

Risky buildings being demolished in Barishal city

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Barishal City Corporation (BCC) has initiated a drive to demolish risky buildings as part of wider effort to remove structurally unsafe structures across the city.

On the first day of the drive yesterday, two old buildings were torn down on the busy Sadar Road in the morning, said BCC officials. One of the two buildings had already tilted toward an adjacent structure, causing visible cracks.

A total of 35 buildings have been identified as risky in a 2013 survey within the 58-square-kilometre city area, including both old and relatively new structures, ranging from single-storey to multi-storey ones, said Swapna Kumar Das, administrative officer of BCC.

"We had earlier issued notices to the owners, but the tenants took the matter to court. After obtaining a verdict lifting the temporary injunction, we issued final eviction notices this morning and began demolition. The work is expected to be completed in seven days, after which other risky structures will be demolished in phases across the city," he added.



Barishal City Corporation officials in a drive to demolish risky buildings across the city. The photo was taken on Sadar Road yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

HC benches reshuffled as judiciary returns to session

STAR REPORT

Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed has reconstituted the jurisdictions of nine High Court benches out of the total 66 benches as both the Appellate and High Court Divisions of the Supreme Court will reopen on Sunday after a long 44 day annual vacation.

Among the nine reconstituted HC benches, two are division (comprising two judges) benches and the remaining seven are single-judge benches.

The chief justice issued a notification on October 13 to this effect, stating that the HC benches will sit in the benches at 10:30am from Sunday to conduct judicial functions.

The chief justice and other judges of the Appellate and High Court Divisions will meet Attorney General Md Asaduzzaman, Supreme Court Bar Association's President AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon, and its Secretary Md Mahfuzur Rahman Milon and other Supreme Court lawyers for courtesy at the Supreme Court's Inner Court Yard from 11:30am to 1:00pm today.

Locals block Ctg-Cox's Bazar highway, demand expansion to six lanes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A group of locals blocked the Chattogram-Cox's Bazar highway by placing logs on the road in Lohagara Upazila of Chattogram yesterday, demanding expansion of the highway from two lanes to six.

Witnesses said the protest took place after Juma prayers in front of the Lohagara Upazila Parishad. The demonstration halted traffic on the busy highway for nearly 30 minutes.

The blockade ended after Lohagara Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and police officials assured the protesters that their demands would be communicated to higher authorities.

Protesters said the current two-lane highway frequently causes long traffic jams and accidents, resulting in fatalities.

"Despite repeated incidents, the government has not taken necessary measures," said Tamim Mirza, a resident of Lohagara.

Another protester, Muslim Uddin, warned that if their demand for a six-lane highway is not met, they would announce tougher protest programme.

Lohagara UNO Md Saiful Islam told The Daily Star, "Students and locals blocked the highway demanding six lanes. The road was closed from 2:00pm to 2:30pm. We explained



the inconvenience caused to the public and convinced them to lift the blockade. We will convey their demand to the higher authorities."

During the protest, participants also formed a human chain to press their demand.

Sand lifting puts two Dengue taking its toll

FROM PAGE 4

Local sources alleged that Lipi and her associate Deepak Dey have been operating the machines illegally for a long time, despite repeated drives and fines imposed by the upazila administration.

Recently, Md Anisul Islam, upazila assistant commissioner (Land) and executive magistrate, fined Shambhu Kumar Deb, manager of the sand extraction site, Tk 2 lakh in an effort to curb the illegal activity.

Contacted, Lipi hung up the phone when asked about the illegal sand extraction operations.

"Sand is extracted from the river near Kotarkona Bridge every year, no matter how many times the administration conducts drive and imposes fines," said Shahidur Rahman, a local resident.

Nurul Mohaimin Milton, general secretary

of the Environmental Journalists' Forum in Moulvibazar, said they had organised protests and formed human chains to stop indiscriminate sand lifting from the Manu river, but to no avail.

"The sand extraction facilities will be relocated to designated areas, and we will continue our drives until the violations end," said AC (Land) Md Anisul Islam.

Md Kaysar Hamid, executive engineer of the Roads and Highways Department in Moulvibazar, said illegal sand extraction under the bridges has continued for a long time, even though they had raised concerns in this regard.

"A formal letter has been sent to the Moulvibazar deputy commissioner requesting an immediate halt to illegal sand lifting to keep the infrastructures safe," he added.

may cry excessively, refuse to breastfeed, or appear unusually tired," he noted.

He warned that dengue can reach the critical stage faster in children.

"For adults, it may take 48 hours to become critical, but in children, it can happen within just 24 hours. That's why we strongly recommend hospitalisation as soon as possible," he said.

Dr Ahsan also cautioned that children are more prone to developing dengue shock syndrome, which is extremely dangerous.

Urging guardians to be

vigilant, he added, "The risk of infection is high at schools and coaching centres. Most schools don't provide full-sleeve uniforms, but these are essential during dengue season. Children's legs should also be covered with long socks and shoes."

Country needs

FROM PAGE 3

They noted that the shift in serotypes is a natural result of a successful vaccination programme, as targeted serotypes have become less common.

The speakers agreed that updating to a higher-valency vaccine would be a prudent, evidence-based step to sustain progress and ensure continued protection for Bangladeshi children.

Dr Firdausi Qadri, senior scientist at icddr,b and chairperson of the National Immunization Technical Advisory Group, said many countries are already transitioning to higher-valency pneumonia vaccines.

Currently, PCV-10 is used in 35 countries, including Bangladesh, while PCV-13 is used in 130, and PCV-15 and PCV-20 are used in 16 and nine countries, respectively.

Dr Tajul Islam A Bari, former EPI programme

manager, noted that switching from PCV-10 to PCV-13 could even be cost-saving, as PCV-13 is slightly cheaper.

Prof Md Farhad Hussain, director (disease control) at Directorate General of Health Services, said Bangladesh should upgrade the vaccine to reduce antibiotic dependence amid rising antimicrobial resistance.

Mohammad Shahariar Sajjad, deputy director of EPI, reaffirmed the government's commitment to reviewing and updating the vaccine based on new evidence and global best practices.

Dr Zakaria Bin Amjad, senior assistant secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, added, "Health security and international relations are deeply intertwined, and updating our immunisation programmes based on robust evidence is not just important but essential."

Jamaat announces

FROM PAGE 3

the statement, "Based on the five-point demand declared by Jamaat-e-Islami, we... observed a mass communication campaign across the country from October 1 to 9, mass processions in Dhaka and other divisional cities on October 10, and submission of memorandums to deputy commissioners on October 12..."

He added, "The government should... immediately accept Jamaat's five-point demand to ensure an inclusive, free, fair and neutral election. The people will not leave the streets until these demands are fulfilled."

The other demands include ensuring a level playing field for all parties in the upcoming election, ensuring visible justice for the government's alleged

Factory gutted

FROM PAGE 3

which prolonged the blaze. "These products are chemical-based, and we saw large flames with a bluish colour," he said.

The fire service director also confirmed that the building had not implemented a fire safety plan and lacked the required fire effectiveness certificate, which is mandatory as per the Fire Prevention and Extinguishing Act, 2003.

Meanwhile, two probe committees were formed to investigate the incident.

The fire service formed a five-member committee and asked it to submit a report within 15 days. CEPZ Executive Director Abdus Sobhan said they would investigate the matter.

He, however, said Adams

Caps is a compliant factory and conducts fire drills regularly.

Md Shahidur Rahman, fire consultant for CEPZ and Karnaphuli EPZ, said Jiehong had some fire extinguishers but they were insufficient. He added that he had repeatedly instructed the management to install a proper fire system, but they did not comply.

Fire Service Deputy Director Jashim Uddin said the factory, built in 2008, only recently applied for a fire safety plan.

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