

CUSTODY OF CHILDREN

# Dispose of cases in 6 months: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the family courts of the country to hear and dispose of the cases filed over the custody of children in six months.

The law secretary and Supreme Court registrar general have been asked to communicate the directive to the family courts concerned.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman delivered the verdict following a petition filed by a mother in Rangpur seeking her child's custody from her ex-husband.

The bench ordered the family court in Dhaka to finish the trial proceedings of the case filed by the petitioner by March 31 next year.

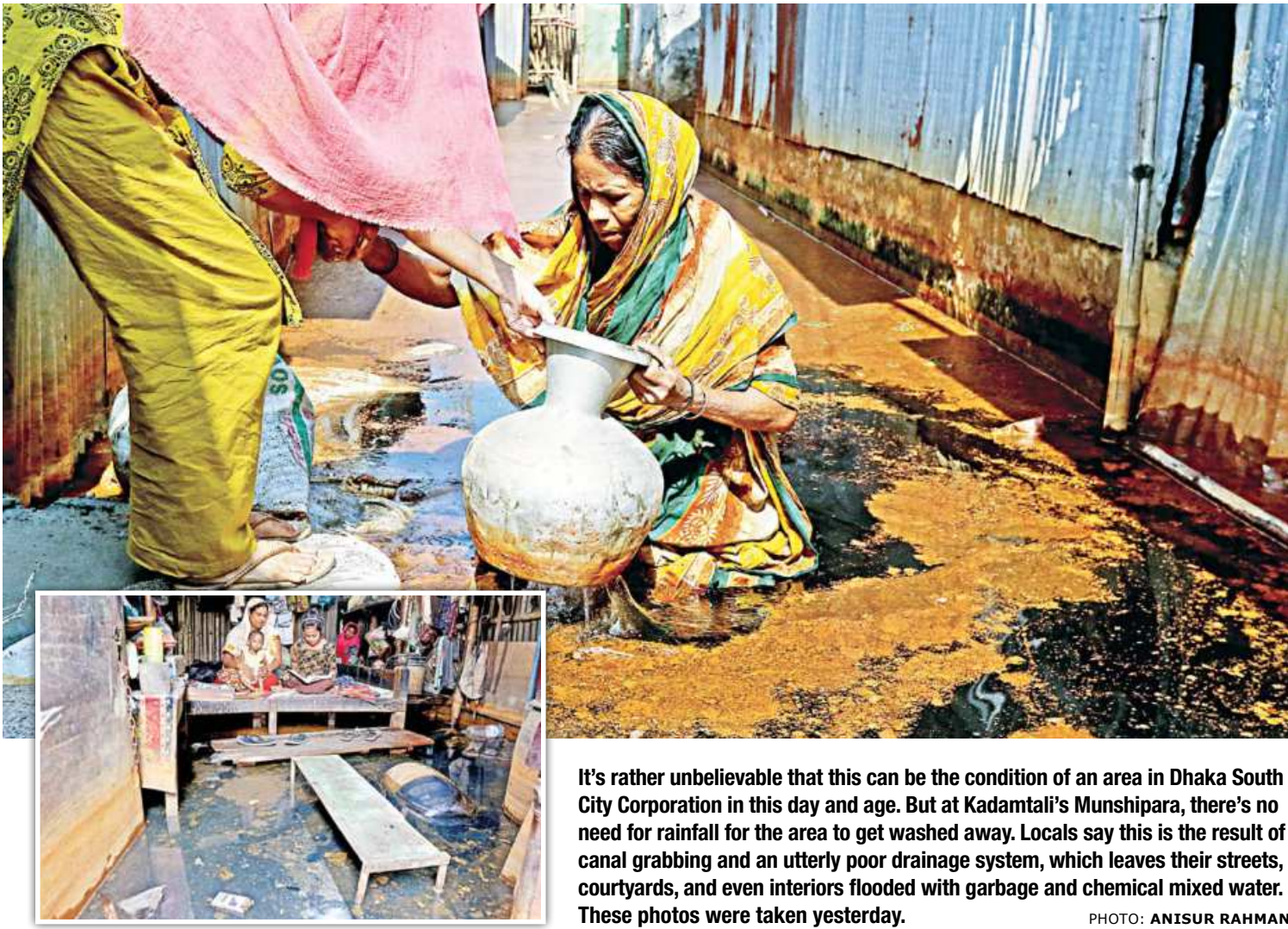
It also asked the child's father to allow her (child) mother (petitioner) to visit the child at her convenient times during the trial proceedings of the case.

The writ petitioner's lawyer Md Motaher Hossain Sazu and Deputy Attorney General Bepul Bagmar told The Daily Star that the HC directed family courts to dispose of custody cases in six months as many such cases have been pending for long periods (two to three years) without any trial.

They also mentioned that there is no specific time limit to finish proceedings of such cases in the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961.

Motaher Hossain Sazu said the writ petitioner married a man from Rajshahi in 2011. They had a daughter in 2015.

In 2018, they got divorced and since then the child has been staying with her father. The mother filed a case with the family court in Dhaka seeking custody of the child. As the family court failed to settle the case, she submitted the petition with the HC this year, the lawyer added.



It's rather unbelievable that this can be the condition of an area in Dhaka South City Corporation in this day and age. But at Kadamtali's Munshipara, there's no need for rainfall for the area to get washed away. Locals say this is the result of canal grabbing and an utterly poor drainage system, which leaves their streets, courtyards, and even interiors flooded with garbage and chemical mixed water. These photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

# 'No betel leaf, cigarette shops at school gates'

Recommends JS body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body yesterday asked the home ministry to request the education ministry to take measures to ensure that no betel leaf, cigarette, or related shops are set up in front of or at school and college gates.

The parliamentary standing committee on the home affairs ministry came up with the recommendation at a meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Ruling Awami League MP Md Shamsul Haque Tuku presided over the meeting.

The meeting was attended by committee members Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, Kujendra Lal Tripura, Pir Fazlur Rahman, Nur Mohammad, Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed, and Begum Rumana Ali.

The report on the overall activities of the Bangladesh

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## Sampans passed through here once



Once a kilometre-long boat route emerging at the Karnaphuli, the Manaharkhali canal is little more than a narrow drain now.

SANJOY KUMAR BARUA, Cg

Not too long ago, only about 15 years, Chattogram's Manaharkhali canal could let sampans (traditional wooden boats) pass through. But due to rampant encroachment, today it has become little more than a drain that can barely let water pass, let alone boats.

The grabbers are mostly the same people who live beside the canal. Over the years, they've constructed numerous multi-storey buildings grabbing the bank of the canal.

Fifteen years ago, the canal stood at a whole kilometre in length. "We used to see sampans move through it back in the days," said Titu Das, an inhabitant of the area.

During a recent visit to the canal, that starts from Chattogram town's Kolabagicha area and runs all the way into the Karnafuli river, this correspondent was left wondering where the glory days have gone.

Talking to The Daily Star, local ward commissioner Pulok Khastogir said, "There are around 2,500 voters in the canal area. We can't just evict them overnight as they've been living here for a long time."

However, Humayun Kabir, a local trader, told this correspondent that not everyone of its 2,500 inhabitants are connected with the grabbing.

"It's the influential people of the area. They filled up the canal and then constructed houses and other structures on it first. Later on, the Chattogram Development Authority (CDA) came in to construct walls on both sides and turned it into a drain."

CDA's intervention has become a particular case of contention among city officials and environmental activists, who also dispute the actual number of canals in the city.

Md Abu Issa Anshary, deputy chief town planner of CDA, said "According to a 1995 drainage master plan survey, there were 57 canals in Chattogram town, but this has now come down to only 36."

"This leads to waterlogging in the city. So when you trace the source of the problem, you see how encroachment and land grabbing is one of main reasons," he said.

"According to CDA's Detail Area Plan, no structure can be set up at least 12 feet from the borders of a canal," said Anshary.

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## We're all in this together

Global communities' support crucial to tackle climate change, say speakers at event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The US\$100 billion per year fund, committed by the industrially developed countries for the climate-vulnerable developing nations has hardly started to transfer, said speakers at a discussion organised by Brac Climate Change Programme.

"Only capable institutions can ensure that the fund reaches the vulnerable local community," said eminent climate change expert Professor Saleemul Huq at the discussion titled "Climate Bridge Fund: An innovative CSO led financing to build resilience of climate migrants in Bangladesh" on Saturday.

The developed countries are transferring 20 percent of the total fund for adaptation and 50 percent for mitigation, though it is required on a 50:50 ratio. Only 2 percent of the fund is reaching the marginalised communities directly suffering the impacts of climate change, he added.

Dr Golam Rabbani, head of the Climate Bridge Fund Secretariat, shared experiences and learnings of CBF during his key-note speech.

"The fund can invest in capital and has

CLIMATE FUND
➤ Fund: \$100b per year
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the potential for reinvestment to increase support for the population vulnerable to the climate crisis," said Barbara Schnell, director of KfW.

Asif Saleh, executive director of Brac, said the CBF model of Brac-KfW can be a unique model to address the problems of the climate migrants and the vulnerable urban population.

"We must try our best to overcome the impacts of climate change and achieve sustainable development. The global community's support in all levels is crucial in this matter," said Md Mostafa Kamal, secretary of the environment, forest and climate change ministry, while addressing the discussion as chief guest.

## 'Rehabilitation before eviction'

Demands Welfare Mission of Biharis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Welfare Mission of Biharis (Bangladesh) yesterday demanded that the authorities refrain from conducting any drive to evacuate them from their camps before rehabilitation.

They made the demand at a press conference held at Dhaka Reporters Unity in the capital.

"On January 21, 22 and 23, Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) demolished several hundred of our homes in the name of road development at Avenue-4 of section-11 in Mirpur. Many families were forced to stay under the open sky at that time because of that drive," said Md Mahtab Alam, acting general secretary of the mission.

Though the DNCC mayor had given assurance about their rehabilitation, the DNCC authorities have been warning to evict the camps, claimed Mahtab.

However, during the eviction drive at

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## Will the Taliban deliver?

Int'l relations analysts express concern over the regime's rule in Afghanistan

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Though the early days of the Taliban takeover had promised otherwise, it now looks like the country is heading towards a future supporting hardline, extremist activities and no support for women's rights, said international relations analysts at a webinar.

With such realities, the Taliban may find it hard to gain international recognition, while its relationship with neighbours might continue to be complicated, they said.

The observations came at the webinar titled "The Afghan Imbroglio" organised by Dhaka

There has been no notable improvement in women's rights and education with the Taliban in power.

DR SREERADHA DATTA  
VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION, NEW DELHI

University's International Relations Department on Saturday night.

Addressing the session, former ambassador Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury said the Taliban cabinet stands divided, which is signified by its interior minister Sirajuddin Haqqani's praise for suicide bombers on one hand, and pledged support for families of the fighters killed in suicide attacks on the other.

Chowdhury also said an interior minister's praise for suicide bombers sends out wrong message to the international community and creates further uncertainties

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## 'No democracy in country'

Alleges Fakhru

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday alleged that the government has created a "dreadful" situation in the country by "obliterating democracy".

"There is no democracy, independence of judiciary, freedom of expression and freedom of press. Killing, abduction and repression is going on. A dreadful situation is prevailing in the country..." said party secretary general Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir.

Placing a wreath at the party founder Ziaur Rahman's grave to mark "National Revolution and

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## A grave problem

No dedicated cemeteries, crematoriums for Christians, Buddhists in Dhaka

DIPAN NANDY

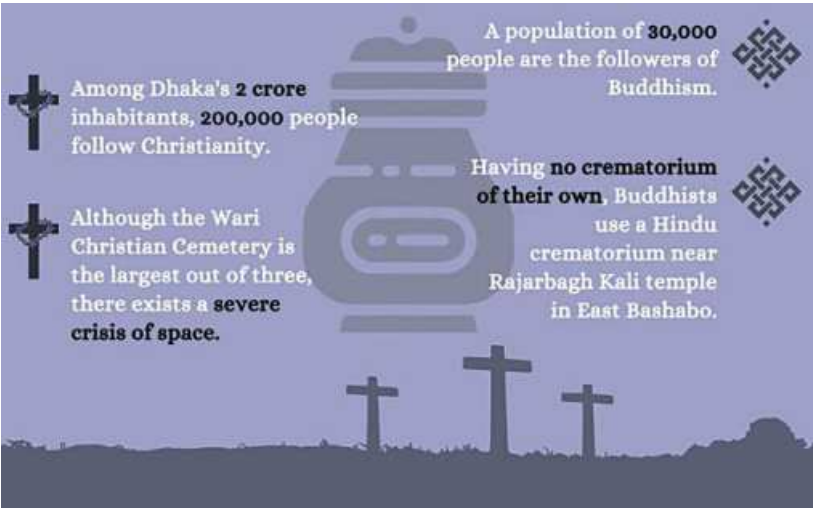
There are almost two lakh Dhaka dwellers belonging to the Christian faith and another 30,000 who practise Buddhism. Yet, despite repeated appeals to the government, there are no dedicated cemeteries and crematoriums in the city where the last rites of the deceased from these communities can be observed.

As a result, Christians perform burials on their own accord, while Buddhists are incinerated in the crematoriums of Hindus.

Neither of the two city corporations in Dhaka has a designated burial place for Christians. However, under their own management, their bodies are buried at three places in the capital.

Among them, the 16-acre Wari Christian Cemetery -- which is also a historical site -- is the biggest in size. Both Catholics and Protestants are buried here.

Given that it houses graves that have been there for centuries, there is a severe crisis of space, according to the committee of Catholic and Protestant



Christians who are in charge of the conservation of the cemetery.

The other two are Teigaon Christian Cemetery and St Joseph's Christian Cemetery in Mohammadpur. The size of the two cemeteries is nearly two acres. However, only Catholics are buried there.

Nirmol Rozario, secretary of the

Christian Religious Welfare Trust and president of Bangladesh Christian Association, said there is no official burial for Christians in Dhaka.

"There exists three cemeteries, and each has its own management. We have been advocating at length for a big cemetery for years now."

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