



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

DC Park or mangrove forest?

Forest Department, Ctg district admin at odds over control of 194-acre land in Sitakunda

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

The Forest Department and the Chattogram district administration are at odds over the control of a forest land in Sitakunda upazila, where a recreational park has been developed after felling hundreds of trees.

The Forest Department wrote to the chief conservator of forests on January 2, requesting that the land, along with existing structures, be handed over to the Coastal Forest Division of Chattogram.

Records show that the land – about 194 acres under North Salimpur mauza – was officially gazetted as a notified forest by the government under Section 4 of the Forest Act on January 9, 1986. Later, the Coastal Forest Division planted mangrove trees there in the 1990-91 fiscal year.

In its letter, the Forest Department argued that, even though the land has been typically recorded in the name of the deputy commissioner of Chattogram in Khatian 1, this cannot be used as a pretext to treat such notified land as grassland, and hence any such action by the district administration is unlawful and constitutes an overreach of jurisdiction.

District administration officials rejected the claim, saying the land is recorded in its name in the official khatian.

According to Section 5 of the Act, once land is notified under Section 4 and subsequently gazetted as forest land, it cannot be repurposed.

In a verdict on October 6, 2013, the Supreme Court also directed that forest land notified under Section 4 must be preserved.

And yet, the Chattogram district administration constructed what is now known as DC Park in 2023 on the land, allegedly ignoring objections from the Forest Department.

The land of DC Park had not been under our possession for a long time. During that period, a local influential named Kafil Uddin established a recreational centre there called Shuktara Park. However, the area still had many trees, including mangroves. We sent a letter to the deputy commissioner on November 22, 2020, requesting its eviction. The park was removed in January 2023, after which the district administration took control of the land and built DC Park there later on," said Belayet Hossain, divisional forest officer of Chattogram.

"Despite our objections during the construction of DC Park, the district administration went ahead, building numerous facilities for visitors, including seating areas, swings, and restaurants,"

he added.

The Forest Department stated in its letter that the park was built on over 37 acres of land, with at least 5,000 mangrove trees felled during construction.

This claim is supported by satellite imagery analysis from Google Earth. A 2018 image shows the western bank of a pond inside the park was densely forested, while 2025 images show numerous structures now occupy the site. The latest imagery also shows a road cutting through the northern part of the park, extending towards the sea.

"DC Park has been built on land belonging to the Chattogram district administration. We have not constructed the park on any land belonging to the Forest Department, so their claim is not reasonable," Farida Khanam, deputy commissioner of Chattogram, said when contacted in this regard.

Asked why the Forest Department only recently sought to reclaim control of the land, Belayet Hossain said, "We have observed that the district administration is gradually expanding the park, constructing facilities for tourists near another pond, and there are plans to build a road towards the sea. We are concerned about these activities, and so we are now trying to regain control of the gazetted

forest land."

The Forest Department had tried to intervene during construction of the DC Park earlier, but the district administration proceeded, allegedly threatening forest officials in the process, he claimed.

If the land is returned to the Forest Department, a coastal greenbelt could be developed there, serving as an ideal habitat for wildlife, water systems, air quality, and biodiversity, Belayet added.

In a letter, Chief Conservator of Forests Mollah Rezaul Karim wrote that mangrove forests beyond the embankments in Sitakunda and Mirsarai upazilas have played a crucial role in protecting lives and property by mitigating the impact of several major cyclones in the past.

Kamal Hossen, a former professor of the Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences at Chittagong University, said, "Mangroves are frontline defenders of coastal regions, reducing the force of storm surges, protecting against erosion, and helping maintain biodiversity. When these forests are cleared, they remove a critical natural shield, leaving communities highly vulnerable to cyclones, flooding, and long-term ecological damage."

Finn, Cory and Sam to retire

FROM PAGE 3
"good health" and are "perfectly capable of living comfortably as companion animals".

"Dogs used in law enforcement generally have a fixed service span. As per procedure, we sought approval from the Police Headquarters to put them

up for auction," said Nazmul Hasan, additional deputy commissioner of the CTIC's Dog Disposal Unit. "K-9 unit hopes these animals will spend the rest of their lives in a safe and caring environment with animal lovers." The auction is being conducted in compliance with the Animal Welfare Act, he added.

According to the tender notice, businessmen, auction bidders, contractors, and dog lovers have been invited to an open auction, which will begin at 12:00pm on November 25 and continue until all three dogs find new owners.

The rules are simple: interested buyers must deposit Tk 1,000 to participate. Successful bidders will pay the final price along with 10 percent income tax and 7.5 percent VAT.

Each dog will be auctioned separately. They can be inspected by contacting the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Action Group), DMP, and buyers must complete payment and collect their dogs within three days. For more details, interested persons may dial 01320-046356.

The witness further stated that he saw no punitive action taken by

fire directly," he testified. "ASI Bishwajit and several others opened fire on his command," he added.

He said police personnel then loaded the bodies of the fallen protesters onto a police van. While doing so, he noticed that the OC was speaking in hushed tones with Bishwajit and Abdul Malek, a constable.

"They stopped talking when I approached. I suspected they were planning something regarding the bodies," Abzalul said. He later came to know that the OC and ASI Bishwajit burned the bodies using petrol.

The witness further stated that he saw no punitive action taken by

senior police officials, then Dhaka Range DIG Syed Nurul Islam, then Dhaka SP Asaduzzaman Ripon, former SP Abdullahe Kafi, and Savar Circle Additional SP Shahidul Islam, against those involved.

According to him, during the July uprising, then lawmaker Saiful Islam repeatedly phoned OC Sayed, instructing him to suppress protests and arrest opposition activists.

"The OC relayed those orders to us, and we carried them out," he said. Abzalul, arrested in

the case in May 2025, told the tribunal he chose to turn approver out of "moral responsibility" and to repay his debts to the martyrs. He also vowed to make a "full and truthful disclosure."

On August 21 this year, the tribunal framed charges against 16 accused in the case. Of them, eight are in custody. Seven pleaded not guilty and demanded justice.

Following his deposition, the defence began cross-examining him, which is set to continue today.

Ex-OC ordered killings

FROM PAGE 3
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STATUTORY NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION (STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO. 2005 OF 2025

IN THE MATTER OF:
Wahida Sharmin, Managing Director of FIT ELEGANCE Ltd, of Reg. Office: A-131, Lane-05, New DOHS,Mohakhal, Dhaka-1215, and The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies & Firms (RSC), TCB Bhaban (6th floor), 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215 and having its Chittagong Office at CDA Annex Building (5th Floor), Kotowali, Chittagong.

...Petitioner
...Respondents

Notice is hereby given that an application under sections 81(2) and 85(3) read with section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994, AND IN THE MATTER OF:
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Notice is hereby given that an application under sections 81(2) and 85(3) read with section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994, was moved before the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the petitioner for condoning the delay of holding the Annual General Meeting of FIT ELEGANCE Ltd for the years 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024. Upon hearing the application The Hon'ble Company Judge Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel has admitted the said application on 06/11/2025. If any person interested in the said application may appear on the date of hearing or before the Hon'ble Court either himself or through an Advocate. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of charges.

...Petitioner
...Respondents

Notice is hereby given that an application under Section 171 of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed before the Company Bench of the Hon'ble High Court

Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the above named petitioner for rectification of the register of mortgages. Upon hearing of the aforesaid application on 30.10.2025, Mr Justice Ahmed Sohel presiding over the Company Bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division was pleased to admit the said application and, further, directed the petitioner to publish notice in the daily newspapers.

Any person desirous to contest the said application may appear before the Hon'ble Court in person or through an Advocate on the date on which it will be heard. A copy of the application may be collected from the office of the undersigned upon payment of costs.

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