

Scientist sees 'small Bangladesh' in Bay of Bengal

BSS, Dhaka

A London-based Bangladeshi scientist has developed a technology that promises to float a "small Bangladesh" in the Bay of Bengal in five years using the natural hydrodynamic forces.

"A landmass almost one third of the size of Bangladesh can emerge with the use of a mechanism applying the natural hydrodynamic forces or flow of gushing waters," Dr Abdul Khaleque, a natural scientist, told BSS on Friday while explaining his recent innovation.

He added: "The mechanism will expedite an already existing slow natural process of land accretion in shallow sea front areas near estuaries."

The scientist says with the use of the technology, Bangladesh could get some 40,000 square kilometre landmass in the bay adjoining the coastlines and it would help remove all water-related problems including flood, erosion and drought deepening the river beds and washing away the silts.

In addition, this would keep the rivers navigable, increase wa-

ter flow in rivers and availability of surface water, reduce dependence on groundwater for irrigation and other uses, recharge the dwindling groundwater level and heighten the river shores, he said.

The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) of Geneva had patented the technology in 1998 endorsing the innovation of Dr Khaleque, basically a bio-chemist and faculty member of Royal Holloway College of London University.

Dr Khaleque said his mechanism would create "convergent current" in rivers to vibrate riverbeds during the monsoon and thus deepen the river depth while the onrush of waters would deposit the silts to certain points of the bay under an engineering design.

According to Bangladesh Water Development Board and other estimates, three major rivers - the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna - alone carry some 13 billion tonnes of silts to Bangladesh daily from the upstream regions beyond the country's border.

The huge silts are gradually heightening the riverbeds causing massive silting and consequent floods and navigation problems, reducing the carrying capacities of rivers.

Water Development Board officials said the situation has been aggravated as the neighbouring India reportedly developed structures to trap silts, to withdraw waters in lean season. But in monsoon, it releases the silts, causing massive silting in Bangladesh side, they said.

Dr Khaleque, who calls his mechanism as "natural dredging" said, it could remove the country's growing concerns for navigability of rivers.

Experts say the use of dredgers to keep the rivers navigable is almost an impossible idea for riverine Bangladesh, crisscrossed by 230 major rivers, because of high cost. According to an official estimate, dredging of per cubic feet silt requires Tk 11.

"Rivers were created by the natural hydrodynamic force of the nature, not by dredging, and it can only be maintained by the hydrodynamic force and not by dredging," the scientist said.



PHOTO STAR

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina inaugurating reunion of the Krishak League at the Institution of Engineers', Bangladesh in the city yesterday.

IT village to be set up in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An IT village will be set up in the port city shortly to exploit the potential of Information Technology.

The government has already taken a decision in this regard, Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury said at the launching ceremony of information and communication technology (ICT) courses at Agraibd IBM-ACE Centre in Chittagong on Saturday.

Speaking as chief guest, the commerce minister said a strong base should be developed in the IT sector to face the challenges of globalisation.

Education Minister Osman Faruk, who attended the function as special guest, said efforts are underway to expand IT education throughout the country.

Initially, one school in each district would be brought under computer networking to impart IT education.

He stressed the need for extensive training programmes on IT to produce efficient manpower in the country.

The function was also addressed by British Deputy High Commissioner Robert Gibson, education minister Dr. Abdul Majid Khan, Director of British Council, Chittagong, Julia M. Crockett, Managing Director of Agraibd IBM-ACE Tanjila Faruk, Country Manager of Cambridge University Asia Region, Subrata Bhattacharya and Dr. Israt Kamal Khan.

The function was followed by a magic show performed by Jewel Vich.

FEJB seminar on Earth Day today

The Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) will hold a seminar on the occasion of Earth Day at 9 am today at the Jatiya Press Club.

State Minister for Environment and Forest Jafrul Islam Chowdhury will attend the function as chief guest while Environment Secretary Sabihuddin Ahmed and former Secretary Syed Marghub Moshid will be the special guests.

FEJB Chairman Quamrul Islam Chowdhury will preside over the function.

Suitable Labour Code soon

UNB, Dhaka

A suitable Labour Code in accordance with different ILO conventions will soon be formulated to protect the workers' rights and maintain good relationship between the employers and workers.

State Minister for Labour and Employment Lutfur Rahman Khan said this during a meeting with ILO Area Director in Bangladesh, Gopal Bhattacharya, at his office in the Secretariat yesterday.

"The government is deter-

mined to eliminate child labour from the country in phases," the state minister said seeking cooperation of ILO in different programmes for workers' rehabilitation, training and elimination of child labour.

Participation of Bangladesh delegation in the upcoming International Labour Conference to be held in Geneva in June next also came up during the discussion, said a labour ministry press release.

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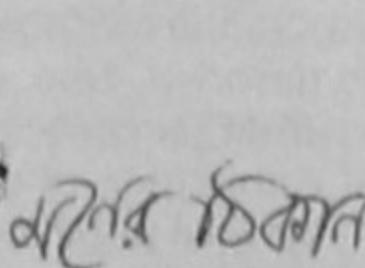
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