

Eliminating polythene key solution to waterlogging Says Ctg mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor Shahadat Hossain yesterday urged port city residents to abstain from using single-use plastics, saying that a sustainable solution to the city's waterlogging problem lies in eliminating polythene.

"Plastic is the 'top enemy' of our city's environment. To fight it, we must work together," he said, launching an initiative called "Plastic Exchange Programme" jointly organised by Bidyanondo Foundation and the city corporation.

Under the initiative, residents are able to receive medical treatment and daily essentials in exchange for discarded plastic.

Around 500 people were given free medical consultations in return for plastic waste at the event.

Bidyanondo Foundation Board Director Md Jamal Uddin said, all collected plastic will be recycled in partnership with the country's renowned recycling companies.

As part of the "Plastic Exchange Programme" an exhibition of sculptures made from the collected plastic will be organised at Patenga sea beach to raise awareness among the public, including tourists, said organisers.

Sand lifting puts two bridges at risk in Moulvibazar

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Unabated illegal sand extraction from the Manu river in Moulvibazar's Kulaura upazila has put the Kotarkona Bridge and the newly constructed Rajapur Bridge along the Kulaura-Prithimpasha Hazipur Sharifpur road at risk.

The foundations of the two structures have been severely threatened due to sand extraction nearby, despite several drives and fines imposed by local authorities, alleged locals.

Reportedly, Nazmun Nahar Lipi, wife of Habiganj Jubo League leader Selim Ahmed, is allegedly overseeing the sand extraction operations near both Kotarkona and Rajapur bridges, bypassing the terms of the government's lease agreement.



On September 2, Lipi was fined Tk 1 lakh for extracting sand illegally in the Salan area of Tilagaon union. Later, on September 30, her associate Ashraf Khan was also fined Tk 1 lakh for illegally installing a machine for sand extraction near the Rajapur Bridge in Prithimpasha union.

According to Section 4(b) of the Sand and Soil Management Act, 2010, sand extraction is prohibited within one kilometre of bridges, culverts, embankments, roads, highways, railway lines, and other important government and private establishments or residential areas.

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Moyeen Khan also raised doubts about the competence of those responsible for coordination and asked whether it was necessary for the interim government to engage in such a complex process.

"Would it not have been more logical to leave these matters to a representative government formed through a free and fair election held within the shortest possible time?" he asked.

PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 18

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
4:50	12:45	4:00	5:38	7:15

JAMAAT 5:25 1:15 4:15 5:41 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

LOST

I, Md. Risalat Huda (NSU ID: 1612147030), have lost my BBA certificate issued by North South University (Graduated Apr 8, 2021, Lost Oct 14, 2025). A GD is filed with Khilgaon PS (Tracking no. MVHMLS), Date: 14.10.2025. Contact: 01743030016.



Teachers from non-government MPO-listed institutions stage a sit-in at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka yesterday, demanding nationalisation of their jobs and a 20 percent house rent allowance based on their basic salary.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Khulna on edge amid rise in murders

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

After dusk, an eerie silence descends on Khulna city. Fear creeps into homes, roads, and alleyways alike -- fear of another murder, another lifeless body found somewhere. For residents, living in the city now comes with anxiety as news of killings and mysterious deaths emerge almost daily.

Over the past month alone, eight people have been murdered, while four others were found dead under mysterious circumstances. Since August last year, 45 murders have been reported in Khulna city, more than double the 19 reported in the previous year.

Toriqu Islam, owner of a small eatery near Khalishpur Peoples Jute Mills, said he used to keep his outlet open late for night-shift workers but now closes by 9:00pm.

"Murders, mugging, extortion, and fights have become frequent in the city. Even with my son escorting me home, I still feel afraid," he said.

According to Naval Police statistics, a total of 39 bodies were recovered from rivers this year till September, of which 15 remain unidentified. Several of the bodies recovered were of women and children.

Superintendent of the Naval Police Dr Manzur Morshed said, "Criminals use rivers to dispose of bodies. Some people die of drowning, but in many cases, the victims are murdered first and then their bodies are thrown into the river."

On September 30, the killing

of Tanvir Hasan Shuvo, a former multinational company executive, shook the city. Tanvir was shot dead while sleeping beside his mother in Maheshwarpara. The same neighbourhood has seen at least three high-profile murders in the past year.

On September 23, a female day-labourer was found dead with her throat slit inside a bathroom of an under-construction building in the city's KDA Mayuree Residential Area.

Two days before that, in Phultala

Over the past month alone, eight people have been murdered, while four others were found dead under mysterious circumstances. Since August last year, 45 murders have been reported in Khulna city, more than double the 19 reported in the previous year.

upazila, Alamgir Hossain Rony, 30, was beaten to death in broad daylight over extortion disputes.

More bodies kept surfacing -- from Lobonchhara, Dacope upazila, and Sadar areas -- including that of a local Awami League leader, Towhidur Rahman Tuhin, who was found dead inside a hotel room near Khulna Sadar Police Station on September 14.

On September 4, Parveen Begum, a homemaker in Rupsha,

was hacked to death by her husband over a domestic dispute, while that same night, Imran Hossain Manik, a suspected member of an armed gang, was gunned down in nearby Joypur village.

Most recently, Liton Khan, 45, a fish vendor, was killed by his 17-year-old son for refusing to give him money for drugs on October 2 in Basupara Bashatola area.

According to law enforcers and local sources, during the Awami League's rule, control over drug trafficking networks and extortion rackets reportedly remained with a single political family.

However, since the political changeover last year, that syndicate has collapsed, leading to a turf war among rival drug dealer groups and local gangs.

In an effort to curb the killing spree and spike in violence, authorities transferred officers in charge of all eight police stations in Khulna city on September 11.

"Most of the recent killings are connected to the drug trade," said Md Rashidul Islam Khan, additional commissioner (crime and operations) of Khulna Metropolitan Police. "We are working hard to restore order and identify those behind these crimes."

KMP Commissioner Md Julfikar Ali Haider said, "Most of the listed criminals have been arrested since I took charge. We are investigating every murder and robbery with equal importance. However, factors like drug addiction, family disputes, and local crime networks make the situation complex."

Frequent gas blasts in N'ganj spark concern

SAURAV HOSSAIN SIAM, Narayanganj

Frequent gas explosions in Narayanganj have sparked concern among residents and civic activists, as the industrial district with its dense housing continues to witness a rise in such incidents.

According to the fire service records, Narayanganj saw 399 fire incidents in the first eight months of this year, including 29 caused by gas explosions.

Over the past five years, more than 400 gas-related blasts have been reported, most linked to leakages from Titus Gas pipelines, while others originated from LPG cylinders.

One of the deadliest accidents occurred in 2020, when leaked gas from a Titus pipeline accumulated and exploded inside Baitus Salat Mosque in West Tolla, killing 34 worshippers.

On September 4 this year, a blast from a leaked LPG cylinder in Sonargaon's Kanchpura area left five members of a family burnt, two of whom later died. Earlier, on March 3, another explosion in Siddhiganj left seven members of a family injured, three of whom later died.

Officials say poor urban planning, ageing pipelines, illegal and tampered connections, and unsafe cooking practices are the major causes of the recurring disasters.

In Narayanganj Sadar's Fatullah and Siddhiganj -- both densely populated and industrially active -- the risks are particularly high, with frequent reports from Sonargaon, Araihazar, Rupganj, and Bandar as well. Despite repeated tragedies, accountability remains elusive.

According to the fire service records, Narayanganj saw 399 fire incidents in the first eight months of this year, including 29 caused by gas explosions.

"In many households, kitchens are connected to bedrooms, turning them into gas chambers if leakage happens. A small spark can trigger catastrophe," said Abdullah Al Arefin, deputy assistant director of Fire Service and Civil Defence in Narayanganj. He also noted the lack of safety practices in factories as a cause for concern.

"Neither customers nor Titus take gas leakage seriously. Pipelines are rarely monitored. Some are so old that they corrode and leak constantly. Illegal connections only worsen the danger," said another fire service official, requesting anonymity.

He cited the 2020 mosque blast, where Titus initially denied having a distribution line nearby -- only for investigators to later find a leaking pipe right under the road. Although a case was filed naming Titus engineers as accused, little has changed since.

Titus currently supplies over 68,000 residential customers and 396 industries in Narayanganj, with much of its distribution line dating back six decades.

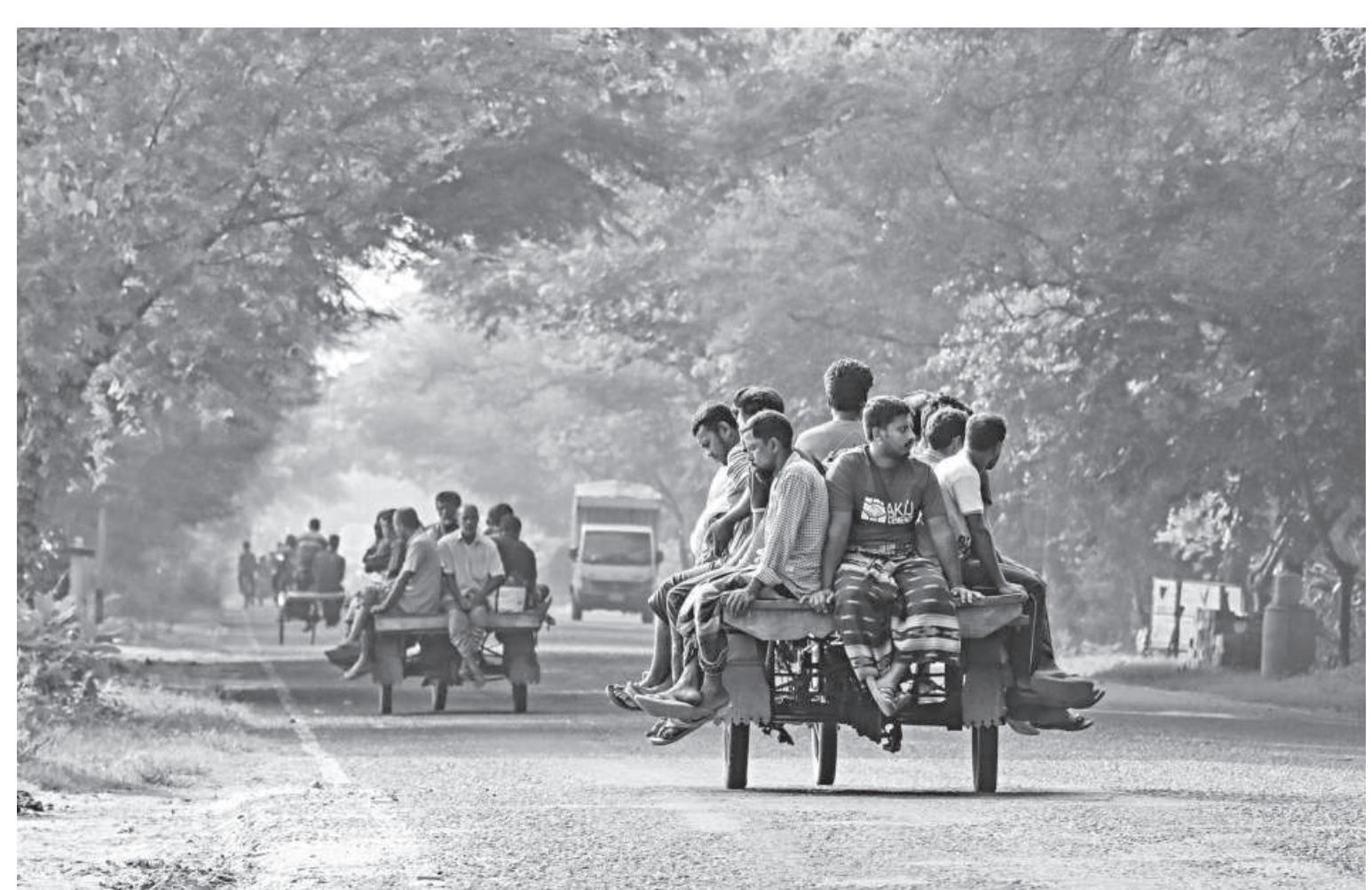
Contacted, Md Mamunur Rashid, deputy general manager of Titus's Narayanganj regional office, said such accidents are mainly due to customers' negligence. "We provide main line connections, but household links are made by building owners, often without skilled mechanics. We lack the manpower to inspect every home," he said.

He admitted that some pipelines from the 1960s remain in use but insisted Titus repairs leaks once reported, and that a project to replace old lines is in planning.

Civic activists, however, rejected such explanations.

"Titus cannot wash its hands of responsibility. Their negligence in maintaining old pipelines is a major reason behind these disasters. Illegal connections and corruption worsen the risk. It's a systemic failure of monitoring by Titus, Rajuk, and the city corporation," said Dhiman Saha Jewel, district president of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik.

He also pointed out the lack of specialised burn care facilities in Narayanganj, forcing victims to be rushed to Dhaka, often leading to deaths due to delayed treatment.



Daily wage earners arrive in the city early in the morning by vans, nosimons (human haulier), and other small vehicles in search of work. Many of them come from nearby villages and sometimes return home empty-handed after failing to find a job. Depending on the type of work, they earn between Tk 500 and Tk 700 a day. The photo was taken at Bypass Road's Akmaner Mor in Khulna city yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN