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# Down to Earth

# Vision of City's Liveability

By AS M Nurunnabi

The proclivity to resort to tall talks is a somewhat inherent weakness in human nature. This is perhaps why we have been presented with a vision that capital Dhaka will be transformed into a world-class beautiful city by next March through radical changes in its physical infrastructural facilities. The vision is apparently Utopian. The promised prospect might have been perhaps within the range of credibility if it was stated that this city is going to rank among the leading megalopolis of the world in the first quarter of the coming century with the status of a modern city of the present-day

It is worthwhile to remember that a city continues to grow over a long period through a process by which a huge number of disparate and unrelated people acquire urban habits and abide by rules to live peacefully in a congenial environment. Since we can't get the help of an Aladin's magic lamp to transform our vision into reality, it is felt that pragmatism demands that, in view of our over all resource constraints, we may aim at harnessing whatever resources, facilities and authorities are available for the city by innovating and trying to make their optimum utilisa-

The primary functions of a city may be broadly categories into two groups: One relating to rendering services and the other relating to the work of reducing difficulties and inconveniences of the citizenry. 1. And from these views, some .... examples, are

easily possible. The vexed problem of witnessing ever-increasing potholes on roads could be remedied promptly. The constant digging on thoroughfares can be minimised by way of better planning in periodic communication with the

and expertise under technical

cooperation to get approval of

TAPP in advance, for prompt

Customs clearance by paying

Customs duty and VAT for the

critical of the disappearance of

Bangladeshi trainees in their

country and warned that if such

incident took place in the fu-

ture, it would strain bilateral

relationship and such training

tinued for Bangladeshis, the source said, adding, it asked the

government to take steps to

of Japanese aided projects, the

delegation suggested that the

government should approve

such projects within five to six

weeks after the dispatch of JICA

Draft Basic Design Study Team

Japanese aided projects should

be concluded within one month

after the Japanese Embassy in-

forms the Bangladesh govern-

ment that the EN are ready for

construction of Multipurpose

Cyclone Shelters (Phase 3) is far

behind the original schedule

due to six months' delay in the

signing of Exchange of Notes.

To complete the project, the

government was requested to

take all steps necessary, includ-

ing the issuance of certificate of

completion. The delegation

added, "by doing so, disburse-

ment for the project would be

completed by the end of March

1997," the Finance Ministry

sources said.

If Bangladesh used the ten-

der documents as used in March

1996 for possible food aid in the

future, these should be prepared

on a 'Loading Final basis', the

team said. This meant that

from the time of shipment at a

loading port, all risks regarding

the consignment would be

at the poor progress of a project

for the supply of irrigation and

cultivation equipment to the

cooperative farmers of the cy-

clone and tidal bore affected ar-

eas which was conceived in

1991, Japanese side asked the

government to expedite the

lease of pumps to the coopera-

tive farmers provided under

for effective utilization of the

equipment and facilities pro-

vided under the following pro-

jects: a. Project for Supply of

Fish Net Equipment (Fiscal Year 1983). b. Project for

Construction of Foodgrains

Storage (FY 1986), c. Project for

Establishment of Central

Workshop for Repair and

The delegation also called

this project.

Expressing dissatisfaction

passed on to the purchaser.

The team pointed out that

signature, it went on.

Exchange of Notes (EN) for

to Bangladesh.

On smooth implementation

prevent such disappearances.

opportunities might be discon-

The Japanese side was very

imported equipment.

authorities concerned. The more galling features of our civic life relate to our communication and transport sectors. which, because of their ominous dimensions, call for pointed attention even at the risk of repetition

The traffic hazards in the

city are yawning alarmingly

and the authorities are yet to

prop up palliative measures to butt the menace. A hectic jam is a regular phenomenon of the city's traffic system, which is caused, as vividly apparent. from the large number of unlicenced rickshaws. This is a frequently repeated tale without any viable relief in sight. The problem of traffic congestion has been lately compounded by the overwhelming presence of newly imported re-conditioned cars. The redeeming factors in this behalf however as lately reported, seems to be that the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has decided to restrict the num ber of three wheeler motorised vehicles (authorickshaws) at 30,000. The additional authorickshaws will be phased out. It was also reported that the DCC would not allow any rick shaw without licence to ply. Separate lanes would be kept reserved for motorised and non-motorised vehicles. Besides, the DCC would reportedly identify the accident prone spots to reduce road mishaps in the city and improve the signalling system to ease move-

ment of traffic. A happy development in the city's transport system is the announcement that 50 BRTCluxury buses are going to be operated on two city routes on experimental basis by the private sector. This was stated to be the first heralding phase of im proved communication ar rangements within the metropolitan limits. It is the sponsors' view that it will ease the traffic jam. But accord to

Maintenance of Vehicles of

Transport (FY 1979), d. Medical

equipment provided under sev

eral past projects and e. Project

for Improvement of Scientific

Educational Equipment for

was followed by a press confer-

ence by the Japanese team

where, for the first time, it

openly criticised the authorities

"It is not that the Japanese

for the snags in implemen-

never criticised us bitterly.

They had severely criticised us

on KAFCO deal and regarding

the Sonargaon incident. This

time, they made an exception by

making such statement to the

press." an official of the

The government was expect

ing some 175 million dollars of

Debt Relief Grant (DRG), but the

Japanese team said that

Bangladesh already had quite a

significant amount of DRG fund

deposited with the Bangladesh

Bank which required to be

Soeharto

From Page 1

Hasina stressed the need for

exchanging trade and official

delegations between the two

countries to strengthen the ex-

Official sources said the dis-

isting bilateral relations.

of the two countries.

tation of various projects.

Finance Ministry said.

The annual consultation

Universities (FY 1988).

Tokyo suggests steps

pessimists, the existing presence of undiminished numbers of fast and slow-moving vehicles when added to the total strength of transports is only likely to exacerbate the traffic congestion in the opinion of observers, instead of settling for such virtual palliatives, we need to go with far sighted resolve for a mass transportation system of tested patterns which will have the advantage of dispersing some of the city's population to the outskirts, thereby easing the pressure of amenities in the metropolis.

In this context, it is pertinent to realise that rapid urban migration is a persistent problem in a developing country like ours. In contrast, suburban living involving a dispersal movement and a reverse flow away from the city's madding crowd concentrated in city cen tres may be considered as a blessing by many who are able to avail such options.

There are many more ways to deal with the myriad prob lems in the communication and transport sectors for which the city can earn praise of its citi zens. What are needed most are imagination, perseverance pragmatism and dedication Unless we can improve our city communications by making the roads worthy of easy movement and the traffic system more ef fective and law abiding, the city of Dhaka can never attain the status of a real city in the truest sense of the term. Above all, we need to make all plans for an uneducated teeming millions from whom spontaneous re spect for traffic rules can never be expected. We can, however take the example of neighbour ing countries where punish ments for violations and the machinery for implementation of the same are so strong and ef fective that one can never dare

HC orders release of BM College VP

to violate any laws and rules.

A High Court Division bench of the Supreme Court Thursday ordered immediate release of A K M Mahbubul Haq, vice president of Barisal B M College Students' Union and vice president of JCD central committee, reports UNB.

The Division Bench comprising Justice Badrul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Mohammad Hasan Amin declared the detention of Mahbubul illegal and unlawful.

Mahbubul Haq was arrested recently under the Special Powers Act of 1974.

Advocate Golam Mohammad Chowdhury Alal moved the case on behalf of the petitioner while Assistant Attorney General Sufia Khatun proceeded on behalf of the government.

Four BL College students hurt in police attack

From Staff Correspondent KHULNA, Nov 15: Four students of Govt B L College were injured in an attack by police in the college auditorium this evening.

The attack came when students opposed entry of police into the auditorium for viewing Sarjah Singer Cup final on television.

From Page 1

jor (retd) Akhteruzzaman.

Awami League district unit

president Wahedul Islam, dis-

trict BNP joint convenor Masud

Helali, Poura Chairman Alhaji

Abu Taher and JSD district

general secretary Nazrul Islam

Biplob's father Dulal Chan

dra Sarker and grandfather

Kartik Chandra Sarker were

logue when ruling party nego-

tiators telephoned last on

Thursday. The preconditions

are release of leaders and work-

ers of BNP and its front organi-

sations, starting implementa-

tion of its 10-point demand and

creating a congenial atmo-

The JS session resumes on

Meanwhile, both AL and

also present.

impasse.

sphere.

today.

November 19.

Two constables were immecussion between the two leaders diately placed under suspenmainly focused on building a sion, while 20 others closed to consensus on economic issues police lines. All-Party

BSS adds: Thai Deputy Prime Minister Kasem S Kasensri also called on Sheikh Hasina today.

Thai DPM

They discussed bilateral issues, especially on investment, and stressed the need for further strengthening the relations between the two countries to achieve a new level of cooperation between Bangladesh and Thailand.

Hasina told the Thai deputy premier that agro-based Bangladesh needs cooperation in its agricultural sector.

when the That deputy premier referred to his country's investment in the United States, China and Myanmar, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina invited the Thai investors to invest in her country in the

agricultural sector. She expressed the hope that Thailand would be a development partner of Bangladesh in

its growing agricultural sector. The Thai deputy prime minister said his country is always in favour of increasing cooperation with neighbours like Bangladesh.

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PM tells newsmen in Rome

# Budget increased to boost food output

ROME. Nov 15: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said here today her government has made increased budgetary allocation in agriculture sector and is keen to adopt modern technology to boost food production in the country, reports UNB.

We have increased 34 per cent allocation for the agriculture sector in the 1995-96 budget," she said while talking to local newsmen at her hotel suite in the morning.

Representatives of major newspapers of Italy including II Messagero, La Stampa and Il Sole-24 jointly took the interview of the Bangladesh Prime Minister, who is now in the Italian capital in connection with the World Food Summit. Sheikh Hasina said her gov-

ernment is taking supportive measures to increase production and maintain proper distribution of agriculture produces to ensure fair price for the Referring to the on-going World Food Summit here, the

Prime Minister hoped that it

would come up with positive re-

sults for the benefit of the 800

million poor people in the

This summit is very much important and I am confident

and optimistic that the world

leaders will address the global food problem in true perspec-

Replying to a question on natural disasters, she said it is difficult to avoid natural disasters, but measures have been taken to protect the people from natural calamities

"We are to live with natural disasters," she said explaining how people's lives are protected from natural calamities by adopting various means including construction of cyclone shelters and flood protection embankments.

Responding to a query, Hasina said Bangladesh received grants from UN bodies and foreign donors to build cvclone shelters and other infrastructures to save the people from natural disasters.

About poverty alleviation she said, the government has already taken steps to alleviate poverty through various income generating projects and eradicating illiteracy.

She said the present government believes in account ability and transparency in running the state affairs and effective programmes have been taken to lead the nation towards development and economic progress.

## PM: Italian investors

labour force and also have an easy access to a huge market of 120 million people

Bangladesh's macroeco nomic management henceforth would be both conservative and prudent, she said, adding, "We are especially committed to limiting inflation and gearing ourselves to avoid excessive deficit spending.

The present government, she said, is also determined to provide prudent governance, func tionally free convertibility of currency, export processing zones in private sector, a vibrant Board of Investment and complete international guaran tees against expropriation of assets of foreign companies operating in Bangladesh

"My government believes in foreign investment and will welcome all investors." Hasina

The Bangladesh Prime Min ister also said that she had al ready met several CEOs of Italian companies and hoped to meet a few more in the coming

"I am happy to note that they have shown keen interest in participating in a number of large projects in Bangladesh in the sectors of infrastructure building like a railway link over a bridge and an international airport, power genera tion on BOT and telecommuni cations on BLT basis.

She expressed her confidence that Italian companies have the technical competence, the job experience in developing countries, and the global competitiveness to be successful in their efforts in participating in large projects in Bangladesh.

Hasina said she welcomed their seriousness and determination in investing in Bangladesh and assured her government's full cooperation. assistance and goodwill to

Speaking of the governmen t's ambitious economic goal, she said, "in today's competitive world we need to be ambitious. We need to grow, we need to flourish. Our targets are to create millions of jobs and attract billions of dollars in foreign investment

The days of aid dependence were drawing to a close for Bangladesh, the Prime Minister said, adding that "We have put the economic agenda on the front lines of our administration and our diplomacy."

Hasina said: "I would per sonally take this opportunity to invite you to Bangladesh and to assess for yourselves what we have to offer you'll find much of interest in Bangla-Honorary Consul General

Arnaldo Morea also spoke on the occasion

## Jackson marries mother of his unborn child

SYDNEY, Nov 15: Megastar Michael Jackson remained holed up in his Sydney hotel today following an announcement that he had been married overnight to nurse Debbie Rowe. the 37-year-old mother of his unborn child, reports AFP.

Jackson's Los Angles-based publicist Christine Holevas sparked uproar among fans and media when she released a statement confirming his marriage and appealing for the singer's privacy to be respected. "They are married. All I

know is that it happened. Holevas said in the announcement published by media here.

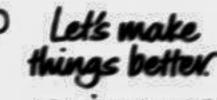
The enigmatic 38-year-old performer had earlier strutted through the first of two concerts before a sell-out crowd of 40,000 in the Sydney cricket ground.



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At least five persons were killed and five others injured in road accidents in Jhenidah Dhaka, Barisal and Jessore ves-

Our Jhenidah Correspon dent says: Two persons were killed and two others injured in separate road accidents in the district yesterday. Rizia Khatun, 12, was

speeding Jhenidah-bound bus near Tetultala in sadar thana this noon. A case was filed with

crushed under the wheels of a

Jhenidah thana in this connec-

In another accident, three persons were injured when a micro-bus collided head on with another bus at Barobazar in Kaliganj thana of the district this morning.

The injured were rushed to the Jessore Hospital where Faroog Hossain, 42, president

JCD leader

# The JCD leader Shawkat Ali

had allegedly used abusive words against the pro-VC and the proctor and ransacked the offices of the Registrar and PS to the VC on Wednesday after he was injured in an attack allegedly by some activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League on the campus

The Disciplinary Committee also decided to form a probe body to investigate the incident in which the JCD leader was in-

Meanwhile, stalemate continued on the JU campus for the third day yesterday following JCD's call for an indefinite strike in protest against the in-

## LGC team holds talks with West Bengal ministers

on Local Government (LGC) led by Advocate M Rahmat Ali, now on a visit to West Bengal, held meetings with ministers and officials of the state, reports

in Calcutta Thursday passed a busy day meeting a number of ministers. It also held meetings with top state level officials on rural development, local government and urban development, a message from West Bengal capital received in Dhaka yesterday said.

respective places.

ter for Municipal Affairs hosted a dinner Thursday night for the visiting Bangladesh delegation. A number of ministers, mayors of Calcutta and Howrah Corporations, Jahangir Saadat, Bangladesh deputy high commissioner, and high officials of West Bengal government attended the dinner.

In the afternoon, the delegation attended a tea party arranged in their honour by the Department of Panchayat and Rural Development.

The members of the delegation included Advocate Fazle Rabbi, MP, and A H M Abdul Hai. Secretary, Local Government Division, and Dr Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir. Professor Department of Political Science, Dhaka University.

## 5 die in road accidents

By Staff Correspondent

of District Brick Manufacturers' Association, succumbed to injuries.

BSS reports: An unidentified person died when an Arichabound truck ran over him on Dhaka-Aricha road near Amin Bazar late Thursday night, hospital and police sources said.

His body has been sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy. A case has been registered with the Savar police station in

this connection. Our Staff Correspondent from Barisal reports: One Sultan Howlader, 22, was killed in a road accident on Barisal-Jhalakathi road at Battala yes-

terday morning. Witnesses said Sultan was knocked down by a Jhalakathibound passenger bus.

Sultan succumbed to his injuries on way to Barisal Medical College Hospital. His body was taken to hospital morgue for autopsy

Our Jessore correspondent adds: One person was killed and three others were injured, one of them seriously, when a micro-bus collided head-on with a passenger bus on Jessore Jhenidah road near Hoibatpur seven miles off Jessore town

Gaus, 42, was killed on the spot while Batul Mia, 40, Wahidul 27, and Rustom Ali, 25, were in-

### picked up a retired army jawan from Arja Narayanpur in Sadar thana here today in connection with the assassination of

formed.

A high-powered Commission

The delegation after arrival

During meetings, the two sides exchanged views on local government systems in their Ashok Bhattacharya, minis-

## yesterday morning. According to police. Golam

Bangabandhu killing One picked up from Jhenidah JHENIDAH, Nov 15: Police

> Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Police Super Mia Ataul Gani told UNB that the retired army sepou. Akbar Ali, was yet not arrested. "We simply interro-

> gated him," he said. On instruction from higher authorities, Akbar Ali, was later sent to Dhaka, the SP in-

#### Showcause From Page

JCD spoke at the meeting

The JCD leaders demanded of the party chief to launch a movement programme to protest "government's atrocities" on JCD leaders and work ers. They criticised the ruling party's student front for bringing charges of treason against the BNP Chairperson and said. We will not tolerate any conspiracy against our leader.

They also appealed to Begum Khaleda Zia to ask party leaders to enquire about the 'miseries" of JCD leaders at various educational institutions throughout the country and to arrange funds for further strengthening organisational activities. They expressed dismay that not a single poster was printed by the party demanding release of JCD vice-president Nasiruddin Pinto yet after two

and a half months of his arrest. Reporters present there could hear the JCD leaders speaking at the meeting till 9 pm but, later the programme turned to be a close-door one and newsmen were no more allowed to attend.

#### Restrictions on media From Page 1 ing food security" that stressed

event. It is alleged that the media is being fed information rather than being allowed to observe directly and write its own stories.

The media briefings and individual press conferences are the only opportunity journalists are getting to interact with the participants and discuss the As far as the main issues are

concerned, there is no scope for too much disagreement on the pre-approved Plan of Action to which the delegates are all expected to make concrete commitments.

However, there were reports that some countries had expressed their "reservations" The official FAO line is that these countries, who were left unidentified, would be allowed to raise their reservations. The only group who are strongly and openly critical of the Summit's position on food insecurity and ways to tackle it are the NGOs.

The particular issue of trade liberalisations is a bone of contention. Liberalisation of agricultural trade is a key element in achieving food security in the World Food Summit Plan of Action, but the NGOs argue that this usually requires farmers in developing countries to shift to cash crops, thereby actually undermining food security in these countries.

Blaming wars and civil strife as a growing cause of hunger, the NGOs say that the globalisation of the world economy, dominated by transnational corporations which lack accountability, and overconsumption in the rich nations is a key reason for growing world poverty. In their address to the plenary session of the Summit later NGOs proposed a 'new model for achiev-

small scale producers. But by and large, the issues

are not contentious enough to · create any major obstacles to the common objectives of sustainable development towards the eradication of hunger.

One expects some lively debates in the next few days but hopes that in all this, the underlying tone will always be civilised as befits a solemn gathering discussing the restoring of dignity to segments of humanity who suffer everyday the insult of hunger.

Many journalists publicly condemned the women activists who denuded themselves protesting US free trade policy. even if it was in the interest of a righteous cause.

Surely the naked truth of a starving, impoverished world is humiliating enough without women debasing themselves to

get attention.

From Page 1

World beauty contest, after earlier condemning the pageant, PTI said. Devi said she saw no harm in the contest being staged in

the city of Bangalore since the swimwear section of the event was switched to the Sechelles. "What's wrong if beauty is presented beautifully, with Indian touch and style," she

told PTI. Earlier, suspected anti-Miss World pageant activists today attempted to set ablaze two mini-buses of a travel agency whose vehicles have been hired

for use for the pageants.

In another part of the city Hindu nationalists were al lowed to stage a march despite a police crackdown on demonstrations involving more than 10 people.

#### No contacts From Page 1 phone thrice to extend invitation for a dialogue to resolve the BNP, however, put forward three preconditions for any dia-

BR lands From Page 1

BNP have geared up organisational activities. While AL is set to hold rallies throughout the country today and a grand rally in the capital tomorrow, BNP is scheduled to acres by individuals leased out hold a meeting of its National to the current users and 5907.90 Executive Committee at 10 am acres 'abandoned land' sold out.

### Bus passengers robbed in Jessore From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Nov 15: A decoity was committed in a Meherpur-bound bus on Kaliganj-Kotchandpur road last night, according to police sources.

Police said, a gang of armed dacoits numbering 10 to 12 in the guise of passengers boarded into the bus (Jessore Ga-792) near Elangi at about 6.45 pm and took control of the vehicle after stabbing the driver. They also stabbed three pas-

the passengers worth about Tk two lakh. The dacoits left the A case was filed with Kali-

Kabir, 23, and Emdadul Haq

25, and looted the belongings of

# Police raid ZH

hall gate for half an hour as it was under lock and key. They searched some selected rooms.

Vice-Chancellor Prof A K Azad Chowdhury.

They alleged that police were harassing the students by making frequent raids in the Hall

# Hall again

Haq Hall of the Dhaka any arms, reports UNB.

A group of students alleged that the raid was mere an eyewash as the police overlooked the armed outsiders. Meanwhile, supporters of the Chhatra League brought out

# Police raided the Zahurul

University yesterday, the third in a week, but could not recover Police entered the Hall at 11:30 am after waiting at the

a procession from the Zahurul Haq Hall yesterday evening in protest against the raid and met

IFAD assures assistance ROME Nov 15: The President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Fawzi Al-Sultan, today

Dhaka: 815306-9, 819625-9, 889993 Ctg.: 501082, 503578, Khuina: 20304, Bogra: 6215

Sheikh Hasina at her hotel Suite here, reports BSS. They discussed, at length, the present Bangladesh government's steps as well as the IFAD projects in Bangladesh for development of the Agriculture sector, the core of

called on Prime Minister

Bangladesh economy Fawzi Al-Sultan said his or ganisation has a wide range of activities in Bangladesh in the agriculture sector.

Agriculture Minister Begum Motia Chowdhury said Bangladesh was inviting pri vate investment in agriculture sector. "What we need in agriculture sector in Bangladesh are seeds, fertiliser and technol-

Fawzi assured of his organisation's assistance in the agriculture sector in Bangladesh.

#### who starve' ROME, Nov 15 Irish Prime Minister John Bruton, speak

'It is the poor

ing on behalf of the European Union, pledged today the EU's backing for the work of the UN World Food Summit here to tackle starvation, reports AFP. "I therefore welcome and wish to associate the European

Union with the key undertak ings in the Rome Declaration on food security in which we each pledge our political will to achieve food security for all and reaffirm our commitment to the ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in our countries," Bruton told a summit plenary ses-The summit adopted

Wednesday a Rome declaration

and action plan towards halv

ing the number of malnour-

ished developing countries

from the current figure of 84

million by 2015. Bruton's speech picked up on the summit's main themes from the theory that poverty is the main cause of people being unable to feed themselves to the need for the summit's resolutions, which are non-binding to be honored by participating

Bruton 'stressed the impor tance of moving from words to actions.' He added: 'We know that the prime source of food insecurity is poverty. In any crisis whether local or largescale it is the poor who starve. Ireland currently holds the

governments.

rotating presidency of the EU. Meanwhile Cuban President Fidel Castro has been forced to delay the trip to Rome and wil miss a scheduled speaking engagement today, the Cuban delegation said.

Castro had been due to arrive

in Rome overnight but his plane

has yet to take off from Havana

because of bad weather, it



Thousands of Rwandan Hutu refugees walk through the Zairian border town of Goma after they fled fighting around the Mugunga refugee camp yesterday. UN Security Council members hoped to vote Friday on a resolution to send a multinational force to ease the plight of an estimated one million starving refugees in war-ravaged eastern - Reuter/UNB photo

## Strike continues in RMCH

RAJSHAHI, Nov 15: The normal activities at the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) remained suspended for the fourth day today as the impasse over a dispute between employees and physicians remained unresolved, reports

13,314.44 acres (currently used for agricultural purposes illegally) leased out, 434.03 acres of water bodies developed for pisciculture, 3777.51 acres of fallow lands developed for BR's own use, 1040.74 acres under illegal occupation by government organisations and 419.23

sengers - Kamal Hossain, 22.

vehicle near Patibilla. ganj thana. No one was arrested till filing of this report.