

# Illegal housing mushrooms

## 153 projects running without KDA, DoE approval

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

As many as 153 housing projects have sprung up illegally in Khulna and its adjoining areas without approval from the city's development authority and the Department of Environment.

These developments are primarily in Dumuria, Batiaghata, Rupsha, and Phultala, where government khas lands, waterbodies, arable lands, and tidal floodplains are being encroached upon, aided by the inaction of the authorities.

Agricultural lands are being filled with sand for these projects, notably in Koiya Bazar, Jolma, Zero Point, Labonchhara, and Horintana. Experts warn these areas are crucial tidal floodplains.

In 2007, Khulna City Corporation proposed extending its boundary by 40.10 sq km from the existing 45.65 sq km. Since then, unplanned constructions have proliferated in these areas. Mentionable, the areas are under the jurisdiction of Khulna Development Authority.

"If unplanned housing continues, the city corporation will struggle with waste management, street lighting, roads development, and other services. Residents will suffer, and the areas will turn into

concrete slums," said Abirul Jabbar, KCC's chief planning officer.

Several housing companies are defying the Land Development Rules, 2004 (amended in 2012 and 2015). The KDA's master plan spans 824 sq km, covering areas from Jashore's Noapara municipality in the north to Bagerhat's Fakirhat upazila in the south.

Any development within this area requires KDA approval.

Biswas Properties, Khulna's largest housing project, lacks KDA approval. The project, which has sold 4,000 plots, features narrow roads and no playgrounds or school compounds, despite these being advertised.

"We have applied for project registration with KDA," said Asgar Biswas Tara, owner of Biswas Properties. "It is impossible for any housing project to fully comply with KDA's rules given Khulna's context," he said.

Other projects, including Ujan Nibash, Bismillah, Tanisha Residential Projects, Arafat Housing, Shikder Residential Projects, and Golden City, also lack KDA approval. Yet, they continue to sell plots.

More than 30,000 plot owners are

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PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

As many as 153 illegal housing projects have sprung up in Khulna city and adjacent areas at the cost of arable land, waterbodies, and tidal floodplains.

## The living 'dead'

### Mystery death certificates strip four disabled citizens of allowances

MINTU DESHWARA, *Moulvibazar*

Md Enamul Haque, a living and breathing individual, has recently discovered a shocking truth.

According to the local social service office, he's been dead for nearly three years!

Enamul, a physically challenged individual of Goalbari union under Moulvibazar's Juri upazila, has been receiving disability allowance since 2018.

But the payment suddenly stopped towards the end of 2023. So he recently visited the social service office with his allowance card in hand to learn the reason.

"You have been dead for three years," an official told Enamul. The official records showed Enamul breathed his last in April 2021.

The cause of this celestial confusion? A death certificate, signed by the Goalbari Union Parishad Chairman Md Abdul Qayyum and Member Zainal Abedin, declaring Enamul deceased.

Meanwhile, he has not received his monthly allowances since 2023. "I am

a person with disability. I need the money to survive," he told this correspondent recently.

Enamul is not the only soul in the union experiencing "afterlife" while being very much alive.

Shaira Begum, Sharijun Nesha and Anjali Rani Deb of the union have also been removed from the disability allowance list thanks to a mysterious update in October last year. The three were shown dead in July 2021.

The four now find themselves in the strange predicament of having to prove they are still alive to a system that is already convinced of their demise.

Unless new paperwork declares their resurrection, these four individuals of Goalbari union won't receive their rightful allowances.

Contacted, UP Chairman Abdul Qayyum said, "We were asked to issue death certificates for the mentioned individuals by the upazila social service office, so we did. Later, I found out that these people are alive, and new certificates have been requested to include them in

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Enamul Haque

## Digitalisation push to cost CWasa Tk 200cr

### Installed a few years ago, 90,000 meters worth Tk 27cr to be replaced; experts, residents skeptical

SIFAYET ULLAH, *Ctg*

The Chattogram Water Supply and Sewerage authority purchased and installed 90,000 water meters at a cost of around Tk 27 crore between 2018 and 2022 to collect bills from consumers properly.

However, CWasa recently sent a development project proposal to buy 90,000 digital meters at an estimated cost of Tk 200 crore to replace the existing meters, aiming for digitalisation and upgrading of the existing billing process.

This DPP is now with the Planning Division to be sent to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council for approval.

"If government approves the project, we will purchase these digital meters," said Maksudul Alam, chief engineer of CWasa.

The state agency earlier bought the existing meters in two phases -- 50,000 in 2018-19 at a cost of Tk 10.39 crore and 40,000 more between 2020-22 at a cost of around Tk 16.50 crore, according to documents.

As such, the agency's expenditure of around Tk 27 crore to purchase and install these meters will become nothing but a waste of public money, said experts and consumers.

Muhammad Rashidul Hasan, head of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology, questioned why CWasa had installed these meters earlier without doing the necessary study.

If CWasa installs digital meters without using service life of the existing mechanical meters, it will be a sheer waste of public money, he said.

Rokeya Begum, a resident of Mokbul Ahmed Society in the port city's Patenga area, alleged

that CWasa has been continuously collecting money from us, citing improvements in service including pipeline renovation, and meter change, all while not supplying water properly.

"First supply us water regularly, then think about installing digital meters," she added.

Asked why CWasa bought analogue meters instead of digital ones earlier, Maksudul Alam claimed that digital meters were not popular in the country at that time.

**CWasa has been continuously collecting money from us, citing improvements in service including pipeline renovation, and meter change, all while not supplying water properly. First supply us water regularly, then think about installing digital meters.**

ROKEYA BEGUM, a resident of Patenga

SM Nazer Hossain, vice president of Consumers Association of Bangladesh, termed the CWasa's initiative a waste of money in the name of digitalisation.

"The consumer has to bear the cost of installing digital meters. The state agency's officials took commission from meter supplying companies," he alleged.

The government should take action against those responsible for such unplanned activities, he added.

## CMC, CRB see 5hr power cut over outstanding bills

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

The authorities of Power Development Board, Chattogram yesterday morning snapped the power connection of Chittagong Medical College and Central Railway Building, the headquarters of Eastern Railway, over outstanding bills.

The power supply to these two institutions remained disconnected for around five hours from 10:00am before it was resumed around 3:00pm.

According to CMC sources, PDB staffers snapped its power connection around 10:00am, adding that the power supply to the hospital, however, was not disconnected.

According to PDB officials, Eastern Railway and CMC have outstanding bills of Tk 1.58 crore and Tk 1.29 crore respectively.

There are two connections on CMC campus, one for the college and the other for the hospital. We disconnected the power connection of CMC's academic building as they did not pay bills for six months despite repeated notices, said Humayun Kabir, chief engineer of PDB, Chattogram.

"However, we did not disconnect the hospital's power supply for the sake of patients," he also said.

"The authorities of Eastern Railway and CMC in separate letters assured us to pay their outstanding

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A student studying amid power cut at Chittagong Medical College.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## REMAL'S AFTERMATH

# 400km rural roads damaged in Bagerhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bagerhat*

The Cyclone Remal in its trail of destruction left 400 kilometres of rural roads significantly damaged in Bagerhat.

At least 120 other structures, including bridges and culverts, also sustained damages.

The damage is estimated to be worth around Tk 150 crore, according to Local Government Engineering Department in Bagerhat.

While urgent repairs are needed to the damaged roads, bridges and culverts, there has not been any steps taken to this end, leaving the residents amid immense sufferings.

Visiting different areas in Morrelganj, Sharankhola, Mongla, Rampal and Sadar upazilas, this correspondent observed that the tidal surge under influence of the cyclone had washed away bitumen from paved roads and bricks and soil from unpaved ones, rendering those unusable for vehicular movement as well as for pedestrians at many places.

The damaged bridges and culverts further added to the woes. At many places, locals resorted to constructing makeshift bamboo



bridges for movement.

The main road in Ghoshiakhali area of Baharbania union in Morrelganj upazila has been found broken in several places, with bricks and soiling washed away into nearby waterbodies.


"It has already been a month since the disaster and no step has been taken to repair the damaged road," said Sattar Sheikh of Ghoshiakhali area.

Ruhul Amin from Khaulia village echoed him.


Contacted, Md Sharifuzzaman, executive engineer of LGED in Bagerhat, said they have assessed the extent of damage to the roads and other infrastructures sustained in the cyclone.

Morrelganj upazila has been the most affected, he said.


"We have started repairing some rural unpaved roads temporarily with soil. Major repairs to the damaged roads and other infrastructures will begin once new budget allocation comes in this regard," he added.



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স্বাক্ষর  
Bangladesh



**Cumilla City Corporation**  
Cumilla  
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শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি  
গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

Memo no.46.17.19.50.024.00.36.2022.1895

Date: 24/06/2024

**Tender Notice No. 14/2023-2024**

e-Tender is invited in the National e-gp system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the

Sl. No	Tender ID Number	Method of Tender	Tender Documents Last Selling Date	Tender Closing Date & Time
1.	999817 999818 999819 999820 999821	OTM	24-Jul-2024 17:00	25-July-2024 12:00

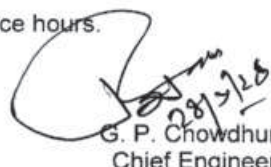
This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited on line through any registered banks branches up to 17.00 PM on 24.07.2024.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and also from E-mail : [se@cocc.gov.bd](mailto:se@cocc.gov.bd) Or Call to +88028165714

Interested persons can communicate with the undersigned during office hours.



G. P. Chowdhury  
Chief Engineer  
Cumilla City Corporation

GD- 1028