

MORE THAN JUST A GRAVEYARD

Chattogram war cemetery stands as a place of reflection, history

ARUN BIKASH DEY

The Commonwealth War Cemetery in Chattogram has emerged as one of the city's most visited public sites, drawing hundreds of people every day.

Established in 1945, the seven-acre cemetery on Badshah Miah Chowdhury Road honours soldiers and civilians who died during World War II, and is maintained with care by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC).

Visitors are greeted by the Cross

Kamal Uddin, visiting with his eight-year-old daughter, said reading the epitaphs made her curious about the past.

"The setting helps us better understand the stories of Commonwealth soldiers who fought in World War II," said Ishita Dastidar of Chittagong College.

During the war, Chattogram served as a crucial British military base due to its proximity to the Burma front. Afterwards, burial grounds across the region were



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

of Sacrifice at the centre, setting a solemn tone. Each of the 755 graves bears the name, nationality, age, and date of death of the deceased, often accompanied by a short epitaph.

The manicured lawns, flowerbeds, and quiet hillside surroundings give the cemetery a tranquil, almost park-like atmosphere.

For many families and students, the site has become a place to learn history beyond textbooks.

consolidated into two main CWGC cemeteries, including this one.

Hillol Sattar, CWGC's country manager in Bangladesh, said the cemetery holds 731 Commonwealth and 24 non-Commonwealth burials, including 19 Japanese soldiers. A five-member team maintains the grounds daily.

The cemetery is open to visitors from 7:00am to 12:00pm and 2:00pm to 5:00pm.

Workers rally in Ctg against leasing out port terminals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Several hundred workers under the banner of Bandar Rokkha Parishad brought out a torch procession in Chattogram city yesterday evening, demanding that the government refrain from leasing out any existing terminals of Chattogram port, including the New Mooring Container Terminal (NCT), to foreign operators.



The procession started from the Halishahar PDB Office area at 6:30pm and ended at the Boropole intersection.

Leaders of Gono Samhati Andolon, Chattogram Bandar Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal, Merchant Sramik Dal and Dock Sramik Dal also joined the procession. Speakers at the rally warned of tougher movements if the government does not refrain from leasing out NCT to UAE-based firm DP World.

Ex-DNCC councillor, held at Kashimpur jail, dies at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A former ward 12 councillor of DNCC, an inmate of Kashimpur High Security Central Jail, died at DMCH yesterday. The deceased, Murad Hasan, 65, was also a local Awami League leader.

"The inmate was brought to the hospital in an unconscious state around 4:30pm. Doctors declared him dead shortly after arrival," said Inspector Md Faruk, in-charge of DMCH police outpost.

Abdullah Al Mamun, senior jail superintendent in Gazipur, said, "The prisoner had been feeling unwell since morning with acute respiratory problems. We took him to Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College Hospital immediately. As his condition deteriorated, he was referred to DMCH."

Murad was arrested in April this year. He was accused in at least three cases, including one over a killing during the July uprising.

CENTURY-OLD SYLHET-AKHAURA RAIL TRACK A route worn down by decades of neglect

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

The century-old Sylhet-Akhaura rail track, laid in 1898 during the British era to connect Assam with Chattogram, is now in a dilapidated state, posing serious risks for thousands of passengers and tourists.

Stretching through Kulaura and Sreemangal, the 127-year-old line remains a top choice for visitors to Lawachhara National Park, Madhabpur Lake, Hum Hum and Madhabkunda waterfalls, and the tea estates in Moulvibazar.

Locals said at least eight to ten bridges along the route have become risky. Nuts, bolts and clips are often stolen, leaving parts of the track unstable. During extreme summer heat, the missing fittings cause the line to bend, heightening the risk.

"Trains often have to slow down or stop on the Sylhet-Shayestaganj section, particularly inside Lawachhara forest," said Saju Marchiang, a resident of the area.

Riyad Ahmed, a visitor from Chattogram, said, "It felt unsafe throughout the journey by train on this route. If the old track was renovated, tourism here would grow further." Juned Ahmed of Kulaura and Nazmul Islam of Kamalganj, both frequent commuters to Dhaka, echoed the concern. Azizul Islam, chief coordinator of a train passengers' platform in Kulaura, said the Akhaura-Sylhet section has not seen any major development in the past 55 years.

No new trains have been launched on the Sylhet-Dhaka or Sylhet-Chattogram routes in more than a decade. The last addition, Kalni Express, was introduced in 2012, said Atiqur Rahman Akhai, general secretary of the Kulaura Traders' Welfare Association.

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Md Mozammel Haque, senior deputy assistant engineer at Kulaura junction, said, "We try to keep the line safe. Sometimes nuts, bolts and clips are stolen, but we reinstall them immediately."

Md Saifullah, senior deputy assistant engineer in Sreemangal, said repairs on several bridges are underway in phases.

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A solo run or alliance

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position, it may reduce our chances of gaining seats in the parliament. Reforms cannot be achieved solely from the streets; a party must be positioned at the policymaking level," he added.

But Nusrat Tabassum,

a key leader of the July uprising and joint convenor of the NCP, firmly supports going alone.

She told The Daily Star, "NCP was born out of people's aspirations. The democratic state we promised can only be achieved through an independent electoral path. Contesting alone will prevent us from becoming a 'pocket organisation'."

Calling the path "bitter but true", she noted that the July uprising began with only six people. "Gradually, others joined, and we succeeded. That gives me confidence about contesting independently."

District level leaders also expressed strong grassroots support for a solo run, though opinions vary on forming alliances.

Shawkat Ali, coordinator of NCP's Narayaniganj district committee, said many activists joined the party after leaving major political parties.

"If we now join an alliance, activists may question whether they should have stayed in their former parties," he said.

"Grassroots members know the road ahead

is tough, but they want the NCP to contest independently."

Advocate Monjila Jhuma, coordinator of the Khagrachari district committee, said not only grassroots leaders and activists but also the general public oppose an alliance with BNP or Jamaat or taking part under their banner.

She said people believe the NCP, as a party outside the mainstream political spectrum, has the potential to bring meaningful reforms.

"Although the journey may be long, the consensus is to continue independently rather than fall under the shadow of a major party," she added.

NCP Joint Convenor Sarwar Tushar told The Daily Star, "We are preparing for independent participation. Any future decision, whether alliance or seat-sharing, will be based on political interests and careful discussion."

"But regardless of the final approach, NCP will contest under its own electoral symbol," he said.

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Table with columns: Tender ID No., Package No., Description, Online Notice Publication date and Time, Online Tender Closing date and Time. Row 1: 1176527, BTEB/GD/OTM/P2-2025, Supply of White Paper 23"x 36" and 26"x 40", 19-11-2025 10:00 A.M, 11-12-2025 15:00 P.M. Below is Secretary signature: (Md. Al Masud Karim) 18.11.2025

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