



UNEARTHING 8TH CENTURY Buddhist vihar in Ctg

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

Ruins of an ancient settlement, likely that of a renowned Buddhist vihar (educational institution), has been excavated in Biswamura area of Chattogram's Karnaphuli upazila recently.

A team of the Department of Archeology found some brick-made walls and concrete floors beneath the earth after digging a chunk of Deyang hill in the area.

"The findings show that the area was inhabited dating back to between the 8th and 12th century," said AKM Saifur Rahman, regional director of the archeology department in Chattogram.

"These bricks are similar to those found in Mahasthangarh, one of the archaeological sites in Bangladesh, in Shibganj upazila of Bogura," he added.

During a recent visit to the spot, this correspondent observed that workers, under the supervision of two archaeologists, are digging to unearth the ancient structures.

"We have found some brick-made walls and concrete floors that are mostly intact," said Niaz Makhdom, a research assistant of the archeology department.

"According to history, there used to be a renowned Buddhist educational institution named Pandit Vihar there in the 8th century," Dr Jinabodhi Bhikkhu, a researcher and professor of Chittagong University.

The institution was one of the four



prestigious universities and Buddhist monasteries of ancient India.

"The vihar was also rich with various invaluable artefacts from the Pala Dynasty," Prof Jinabodhi also said, quoting a writing on Bangladesh's Buddhist artefacts (from 4th to 12th century) of Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, published in 1999.

"The artefacts are preserved in various museums around the country, which all were found from Deyang hill in Chattogram's Anwara upazila many years ago," he said.

"The structure of the vihar could be found if the area can be excavated and studied properly," he claimed.

Faruk Chowdhury, chairman of Karnaphuli upazila parishad, said, "We are helping them with all our heart, as they are finding out about our rich history."

Meanwhile, the team is preparing a report based on the findings for submission to the higher authority.

In a survey last year, the archeology

department found evidence of ancient structures in the area. Following this, a team of the department, including 10 trained professionals, began excavation on September 16.

The first phase of the excavation activity will end by this October, said AKM Saifur Rahman.

"After research of the existing materials, we will decide our future plan on this site," he added.

According to a research article, titled "Pandit Vihar: The Old University of Chittagong", the institution was destroyed by shelling during the time of a battle when northern Chittagong came under Mughal reign in 1666. Over the years, extreme weather events gradually turned the site into ruins.

Dharmapala, the second king of Pala period in the 8th century, established 50 monasteries including the Pandit Vihar, according to the article.

Parliament goes into session tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Sangsad is set to go into session on Sunday, which is likely to be the last session of the current parliament ahead of the next general election.

The session will begin at 4:00pm.

On October 5, President Mohammed Shahabuddin summoned the 25th session of the 11th parliament, exercising the power bestowed upon him as per the Clause (1) of Article 72 of the constitution.

On September 14, the 24th session of the current parliament was prorogued after nine sittings.

The 11th Parliament is going to fulfill its five-year term on January 29, 2024 as it went into the first session on January 30, 2019.

So, the next general election will have to be held within 90 days of January 29, 2024 in the case of the dissolution of parliament by reason of the expiration of its term, as per the article 123 of constitution.

'Will not spare rumour mongers' Says home minister ahead of Durga Puja

UNB, Dhaka

Home Minister Md Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal yesterday warned that those who are spreading rumours in cyberspace over the Durga Puja would not be spared.

He said this to journalists after exchanging greetings at Dhakeshwari Temple in Old Dhaka on the occasion of the Durga Puja, the largest religious festival of the Hindu community.

The minister said a cyber unit initiated by the police is now actively identifying the rumour mongers.

PM to open Bar Council building today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The newly constructed 15-storey building for Bangladesh Bar Council, the licencing and regulatory body of lawyers, will be inaugurated today.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the office building, constructed near the Supreme Court through a project costing Tk 138 crore.

After the inauguration, the PM will attend a gathering of lawyers organised by Bangladesh Bangabandhu Awami Ainjibi at Suhrawardy Udyan.

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Anisul Huq will preside over the event, attended by Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader.

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As the dawn breaks, fishers set off to the Changerkhal river in Sylhet Sadar with their hooks and nets. After spending hours in the waters, they return ashore with their daily catch and sell those at local markets. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Transport crisis grips Ctg cops

District police relying on requisitioned vehicles for official duties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Chattogram district police has been facing a transport crisis severely, often being compelled to requisite private transports for running operational activities.

Seeking anonymity, officers-in-charge of several police stations said they have no option but to requisite buses, microbuses, CNG-run auto-rickshaws, or other passenger carriers to meet their transport requirement.

At present, 37 double-cabin and five single-cabin pick-up vans are being used by the Chattogram district police force, for nearly 3,000 police personnel under 17 police stations, 10 investigation centres, eight police outposts, and one permanent police camp under 15 upazilas.

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The operational works include patrol duties, drives, investigation, escort duties, and VIP protocols.

Most of the vans are in a deplorable condition and need urgent repairs. Amid the scenario, police are resorting to requisitioned

vehicles to send arrested criminals to the court, which poses a security threat.

The officials said ahead of the upcoming election time, the demand for police transport will rise, forcing them to use public transport for discharging duties.

Sometimes, they face untoward situations regarding vehicle requisition, said district traffic inspectors.

"In the rural area, three-wheelers or CNG-run auto-rickshaws are being requisitioned for night rounds, although carrying firearms in local transport is often unsafe," said an OC of a police station.

For requisition of vehicles, police bear the fuel cost and food expense for the driver.

OC Mirza Mohammad Hasan

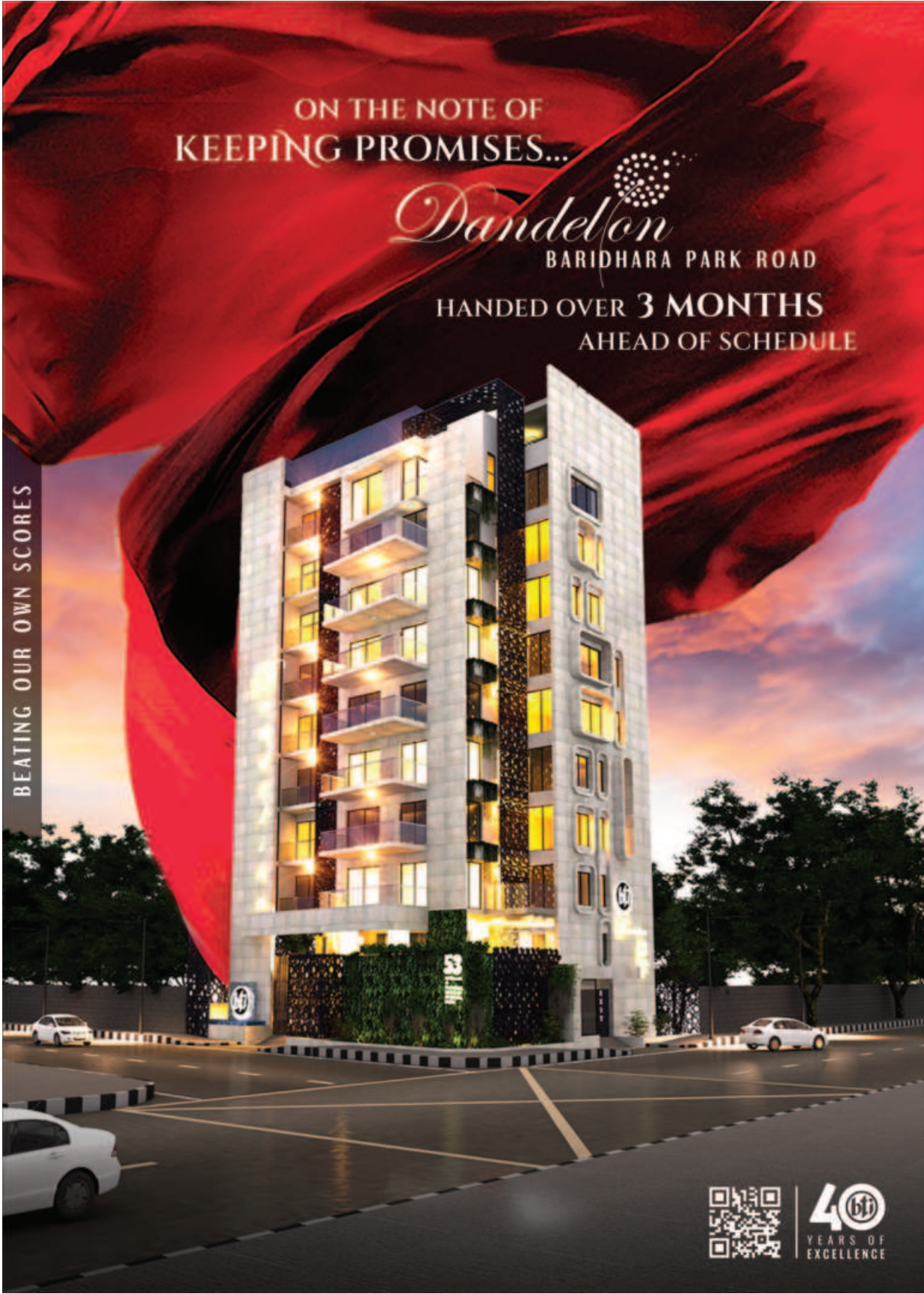
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ON THE NOTE OF
KEEPING PROMISES...

Dandelion

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AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

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