



CRAVING SHUTKI? Just head to Asadganj market!

NAIMUR RAHMAN

If there's one thing that can be said for certain about the residents of Chattogram, it's that they love "shutki" or as they'd like to call it, "funi".

While some might like to call shutki an acquired taste, for people living in Chattogram and shutki enthusiasts in the country, a warm plate of rice and some spicy shutki is all they want to eat for three meals.

This is why Asadganj dry-fish market, one of the biggest wholesale trading sites for dried fish, has been around for centuries in the port city. Some might even say that the city wouldn't be the same without it.

Almost 50 stockists and more than 260 wholesalers are involved in this trading hub.

What makes this hub so popular, especially among outsiders, is the diversity of dried fish traders have in stock. More than 40 kinds of dried fish are brought here from Cox's Bazar, Saint Martin's Island, Rangbali, Sonadia, Kutubdia, Teknaf, Banskhali, Anowara and Maheshkhali. Churri, loitta, icha (shrimp), lakkha, poa, salmon, rupchanda, painsha, kata, hilsha, salmon, moilla -- you name your preference, they have it.

Balachao -- a savory dry fish snack prepared with fried onions and spices -- is also widely available here. However, their prices are as high as their demand.



"People from all over the country come here to get the best dried fishes. One can get a kilo to tonnes of 'funi' from here," said Monsur Miah, a wholesale trader at the market.

Winter is the season when the market thrives.

Just to give an idea, each kilo of shrimp shutki here goes for Tk 600 to 1,700, loitta for Tk 300 to 800, churi costs Tk 1,000 to 1,500, while rupchanda goes for Tk 4,000.

As glorious as it sounds, the market also has its fair share of challenges.

Abu Naser, president of Asadganj Shutki Traders Association, said a huge portion of the market's dried fish is directly exported to the UK, US and middle-eastern countries.

"Although there's a huge demand for dried fish, local production can only meet 25-30 percent of that demand. The government has

to support us with incentives to meet this demand," he said.

Besides, other issues that this trade is facing are -- over-fishing, robbery and the lack of facilities to allow the spawning of marine fish; issues that the government also needs to address to keep this trade alive, he added.

"This market earns a large deal of foreign currency, that not only benefits our economy, but also allows thousands of traders and fishermen to earn a living," said Abu Naser.

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Good news for medical students

FCPS course to start
in CMC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has authorised Chattogram Medical College (CMC) to open a Fellow of the College of Physicians and Surgeons (FCPS) course, which would greatly benefit local medical students.

A gazette notification from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been issued on August 17 in this regard, said CMC officials.

The FCPS course's July 2022 session will start from this month, said CMC sources.

Earlier, Chattogram's medical students had to go to Dhaka to pursue FCPS, said Dr

Faisal Iqbal Chowdhury, general secretary of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), Chattogram Chapter.

BMA Chattogram Chapter President Prof Dr Mujibul Haque Khan, said, "Before, many brilliant students who had family issues didn't want to go to Dhaka to pursue their FCPS course, while others were discouraged to go due to lack of accommodation and not being able to take a long leave from the job to complete the course."

Contacted, CMC Principal Prof Dr Shahena Akter said the government has given permission for starting course on four subjects -- medicine, surgery, paediatrics, and obstetrics and gynaecology.

"In each session we can admit 10 students, five government job holders and five private, for each subject," she said. It's a huge achievement for CMC as it created a scope to build quality medical professionals for the country, she added.

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PROF MUJIBUL HAQUE KHAN
BMA President, Ctg Chapter



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president
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Sudden diarrhoea outbreak in port city IEDCR conducting study to find out reason

ARUN BIKASH DEY

Many residents in certain areas of the port city have been suffering from diarrhoea for a week. A good number of those affected have been admitted to hospitals due to deteriorating health conditions.

According to sources in Chattogram Civil Surgeon office, most of the patients are from Halihsahar, Patenga, EPZ and North Agrabad areas, mostly getting admitted to Bangladesh Institute of Tropical and Infectious Diseases (BITID) in Fouzdarhat.

BITID sources said around 50 such patients have been coming to the hospital on average every day since August 15.

Shahed Iqbal, a Halihsahar resident, brought his 12-year-old daughter to BITID on Sunday. Asked, he said his family has been using Wasa's supply water for many years.

"My entire family got infected and my daughter has not recovered yet," he said.

Contacted, Maqsd Alam, chief engineer of Chattogram Wasa, said they tested the Wasa pipeline in the mentioned areas after being informed of the diarrhoea outbreak and found no leak.

Dr Mamun-ur-Rashid, associate professor and head of epidemiology at BITID, said usually 20 to 25 diarrhoea patients get admitted to BITID every day but the number has doubled since August 15.

"We got a total of 334 patients. We have tested the samples from 81 patients and found cholera germs [vibrio cholerae]," he said.

He also mentioned that according to their case history, most patients live in low-lying areas where tidal water submerges the vicinities almost every day.

Contacted, Dr Ilias Chowdhury, Chattogram civil surgeon, said a seven-member team from Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) has arrived in Chattogram on Sunday to collect samples from the diarrhoea-prone areas.

According to their case history, most patients live in low-lying areas where tidal water submerges the vicinities almost every day.

"The civil surgeon or Chattogram divisional director of Directorate General of Health Services can be the spokesperson regarding the issue," said Dr Sonam Barua, a member of IEDCR team, after informing that the sample collection process has already started.

Dr Md Shakhawat Ullah, deputy director of Chattogram DGHS, said the IEDCR team has started working, and it would require more time to comment on the study.

Port city finally getting central sewerage system

SIFAYET ULLAH

Work for Package-1 of Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) of Chattogram Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (CWasa) has started with an aim to create a pollution-free city for residents.

CWasa has divided the STP project into six packages. However, the organisation has been able to start work for only one package so far, 60 years after CWasa's establishment.

Ariful Islam, superintendent engineer of CWasa and project director, said the base construction for the treatment plant, covering CWasa's 163-acre land in Halihsahar's sea coast area, is ongoing. Piling work will also start soon for laying the 200-km pipeline under the packages.

CWasa is working with South Korean company TAEYOUNG Engineering and Construction Limited to implement STP Package-1 at a cost of Tk 2,627.93 crore, said CWasa officials.

"There will be no need for septic tanks in any city building, as all household waste will be directly dumped into the sewerage treatment plants after the project's

There will be no need for septic tanks in any city building, as all household waste will be directly dumped into the sewerage treatment plants after the project's completion in 2025.

completion in 2025," added Ariful. "At present, septic tank waste of almost 60 lakh people is being dumped into the Karnaphuli and Halda river through the



The allocated land for the Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) of Chattogram Water Supply and Sewerage Authority.

city's drains and canals -- contaminating the environment," he said.

Through Package-1, out of 41 wards, 2 million urban dwellers of 11 wards will be brought under the sewerage system, said the CWasa project director.

"However, due to unplanned urbanisation and narrow roads, STP pipelines can't be laid in 30 percent of city areas, so these areas will be out of the sewerage system. Waste will be collected from those areas separately," he said.

Since its inception in 1963, CWasa didn't take any initiative to solve the sewerage

problem. Chittagong Municipality, which began its journey with formation of Chittagong Municipal Committee, in 1863 introduced the city's drainage system, but didn't take steps for removing sewage.

Currently, Chattogram City Corporation collects garbage from households and dumps those in Munir Nagar and Jalalabad dumping grounds.

According to sources at Wasa, the sewerage project (Package-1) of Chattogram metropolis was approved by the Ecneec at the end of 2018.