

Safety of all citizens govt's key priority
Says CA's press secy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government is giving the utmost priority to ensuring the safety of all citizens, including people of all religions and minority communities, said Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam yesterday.

When approached by The Daily Star, the press secretary urged everyone not to be misled by any kind of propaganda.

Recently, several Islamist groups held nationwide protests on Friday demanding a ban on the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), accusing it of murder, abduction, and anti-state activities.

The demand came after
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Restructure interim govt, make it non-partisan: CPB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) has called for the immediate restructuring of the interim government in a non-partisan manner to ensure a free, fair, and impartial national election.

The demand was made at CPB's three-day central committee meeting, according to a press release issued yesterday by Luna Noor, a member of the committee.

The meeting decided that in order to create a conducive environment
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Market waste dumped in the middle of the road at Gollamari Bazar intersection, Khulna, is blocking traffic, bothering pedestrians, and spreading a foul stench, despite a nearby sign urging people not to leave garbage.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Century-old pond being filled up in Ctg

SIFAYETULLAH, Ctg

A portion of a century-old pond in the Farider Para area has been illegally filled in violation of existing environmental laws.

The pond, locally known as Afiar Baper Pukur, covers an area of around 52 decimals. Khorshed Ali, a student of Chittagong University and a local resident, said people have long used the pond's water for domestic purposes, and it also serves as a source of water for firefighting activities in the area.

Around three weeks ago, a portion of the pond on its southern side was filled with sand and enclosed with bamboo fencing to prevent water flow, causing the rest of the pond to dry up. The dumping of domestic waste by locals further deteriorated its condition.

A team from the Department of Environment (DoE) has already visited the site and found evidence of the illegal filling of the

waterbody.

According to the DoE and locals, the filled portion of the pond belongs to two individuals - Khorshed Alam and Tayeb. Another local, Anowar Hossain, had signed an agreement with Tayeb to purchase a portion of the pond and fill it with sand.

Khorshed, however, denied the allegation of filling up his portion of the pond, while Tayeb could not be reached despite repeated phone calls.

According to the Environment Conservation Act and the Natural Water Reservoir Conservation Act, filling up a waterbody is a punishable offence, carrying up to five years' imprisonment, a fine of up to Tk 50,000, or both.

Saiful Islam, assistant director of the DoE's Chattogram city office, said, "We have served notices to the individuals responsible, asking them to explain their actions. Legal measures will be taken based on the outcome of the hearing scheduled for this week."

Contacted, Anowar admitted that he had dumped 5-6 truckloads of sand there. "I had made an advance agreement

After confirming the allegations, the DoE's Chattogram city office issued notices to the individuals involved, asking them to appear for a hearing.

Contacted, Anowar admitted that he had dumped 5-6 truckloads of sand there. "I had made an advance agreement

to purchase three decimals of land from Tayeb. He assured me of helping with filling up the portion with sand. However, after some legal complications arose, I cancelled the agreement and took back the advance money from Tayeb," he said.

Tayeb, however, denied the allegation of filling up his portion of the pond, while Tayeb could not be reached despite repeated phone calls.

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