

Patenga beach falls victim to encroachment

Illegal structures threatening its natural beauty

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

The Patenga beach in the port city is at risk of losing its natural beauty as illegal structures keep sprouting along the seaside in the absence of effective measures from the authorities concerned.

The illegal activity, which began in 2019 following renovation by Chattogram Development Authority (CDA), has grabbed most of the space on the beach, leaving tourists and locals suffering.

Patenga is a sea beach located 14 kilometres south from the main point of the port city. It is also an estuary of the Karnaphuli.

Every day, hundreds of people visit the beach; the crowd doubles during holidays. But the massive occupation has resulted in a crisis of available space.

However, no authorities have any data regarding the number of these illegal structures.

Both tourists and locals alleged that the illegal activity was going on in broad daylight.

Two syndicates under the name of

"Patenga Beach Hawkers Association" and "Patenga Sea Beach Shop Owner Association" are sheltering this illegal activity by extorting each shop owner daily.

Currently, 197 members are under the Hawkers Association, while 290 shops are under Patenga Beach Shop Owner Association.

This correspondent recently visited the area and observed that at least 500 hundred illegal structures — including restaurants, snack stalls, cloth stalls and souvenir shops have emerged on the beach.

Private job holder Salah Uddin, who visited the beach with his family on Friday, expressed disappointment over the illegal structures. He said there is no space to sit near the beach with family members.

"The beach is now a mess," he said. At least 10 shop owners admitted that they pay Tk 200 to 400 to collectors of the associations daily.

"We can't run a shop without paying money to them," said a shop owner, requesting anonymity.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Illegal structures like restaurants, clothing stalls and souvenir shops keep sprouting along the seaside of Patenga beach in the port city. Syndicates charge these shops Tk 200-400 each day to allow them to continue their operations.

PHOTO: STAR

DEATH OF STUDENT Asaduzzaman Khan, Dipu Moni, Ali Arafat sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former ministers Asaduzzaman Khan and Dipu Moni, and former state minister Mohammad Ali Arafat were sued in a case filed over the death of Jagannath University (JnU) student Ikramul Haque Sajid during the recent mass protests.

The victim's father filed the case with Kafirul Police Station on Saturday, naming 73 individuals as accused.

Former inspector general of police (IGP) Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun, former director general of Rapid Action Battalion Harun-ur-Rashid and former Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) commissioner Habibur Rahman, along with other Awami League leaders and activists, have been accused in the case.

According to the first information report, Sajid was shot in an attack by AL members during a mass protest in Mirpur-10 on August 4.

He passed away while receiving treatment at the intensive care unit of the CMH on August 14.

PRAYER TIMING				
SEPTEMBER 9				
Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:35	12:45	4:30	6:20	7:45
JAMAAT 5:10	1:15	4:45	6:25	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Flood-hit Moulvibazar faces fresh water crisis

9,030 tubewells damaged, local admin working to restore normalcy



MINTU DESHWARA

Over 9,000 deep and shallow tubewells were submerged during three separate floods in Moulvibazar in the past two months, causing a severe shortage of clean drinking water.

The contaminated wells are producing cloudy, foul-smelling water. Sadekun Begum, a resident of Mierpara village in Kulaura upazila, said, "Our government tubewell was submerged and now produces dirty water. So, we are forced to fetch water from far away."

Shaidul Hasan Shipon, general secretary of the Kulaura Sangbadik Samitee, said tubewells in low-lying areas such as Hakaluki and Kawadighi haors are prone to contamination during the monsoon season. He pointed out that areas like Kulaura, Juri, and Barlekha are particularly vulnerable.

The floods have left approximately 300,000 people in Kamalganj, Rajnagar, Juri, Barlekha, Kulaura, and Sadar upazilas suffering from a severe water crisis.

Sufian Mia, a resident of Kamalganj, said, "Half of my house was submerged. We returned home only recently, but the floodwater has contaminated the tubewells and the toilets are unusable."

In Mierpara village, Shamim Mia said his tubewell, which served 15 families,

was completely washed away during the last flood. However, the Upazila Public Health Engineering office has installed a new tubewell, restoring access to clean water for the affected households.

Md Muhsin, sub-assistant engineer of the Kulaura Upazila Public Health Engineering office, said 250 tubewells have been repaired, 350 disinfected, and five new ones installed in response to the crisis.

The Moulvibazar District Public Health Engineering office said 13,050 litres of bottled water, 305,700 water purification tablets, and 3,955 ten-litre jerry cans have been distributed to the affected areas. Additionally, 30,000 litres of treated water have been supplied through water treatment plants across Kulaura, Juri, Barlekha, Kamalganj, Moulvibazar Sadar, and Rajnagar. Hygiene kits were also provided to 609 women and children.

Khaleduzzaman, executive engineer of the District Public Health Engineering office in Moulvibazar, said, "Repair and purification efforts are ongoing, but the full extent of the damage is yet to be assessed. Several tubewells remain unusable, and it may take another two months to restore normalcy."

"We have repaired 699 tubewells so far," he added.

Jashim Uddin new foreign secretary

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The government has appointed Ambassador Md Jashim Uddin as the 27th foreign secretary of Bangladesh, succeeding Masud Bin Momen.

Immediately before this, he was Bangladesh ambassador to China with concurrent accreditation to Mongolia.

Jashim Uddin joined Bangladesh Foreign Service in 1994. He belongs to the 13th batch of BCS (Foreign Affairs) Cadre.

Jashim also served as ambassador to Qatar from 2020 to 2022 and to Greece with concurrent accreditation to Malta and Armenia from 2015 to 2020.



ACC to probe graft allegations against ex-chief whip

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday decided to launch a formal inquiry into the alleged corruption of Abdus Shahid, former chief whip of the Jatiya Sangsad, after it found evidence against the former Awami League lawmaker.

According to ACC, evidence of corruption against Shahid that he occupied Forest Department land to set up a tea garden has been found in initial probe. The allegation that he installed streetlights and a deep tube well in the tea garden with government

expenses is also found to be true.

ACC's preliminary intelligence investigation also revealed information about the acquisition of houses and flats in Dhaka and various parts of the country in the names of his wife and children, as well as assets worth millions of taka.

Furthermore, evidence has surfaced regarding the purchase of a house by his wife in the "Begum Para" neighbourhood in Canada, and the accumulation of vast amounts of illegal assets both at home and abroad.

Based on this information, the ACC has decided to initiate a formal inquiry into Abdus Shahid.

Six die as microbus hits autorickshaw

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A total of six people were killed when a microbus hit a CNG-run autorickshaw in the Kutirchar area of Kamarkhand upazila in Sirajganj yesterday.

Five of the victims hailed from the same village and were related to each other. They were returning home on the CNG-run autorickshaw from Sirajganj town, said police and locals.

The deceased are autorickshaw's driver Rashidul Islam, along with its passengers, Md Nuruzzaman, 22, Tarek Rahman, 55, Jahangir Alom, 56, Abdul Mazid, 50, and his brother Rejaul Karim of Tarash upazila.

Md Abdur Rob, sub-inspector of Kamarkhand Police Station, said the accident occurred in the Kutirchar area when a microbus from the opposite direction hit the autorickshaw around 12:00pm.

Three of them, including Rashidul, died on the spot.



Three others were admitted to Sirajganj Medical College Hospital, where they died within a few hours.

The driver of the microbus fled after the incident, said SI Rob, also the case's investigation officer.

Vehicle movement remained halted for some time on the Sirajganj-Nalka road following the accident.

Family members of the victims received their bodies.



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