging," he warned.

There are many government and private institutions that depend on the Bhairab for their shipments. Khulna Shipyard, BNS Titumir (Bangladesh Navy), BIWTA ghat, Forest ghat, Khulna Newsprint Mills, Khulna Hardboard Mills, nine state-owned jute mills, four power plants, three state-owned oil depots, and over 200 private jute mills were built on the banks of Bhairab.

"If the river lost its navigability, these establishments will be affected and might even be forced to shift to other places," said Paritosh Karmokar, a Baro Bazar-based business owner.

Every day, over 300 cargo vessels

carry goods and oil from Noyapara of Jashore to different parts of the country along the river. On their way, they pollute the river by dumping waste and discharging chemicals, said locals and green activists.

In addition, at least 20 large drains of Khulna City Corporation (KCC) directly discharge waste into the river, and so do the jute mills.

Contacted, KCC Chief Conservancy Officer Md Abdul Aziz said, "We have attached nets to the openings of the drains, so waste does not go into the river. Furthermore, we have plans to process the drain water to remove pollutants before letting it enter the river."

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Express solidarity with global pledge

TIB urges govt on ending deforestation by 2030

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh yesterday called upon the government to immediately express solidarity with the global pledge -- made during the Conference of the Parties (COP-26) in Glasgow -- to stop and reverse deforestation by 2030.

Issuing a press statement, the anti-graft watchdog further urged the government to take specific measures in line with the pledge to stop and reverse deforestation in the country, expressing concern over the contrary.

"Although Brazil and many African countries have joined the pledge, Bangladesh's unwillingness to respond [to the pledge], despite being a most vulnerable country, is unbelievable," said TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman.

He termed Bangladesh's position to

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Baghdad Group MD held in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested Baghdad Group Managing Director Ferdous Khan Alamgir from Dhaka yesterday in connection with several cases filed by different banks of Chattogram over loan scams.

"Ferdous Khan Alamgir has been arrested in a case filed for defaulting Tk 17 crore from City Bank's Khatunganj branch," said OC Nazam Uddin of Kotwali Police Station.

Mohammad Naim Bhuiyan, panel lawyer for the bank, said the bank filed the case with the court in 2012 to recover the loan. Warrants were issued against him on August 10. According to sources in the Money Loan Court, the group's bad loans amounted to Tk 300 crore with 12 banks and financial institutions.

In August 2019, Alamgir's wife Meherun Nesa (50), chairperson of the group, was arrested by immigration police at Dhaka airport after she arrived from Canada.

EU to remain 'steadfast partner' of Bangladesh

Says envoy on Rohingya issue

UNB, Dhaka

Head of Delegation of the European Union (EU) to Bangladesh Ambassador Charles Whiteley has said they will continue to be a "steadfast partner" of Bangladesh in meeting the needs of the Rohingya and host community with continued pressure on Myanmar for their safe return to their place of origin in Rakhine State.



Charles Whiteley

"Clearly, I think, the majority of the Rohingya do want to go back to home," he told UNB in an interview mentioning that everyone, including the government of Bangladesh, underlined that any return has to be "voluntary and safe" for the refugees.

Responding to a question on the EU's business link with Myanmar, the EU envoy said they are very careful when it comes to the economy as some people say why the EU does not suspend the Everything But Arms (EBA) scheme.

Myanmar has been a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) since 1995 and as a least developed country, benefits from the EBA scheme, which grants unilateral duty- and quota-free access for all exports, except arms and ammunition, to the EU.

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Former bKash territory officer arrested over fraud: CID

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminal Investigation Department has arrested a former territory officer of bKash on charge of providing agents' and customers' information to fraud gangs, helping them swindle money.

The arrestee, Tanvir Siraji alias Siraj (38), was sacked from the mobile financial service in September upon receiving complaints against him.

A team of CID arrested him from Tongi area in Gazipur around 2:30pm on Tuesday, Saidur Rahman Khan, special superintendent (Serious Crime Division) of CID told a press briefing at its headquarters yesterday.

The arrest came as three accused in a case filed with Sakhipur Police Station in Tangail in March, in their confessional statements

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Not one event in 15 years

Lying idle, Shegunbagicha Multipurpose Complex loses all lustre; still no gas, electricity supply

DIPAN NANDY

It's been 15 years since the Shegunbagicha Multipurpose Complex was completed. On the third floor of the five-storey building, it hosts the third councillor's office, while the first two are used as a kitchen market.

However, though constructed mainly as a community centre, the establishment is yet to see any light to this end.

Even after 15 years, the premises still doesn't have gas connection, nor electricity. The councillor's office runs on power supply from a nearby kitchen market. More importantly, there has not been a single programme on the venue during all this time.

Contacted, city corporation officials told this newspaper that the scenario may change soon, assuring that renovation works could begin from next week.

"Works for the community centre was wrapped up way back in 2006," said Saiful Islam, additional caretaker of the community centre, "But it's yet to host a single programme."

"The reasons? There's no elevator, no air-conditioning, not even gas supply. Who would want to rent this space?" he asked.

Dhaka South City Corporation's website cites the lack of a gas supply as the main issue,

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15 years of neglect has left the community centre inside Shegunbagicha Multipurpose Complex in shambles. The centre-stage has broken down, floor tiles are starting to wear out, and the elevator door -- with no elevator inside -- has caught rust. The photos were taken yesterday.



PHOTO: DIPAN NANDY