



Development works have made the lives of Khulna city residents miserable. Dust from construction sites, which are virtually present everywhere, cover the roads and fill the air. Such a situation is a great threat to people's health and well-being. This photo was taken from Zero Point area yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## Khulna city chokes on dust

### Ongoing development works behind the pollution

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

Khulna city dwellers have been facing intense dust pollution for the last couple of years, as long stretches of roads and drains are being reconstructed under different development projects.

The situation especially deteriorates during dry weather, as no remedial steps are taken by Khulna City Corporation (KCC) and other agencies. But the city produces so much dust that even monsoon does not bring respite.

According to Public Works Department (PWD), KCC is currently developing a drainage system at a cost of Tk 823 crore and a road development project for Tk 607 crore. Of this, works worth Tk 322 crore are being carried out in 31 wards, while Tk 128 crore is being spent on a waterlogging project.

Besides, works of the road department, electricity department, Khulna Development Authority (KDA) and PWD are going on for another Tk 500 crore. These works are continuously polluting the air.

Construction materials have been piled up by homeowners and sand traders almost everywhere, while over 400 sand-laden trucks ply the city daily.

Usually, city corporation authorities are tasked with repairing and carpeting roads after finishing development work. However, service-providing government agencies, particularly KCC and Khulna Wasa, often shift responsibility in regards to this issue.

Doly Kundu, a resident and mother of a fifth-grader, said her daughter uses Sonadanga Natunrasta Road four

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## Two sued, two sent to jail in rape cases

STAR REPORT

A case has been filed against two youths over gang rape of a teenage girl in Noakhali, while two persons were sent to jail yesterday over separate rape incidents in Dinajpur.

The accused in the Noakhali incident are Abu Darda Bappi (25), resident of Basurhat municipality, and his friend Hridoy (28) from Kabihiat municipality.

On June 16, Bappi, who proposed to the victim to marry him, took her to his rented house at Basurhat to discuss their marriage, where Hridoy and Bappi raped her.

They released the victim after threatening her not to disclose the incident, said police.

The victim shared the incident with her family members. On Tuesday night, the victim's mother filed a case against the two, who are currently on the run, said Md Sadequr Rahman, officer-in-charge (OC) of Companyganj Police Station.

The victim has been sent to a hospital and police were conducting raids to arrest the accused, the OC added. Her family alleged that some local influential people were pressurising them to go for a settlement.

Meanwhile in Dinajpur, a court sent two persons to jail over two separate rape incidents at Ghoraghat upazila yesterday.

Ghoraghat Police said

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## When CCC is the problem

City corporation's establishment on Chaktai canal still not demolished

SIFAYET ULLAH, *Ctg*

In 2000, Chattogram City Corporation constructed a four-storey building in the middle of Chaktai canal, one of the key drainage channels of the port city, without clearance from Chattogram Development Authority (CDA).

For the last two decades, the building has been clogging the drainage system and causing thousands of residents to suffer during the monsoon.

On March 16 this year, the High Court directed the government to evict all the structures built illegally on Chaktai canal within 90 days and ordered to take necessary action against the grabbers.

The HC bench delivered the verdict following a petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh in 2016.

Chattogram's deputy commissioner has submitted a report to the HC in this regard. This correspondent was able to obtain a copy of the report, according to which, there are 48 illegal structures, including the



Chattogram City Corporation constructed this building on Chaktai canal's land in 2000 without approval from the development authority. Currently, 47 other illegal structures also occupy the land.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

**“We issued a notice to the city corporation to demolish the building in 2016. However, the CCC is a government agency, so the CDA has a problem evicting the building. We have asked the agency concerned, including the DC office to demolish this building.”**

SHAHINUL ISLAM  
Chief town planner of CDA

city corporation establishment, residential flats, tin sheds, business establishments and warehouses, have been built on around 20,000 square feet of the canal, chocking the waterway.

The CCC building spans 793 square feet and is used as the revenue office of circle-2. The 6.9km long Chaktai, starting

from the Bahaddarhat point of the city and spanning to the Karnaphuli river, has shrivelled up noticeably due to the rampant encroachment over the years. According to the RS survey, the width of the canal used to be about 65 feet, while the BS survey mentioned it to be 61 feet.

However, according to the DC office report, only 10 to 30 feet can be seen now.

During a recent visit to Bahaddarhat, this correspondent found the drainage system in shambles with the canal narrowing every day.

“The canal used to be huge back in the 90s. Boats loaded with goods could ply it,” said Md Alauddin, who has been running a grocery business in the area for 42 years.

CCC, on the other hand, claimed it had spent Tk 6.7 crore for dredging the canal in the last three years.

However, the canal – flowing through Bahaddarhat, Shulokbahar, Chawkbazar, and Bakalia – overflows and inundates the adjoining localities during the monsoon and high tide. These areas remain waterlogged almost all the time.

Shahinul Islam, chief town planner of CDA, said CCC constructed the building without any clearance. “We issued a notice to the city corporation to demolish the building in 2016. However, the CCC is a government agency, so the CDA has a problem evicting the building. We have asked the agency concerned, including the DC office to demolish this building,” said the chief town planner.

Contacted, CCC chief engineer Rafiqul Islam said they are working to increase the canal's depth. “We don't know anything about the CCC establishment on the canal. Also, we have not received any notice. If any such CCC establishment is found to have occupied the canal, it will also be demolished,” he said.

Delwar Mazumder, convener of the Planned Chattogram Forum (PCM), said “It was CCC's responsibility to protect the canal but they occupied it instead.”

“We are working on the HC order. Illegal structures from Chaktai canal will be evicted very soon,” said Chattogram DC Md Mominur Rahman.

## DREDGING OF 7 CANALS BCC, WDB at loggerheads

SUSHANTA GHOSH, *Barishal*

A conflict has arisen between two government agencies over re-excavation of seven important canals flowing through Barishal city, postponing the work.

Barishal City Corporation (BCC) undertook a major project worth Tk 2,600 crore in 2019 to re-excavate and beautify 46 canals, and build walkways on their banks.

BCC sources said the project is still awaiting approval from the Planning Commission.

Meantime, Water Development Board, on April 12, invited tender for re-excavation of seven canals worth around Tk 7 crore. The tender process has recently been completed.

WDB Executive Engineer in Barishal Dipak Ranjan Das said they took the project considering people's suffering.



In the middle of it, BCC sent a letter to the IGRD ministry objecting to WDB's move, said the official. Thus, the process for re-excavating the seven canals has been halted, he added.

The seven canals – Sagardi, Chandmari, Bhatar, Jail, Amanatganj, Palashpur and Rupatali – are dying due to lack of proper maintenance for the last few years.

Once goods were transported through these canals. Now these have become too narrow to use, said Haran, a trader in Chawk Bazar area.

Shekhar Das from the city's Jail canal area echoed him.

Rafiqul Alam, divisional coordinator of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa), said, “We think this problem will be resolved if BCC and

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## Country's first police museum inaugurated

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Lalmonirhat*

The country's first police museum – “Bangladesh Police Museum” was inaugurated at Hatibandha thana premises in Lalmonirhat yesterday.

Inspector General of Bangladesh Police IGP Benazir Ahmed inaugurated the museum.

The museum will carry the history and tradition of the police force. Various memorabilia and information of the police force will be featured at the museum, said the IGP. There will be seven galleries in the museum.

Of the seven, the first gallery will feature the origins and evolution of policing in the region starting from the Sultanate and Mughal periods, the

British era, all the way up to the Indian subcontinent ahead of partition.

According to police, the building was constructed in 1916 during the British rule, it was initially used as a police station. It was abandoned currently and a new police station was built next to it.

However, Lalmonirhat police later decided to turn it into a police museum, rather than demolishing the building.

This was done under the supervision of Abida Sultana, Lalmonirhat's superintendent of police, who has now been promoted to additional DIG.

Rangpur divisional officers of police and administration were present at the time of the inauguration.



A sergeant checks the papers of a motorbike at Amtala intersection of Barishal city. With vigilance at an all-time high ahead of the inauguration of Padma Bridge, officers of Barishal Metropolitan Police set up check-posts at different points of roads. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## Two killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least two people were killed in road accidents in Panchagarh and Dinajpur yesterday.

In Panchagarh, Jahera Khatun (50) was killed after an easy bike hit her while she was crossing a road in Tentulia upazila, said OC Jaherul Islam of Tentulia Police Station. She was declared dead at the local health complex. A case was filed.

In Dinajpur, a motorcyclist was killed on the spot after a truck hit him in Phulbari upazila town. The deceased is Shahidul Islam (55).

Shahidul was going to Phulbari on his bike. As he arrived at Nimtola, a speeding truck hit him around 1:30pm. Police seized the truck but the driver fled the scene, said OC Ashrafur Islam of Phulbari Police Station.