

Stop illegal construction on Karnaphuli banks

River commission chief directs authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The authorities concerned have been asked to immediately stop all the illegal construction works on the bank of Karnaphuli river in Chattogram.

National River Conservation Commission (NRCC) Chairman Dr Manjur A Chowdhury yesterday also directed the authorities to submit a report after complying with the order within a week.

He said various organisations – including Karnaphuli Drydock – are illegally constructing structures on the riverbanks.

“We will form an expert team on these issues. That team will determine how the riverbed will be reclaimed,” he said.

“The Fisherghat of the port city was built on the river land. Many other structures, including ice mills, have been built there,” he added.

He said about 95 percent of the country’s export-import is implemented through the port on the banks of the Karnaphuli. The economy will suffer if the encroached areas are not freed, he added.

Karnaphuli Drydock is constructing a terminal and a jetty on the riverbank on 30 acres of land purchased from private ownership and leased from Chattogram Port Authority and the Ministry of Land in Badlapur Mouza of Anwara.

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When croplands get submerged during high tide, rural women like Afroja Begum use the situation to their advantage and net local fish. This photo was taken from Khulna’s Dacope upazila recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Chattogram city AL goes to council

December 18

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The council of Chattogram city unit of Awami League will be held on December 18.

AL central organising secretary (Chattogram division) Abu Sayed Al Mahmud Swapan announced the date yesterday.

He was addressing a meeting jointly organised by Chattogram city, and north and south district units of AL at a convention centre in the city, as the chief guest.

The meeting was held to make the party’s December 4 rally at Polo Ground a success.

“It would be the first public rally in the post-pandemic situation where the prime minister would be present,” Altf Hossain Chowdhury, vice president of Chattogram city unit AL, told The Daily Star.

‘Letting a criminal go in exchange for money’

Pabna ASI closed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

An arrest warrant was issued against one Jamat Ali of Pabna’s Sardarpara village following charges of fraud. But rather than arresting the accused, Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police Jahid Hasan of Vangura Police Station, picked up Ali from his home, took him to a secret location and demanded Tk 1.5 lakh from his family, according to family members.

The ASI was closed to the Pabna Police Lines on Tuesday, after Ali’s wife filed a written complaint against him.

Officer-in-Charge of Vangura Police Station Rashidul Islam said, “Jamat Ali has an arrest warrant against him. He hasn’t been held yet. What’s worse are the allegations of demanding money in exchange for letting him go.”

The accused ASI has been closed as per the direction of district police, the OC added.

Contacted, Md Masud Alom, additional superintendent of Pabna police said, “Departmental enquiry is ongoing in this regard. If the police official is found guilty, we will take departmental action against him after a probe report.”

45 lakh children at risk

Speakers tell climate conference

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Climate change is disrupting the overall development of children by putting their health, nutrition, and education at risk during cyclone or other disasters, said speakers at a conference in Khulna yesterday.

The 2nd Coastal Children’s Climate Conference was held at the office of Caritas Bangladesh in the city.

It was organised by

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Six years without classrooms or labs

The plight of HSTU mechanical engineering students

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

Academic works of the mechanical engineering department at Hajeer Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University (HSTU) in Dinajpur are being hampered due to the absence of permanent classrooms and laboratory facilities.

The department, which currently has 250 students, has a dearth of teachers as well.

According to students and officials of the university, the authorities opened the department in 2016.

However, the department did not have a permanent classroom and lab facilities from the very beginning.

Demanding a permanent classroom and lab facilities for the department, the students have been agitating since October 24 on campus.

However, they are yet to get any assurance from the authorities.

The class of 2016 has graduated from the department amid all such inconveniences, while the class of 2017 expects to do the same.

Students of the 2018 and 2019 batches told this correspondent that their classes are held in a room at the academic building, which often remained occupied by students of other departments.

“It’s hard to maintain the class schedule. We need to wait for hours to avail of the classrooms,” said a student, wishing anonymity.

Most students said their classes are only held if a room is found empty at the building.

However, if a classroom was found empty on the fifth floor, teachers are often reluctant to go there due to their physical condition.

Students also reported that they have had no practical classes due to the shortage of room and equipment, despite being an engineering department.

“I would not get admitted here if I knew of such a condition,” said another student.

However, the suffering of the students does not end here.

The department needs at least 15 teachers but has



only seven.

Of them, two teachers are on study leave abroad for their PhD degrees.

The situation was worse a couple of years ago when the department had only 2 teachers for teaching 250 students of 5 batches.

“Students of a university cannot continue their studies in this way. We want a solution to the problem. We urge the authorities to take initiative to provide us with lab facilities at other nearest universities,” many of them told this correspondent.

However, many of the students also reported that teachers of the department have not agreed to their proposals.

“We proposed the authorities locate a room at the newly constructed 10-storey building at the campus. But we are yet to get any reassurance over the matter,” said the students.

HSTU Proctor Prof Harunur Rashid said the mechanical engineering department was opened in 2016 and the university’s vice chancellor (VC) is cordial enough to solve the issues raised by students.

“We will soon provide the students with classroom and lab facilities,” he said.

The proctor also said some apparatus have been purchased and others will be bought soon.

Contacted, Prof M Kamruzzaman, vice chancellor of Hajeer Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University, told this correspondent that the

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Four killed, 12 hurt as bus, covered-van collide in Feni

Three die in other road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least seven people were killed in road accidents in three districts yesterday, according to reports from our correspondents.

In Feni, four people were killed and 12 injured as a bus and covered-van collided head-on on Dhaka-Chattogram highway in Sadar upazila, said law enforcers.

Among the deceased, Forkan (50) from Pirojpur, Riazuddin from Lakshimpur and an unidentified person were the passengers of the Dhaka-bound bus of Unique Paribahan while Md Nazmul from Cumilla was the covered-van driver, said police.

In Jhenidah, Jamal Hossain (35) was killed and two others were injured in a collision between two trucks on Jhenidah-Kushthia highway in Shoilakupa upazila.

Meanwhile, Bappi Sheikh (25) died as his motorbike hit a tree beside Jhenidah-Harinakundu road in the district.

In Pabna, Nantu Biswas (30), a worker at Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, was killed as a truck ran him over in Pakshi area under Ishwardi upazila, said police.

Nantu was going to work on a motorcycle, Officer-in-Charge Ashish Kumar Sanyal of Pakshi Highway Police Station told The Daily Star.

Ensure patients’ access to oxygen

Say speakers on saving lives from hypoxemia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ensuring access to medical oxygen can save lives of many patients, especially children, suffering from hypoxemia, experts at an event said yesterday.

In Bangladesh, about 42 percent of children who visit the secondary hospital with pneumonia suffer from hypoxemia – a severe health condition due to the below-normal level of oxygen in blood.

In this context, the overall availability of oxygen therapy in Bangladesh should be improved, where low-cost innovations can supplement health systems and address medical oxygen security, they said at the discussion with health reporters at the International Center for Diarrhoeal Disease and Research (icddr,b) in the capital.

The event was jointly organised by icddr,b and Data for Impact, a data driven initiative of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and was supported by the United States Agency for International Development.

Experts at the event noted that around 73 million people suffer from hypoxemia each year in

Hypoxemia can happen due to a range of medical conditions, largely due to respiratory distress caused by pneumonia, malaria, sepsis, tuberculosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart disease, and asthma, among others.

the world, of which 32 million are children.

Dr Ahmed Ehsanur Rahman, associate scientist, Maternal and Child Health Division at icddr,b, said anyone suffering from hypoxemia requires oxygen as a medical therapy.

“Hypoxemia can happen due to a range of medical conditions, largely due to respiratory distress caused by pneumonia, malaria, sepsis, tuberculosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart disease, and asthma, among others.”

According to the Bangladesh Health Facility Survey 2017, less than one fourth of health facilities have any of the three oxygen systems – compressed gas system, portable oxygen

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A festival of harmony

Rash mela concludes

MINTU DESHWARA

Love was in the air at the Manipuri villages of Madhabpur and Adampur in Moulvibazar’s Kamalganj upazila as Rash Mela, the biggest religious celebration of the community, concluded with due fervor and festivities yesterday.

At least one lakh people, if not more, attended the celebrations irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Even foreigners visited these Manipuri villages yesterday to participate in this festival of love.

The festival is held annually during Purnima (full moon), between the Bangla months of late Kartik and early Agrahayan.

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BCL leader ‘beats up’ DU student

DU CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka University student was allegedly beaten up by a Chhatra League leader at Bijoy Ekattor Hall on Tuesday night.

A written complaint has been submitted to the hall authority and the proctor’s office yesterday in this regard.

The accused is Monaf Pranto, a history major and member of the BCL Bijoy Ekattor Hall unit. Monaf is also a follower of Abu Yunus, general secretary of the unit.

The injured student is Rasel Mahmud, a Bangla major at the university. The victim and accused were roommates at Bijoy Ekattor Hall.

According to the complaint, Pranto forced Rasel out of the room on Tuesday night. When Rasel protested, Pranto launched an attack on him with an iron rod.

Rasel has been given primary treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital and is currently at the Dhaka University Medical Centre.

Contacted, Pranto denied the allegation. “Rasel is my friend. We had an argument but I did not attack him. I cannot tell how he has been injured,” Pranto told this correspondent.

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Manipuri girls perform traditional dance on the occasion of Rash mela, the biggest festival of the community. This photo was taken in Moulvibazar yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR