



Persistent waterlogging in Chattogram highlights the city's struggle with uncleaned drains, amid political unrest and heavy rains, leaving residents in knee-deep water and disrupting daily commutes. PHOTO: COLLECTED

SUSPENSION OF CCC ACTIVITIES

Chattogram's waterlogging worsens

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Multiple areas in Chattogram city have been facing waterlogging as regular drain clearing activities have been suspended for much of the last one month.

Most activities of the Chattogram City Corporation have been on hold due to the unrest that started with the quota protests over a month ago.

Following the ousting of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her Awami League government, the situation has been improving gradually, and the city corporation initiated a crash programme to clean the major canals in the port city, targeting two canals each day.

The programme started with drives at Chawkbazar and Shulakbarah on Sunday, while cleaning of drains in Katalganj and Sholashahar Gate-2 was scheduled for Monday.

Visiting the areas yesterday morning, this correspondent did not find any workers at the

mentioned spots.

"The CCC conservatory department was supposed to clean drains in our area today. However, no one arrived here since morning," said Abdur Rahaman, a resident of Katalganj.

Overnight rain inundated the area as the drains, not cleaned for over a month, were clogged with garbage, he added.

The situation is similar in Sholashahar area, with city corporation workers being a no-show since morning.

Many low-lying city areas, including Bahaddarhat, Muradpur, Katalganj, Halishahar, Agrabad, Bakalia, and Chandgaon, went under knee-deep water due to overnight rains.

Engine seizures in many three-wheelers and long tailbacks on waterlogged roads added to the woes of the locals.

According to CCC authorities, cleaning activities for yesterday were

suspended due to downpours.

Soil, washed off slopes due to rain, sedimented in the canals, blocking them, as per CCC's Chief Conservation Officer Commander Latiful Haque Kazmi.

"Workers could not work for 20 days due to the political situation in the country. We launched the crash programme as the situation is normalising. We started yesterday but could not continue today due to heavy rains," he said.

He said they are planning to resume the cleaning works today, if rain recedes.

The Chattogram Met Office recorded 124 millimetres of rain in the 24 hours preceding noon yesterday, said its forecasting officer Jahirul Islam, adding that the downpour may continue for the next couple of days due to low pressure over the Bay.

The Chattogram Port has been advised to hoist cautionary signal-3, he added.

Withdraw VAT, taxes imposed on private univs

Demands BSPUA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Society for Private University Academics (BSPUA) yesterday demanded that the government withdraw all forms of VAT and taxes imposed on private universities, urging to redirect these funds towards research, scholarships, and student welfare instead.

At a press conference held at Jatiya Press Club, BSPUA, a platform representing private university faculty, also called for an end to politics in all educational institutions, including private universities.

Farid A Sobhani, professor at United International University and president of BSPUA, citing the 2024 QS World Rankings and Times Higher Education Rankings, said private universities have made substantial progress in educational quality and research, often surpassing public universities.

The long-standing discrimination against private universities is unacceptable, he added.

In a written statement outlining a nine-point demand, Prof Sobhani called for the inclusion of private university faculty in the University Grants Commission (UGC), Bangladesh Accreditation Council, Bangladesh Public Service Commission, and various government committees related to education.

He also demanded prioritising private university faculty for top administrative positions within the institutions.

Additionally, the BSPUA called for the establishment of a separate regulatory agency for private universities and an end to discriminatory practices against private university graduates in the job market.

They also demanded that private university graduates be allowed direct admission into PhD programmes at public universities.

"We demand equal opportunities for higher education based on merit and qualifications," said Prof Sobhani.

The BSPUA also urged the implementation of

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Abdul Muyeed new Biman chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury, former adviser to a caretaker government, was appointed the new chairman of the board of directors of Biman Bangladesh Airlines.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism announced the appointment through a notification yesterday.

Abdul previously served as the managing director and CEO of Biman from 1991 to 1994.

He was a civil servant belonging to the erstwhile Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) cadre, which he joined in October 1967.

Remove top health officials: protesters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group Directorate General of Health Services employees and pro-BNP doctors from the Doctors Association of Bangladesh yesterday demanded the resignation of the new acting director general and other pro-Awami League officials of DGHS.

Several doctors, nurses and health workers demonstrated in front of the main gate of DGHS. Later, they brought out a procession to Mohakhali's DNCC Dedicated Covid-19 Hospital where Health Adviser Nur Jahan Begum was attending a meeting.

Protesters demanded the resignation of Prof Robed Amin, DG of DGHS; Prof Ahmedul Kabir, additional DG of DGHS; Prof Titu Miah, DG of health education department; Bayezid Khurshid Riaz, additional DG of health education department; Shamiul Islam Sadi, director of National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine, and all the pro-AL officials at the DGHS.

Advertisement for Sylhet Gas Fields Limited (SGFL) featuring a logo and text in Bengali.

JU pro-VC, treasurer resign

STAR REPORT

Jahangirnagar University's Pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof Sheikh Md Manzurul Haq and its treasurer Prof Rasheda Akhtar resigned yesterday.

They submitted their resignation letters via email to President and Chancellor of the university Mohammed Shahabuddin.

In their letters, they cited the country's "current situation" as the reason for their resignations, said JU Deputy Registrar ABM Azizur Rahman.

3 task forces to be formed to improve rail services

Says adviser Fouzul Kabir Khan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Railways Ministry Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan yesterday directed the ministry to form three task forces to deal with three issues to improve railway services.

One task force will work to prevent delays in train operations while another task force will work to prevent black-marketing of train tickets. One task force will work to recover occupied railway properties.

The adviser gave the instruction at his first meeting with the officials of railways ministry and Bangladesh Railway, said a ministry press release.

He also asked them to take necessary steps for reducing railway expenditure.

Advertisement for Sundarban Gas Company Limited (সুন্দরবন গ্যাস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড) with logo and Bengali text.

Official document from the Government of Bangladesh, Department of Immigration and Passports, titled 'Invitation for Service procurement' with a detailed table of specifications.