

Hoping to get a good catch, a fisherman throws in his net in the Karnaphuli river, while a storm brews in the distance. Even though fish population has seen a significant decline in the river over the last few years due to pollution, the persistent fishers still keep at their task, seeing if fate has something good in store for them. This photo was taken in the south bank of the river recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN



Of pride and glory

The story of “Frigate Deutschland”, the first-ever ship made in Chattogram

Did you know the first-ever ship made in Chattogram was built in 1818? In recent years, Chattogram has gained quite a reputation for its shipyards, where old ships from across the globe are brought for dismantling and turning into smaller sized ships.

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

According to historian and researcher Shamsul Haque, Chattogram’s shipbuilding business developed on the banks of Karnaphuli, where merchants from across the world used to come to purchase ships and later sail them across the sea, loaded with their goods.

But it all started in 1818, with “Frigate Deutschland” – the first-ever ship made in Chattogram’s Sadarghat area, which sailed across seas for nearly 40 years afterwards.

Its name went into oblivion until it came up in a book titled “Bandar Shohor Chattogram” written by Haroon Rashid, Freaser handed over the ship to J Flint of London in 1828, who operated the vessel in different seas for 17 years.

However, Frigate Deutschland was not the name that it was given after its inception. The three-mast ship was initially named Alfred by its maker James MacRae, who built the ship in his yard on the banks of Karnaphuli, after being commissioned by Freaser Living and Co.

The story of Alfred becoming Frigate Deutschland is not an ordinary one. It is also a story of a merchant ship’s transition into a battle fleet. According to “Uponibesh Chattogram” written by Haroon Rashid, Freaser handed over the ship to J Flint of London in 1828, who operated the vessel in different seas for 17 years.

In 1845, when Alfred was plying the waters of South America, it attracted the attention of JC Godeffroz & Sons, a German company, that had around 150 ships and vessels all over the world at that time.

JC Godeffroz & Sons bought the vessel and changed its name to Cesar Godeffroz.

In about three years, Germany and Denmark found themselves faced with the Schleswig-Holstein War over conquering two border-adjacent towns. The German side was left in a perilous situation when it came to face Denmark’s navy, which was stronger



PHOTO COURTESY

than theirs. To deal with this crisis, the German government sought assistance from its citizens. German businessmen responded. JC Godeffroz & Sons was one such company to play its part by handing over Alfred to the German forces.

According to Haroon Rashid’s book, following the handover, Alfred was renovated and turned into a battle fleet. It was then renamed “Frigate Deutschland”. Thirty-two cannons were installed on the ship.

But the transition was not a smooth one. The vessel lost its previous capacity. Several technical issues came to light when it sailed against Denmark. The German forces later started to use it as a training vessel.

In 1852, when the war was over, Deutschland was once again handed over to a new owner. This time, it was bought by Roessing & Mummz and turned into a coal cargo ship to ply on the England-China sea route. Deutschland plied the seas carrying

coal till 1858.

In 1858, the vessel was relocated to the German Maritime Museum.

“I knew nothing about the ship other than its name while writing my book. I started looking for more information and tried to contact relevant individuals and organisations in Germany as well,” said writer Haroon Rashid.

“I got to know about its relocation to the museum through the German Tourism Board. The museum had the remains of the ship stored for about a hundred years. Now it has a small replica of the ship on display,” he added.

Deutschland went on to sail for 40 years, which was very rare in that era as most ships were not very well-equipped to deal with the natural calamities on the seas. And that’s how Frigate Deutschland created history.

Connecting farmers with consumers

ARUN BIKASH DEY

Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (CVASU) researchers have developed a distribution model of pure cow-milk that would benefit both consumers and dairy farmers.

The pilot project started with limited scope in the port city on April 3, said sources in CVASU, adding that a consumer has to install the app “Smart Goala” and then place the order through it.

Initially, consumers from Khulshi, Nasirabad, GEC and Sholashahar areas in the city can avail of the service, said sources.

“The research was initiated in 2018 aiming to improve farmer-customer network and ensuring a mutually beneficial outcome – consumers get pure raw milk and farmers get a good price, said Prof Dr Goutam Buddha Das, vice-chancellor of CVASU.

Contacted, the principal investigator of the study and assistant professor at Agribusiness and Marketing Department of CVASU, Mokaddes Ahmed Dipu said, “We’ve conducted the study on the peri-urban smallholder dairy farmers initially. Then we developed a distribution model which connects the farmers directly with the urban consumers.”

“For this purpose, we initiated a platform called ‘Smart Goala’, ensuring the distribution of the freshest milk from smallholder farmers to customers,” he said.

Asked, how will they ensure the purity of



the milk, Mokaddes said they test the milk on a regular basis in the CVASU’s laboratory.

Mokaddes said that a litre of cow-milk costs Tk 90.

Asked about why the price is set higher than the market value, he said, “We aim to ensure the purity of the milk and make sure that farmers get a fair price, which incentivises them to maintain hygiene properly.”

“We also train farmers on maintaining hygiene and taking care of the cattle properly,” he said.

Taking care of THE STRAYS

MD NAZRUL ISLAM

Even though pets are taken care of with much affection, the same can’t be said about animals on the street. These strays often suffer from different illnesses, but there’s no one to tend to them.

To change this scenario, a group of youths in Chattogram have mobilised themselves to take care of the street animals. Under the banner “Petman Chittagong”, they provide medical services, like vaccination, to strays in different parts of the city.

This correspondent talked to Petman Chittagong’s Md Faizul Islam, while the group was on a vaccination drive in the port city’s Khulshi area recently.

He said a few friends and some seniors formed the organisation in January this year. Businessman Sohail Ahmed and social worker Hasina Mumtaz joined them as patrons to make this initiative successful.

In the last five months, they have vaccinated more than 200 animals.



He claimed that this kind of work falls under the jurisdiction of the authorities, but no authority has performed this duty for a long time. So, they took up the initiative to make the people of the society and the city corporation aware of the need to vaccinate these animals.

Of the five members of this organisation, three are students. Faizul completed his diploma in computer science, Umme Hani Trisha is a student of bio-pharma, and Umme Samiyun Boshri completed her honours in computer science.

Trisha said, “After vaccination, I’ve noticed the relief in the faces of people in those areas. This is where our satisfaction lies.”

Sohail said, “It’s our duty to take care of these animals. The people of the society will be safe if the city corporation comes forward to provide vaccine to these strays.”

First endoscopic brain-tumour surgery performed in Ctg

ARUN BIKASH DEY

For the first time in Chattogram, a patient’s brain tumour has been removed using endoscopic procedure, a minimally invasive method. Dr Ismail Hossain, consultant neurosurgeon at Dhaka National Institute of Neurosciences Hospital, along with his team performed the surgery at Parkview Hospital on May 26.

The patient Khair Ahmed (55) had been suffering from headache and blurred vision for some days. MRI examination of the brain had found that he was suffering from pituitary macro-adenoma, a type of tumour.

This type of tumour is usually removed after performing a craniotomy, in which a piece of the skull is removed, or through the nose using an endoscopic machine.

Although endoscopic pituitary tumour surgery is an old practice throughout the world, no public or



private hospital in Chattogram had done this before.

The operation team was led by Dr Ismail. Dr Farhad Ahmed, Dr Moinuddin Zahid, Dr Touhidur Reza,

Dr Reza, Dr Khurshid Anwar and Dr Asif were part of the team.

Dr Nurul Azim and Dr Wadud, assistant professors at the anaesthesia department of Chattogram Medical

College Hospital, performed duties as anaesthesiologists.

Asked about the operation, Dr Ismail said, “The operation was successfully completed. From now on, the people of greater Chattogram will no longer have to travel to Dhaka and abroad for state-of-the-art neurosurgery operations.”

Asked about benefits of endoscopic surgery, he said patients recover earlier, and so, hospital stays are shorter. “As the facility was not available in Chattogram earlier, many patients had to go to Dhaka or abroad,” he said. “Now, patients will be able to save time and money.”

Dr ATM Rezaul Karim, managing director of Parkview Hospital, said, “The medical system is getting better and more modern day by day. I thank Dr Ismail and his team for completing the complex and modern operation. This has opened doors to a groundbreaking medical system in Chattogram.”