

Tourist sites being destroyed for lack of coordinated policy

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's tourist sites are being destroyed due to lack of a coordinated policy as businessmen and opportunists are cashing in on the unrestricted sites, speakers said at a programme yesterday.

"Mass people are deprived of the opportunity to visit the tourist sites, something only the well-off can avail themselves of. But we should make it reachable for common people and the private sector should play the leading role here," said Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser Raja Devasish Roy.

"All the actors like locals, tourists, NGO workers and students must be engaged in this process along with the government," he added in his speech as the chief guest.

The programme titled 'International Year of The Reef (IYOR)' organised jointly by the environment and forests ministry

and UNDP at Shilpakala Academy in the city was arranged to observe the IYOR 2008.

"We do not have coordinated laws to maintain tourist sites and preserve ecology. It is really a paradox that land ministry leases out places in tourist spots while environment ministry call for protection of the site," said AHM Mostayeeem Billah, joint secretary of environment and forests ministry.

"Tourist sites and ecology cannot be preserved if people continue to use the sites only for business purposes," he added.

As a part of the celebrations, 'Coastal and wetland biodiversity management project', a project of Department of Environment (DoE), has also organised a three-day photo exhibition that began at Shilpakala Academy yesterday.

IUCN Country Representative Dr

Ainun Nishat, eminent bird expert Inamul-Haque and AHM Rezaul Kabir, secretary to environment and forests ministry, were also present.

DoE Director General Khandaker Rashedul Haque presided over the meeting.

The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) announced the IYOR that is a worldwide campaign to raise awareness among people about reef and make them work to protect reef.

The 46 specimens of corals on display along with the photographs at the exhibition were stolen away by tourists from Saint Martin's Island and later collected by the organisers. They are being kept at the Zoology Department of Dhaka University for further study, organisers said.

The 70 photographs on display were taken from Saint Martin's, Teknaf, Hakaluki Haor and Sonadia Island.



PHOTO STAR
Bangladesh Development Partnership Centre (BDPC) and International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women Ujjapan Committee held a rally at Rabindra Sarobar in the city yesterday.

'Raise voice against sexual harassment'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a view exchange meeting yesterday called on the youth to be conscious against the sexual harassment and exploitation at the education institutions.

They said this at the meeting organised by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad at the National Press Club auditorium in the city to mark the International Women Repression Protest Forum 2008 and the Human Rights Day.

Joint Secretary of the Parishad Masuda Rehana Begum presented a keynote paper at the programme which was moderated by its Acting President Dr Fauzia Moslem.

She called for taking initiatives to turn the Policy Against Sexual Harassment 2008 into a full-fledged law along with setting up an allegation centre at all education institutions to raise voice against all sorts of mental or physical repression.

All the universities should include the issue of sexual harassment in their respective university acts and proctorial laws and regulate provisions to punish the perpetrators, she added.

She suggested that the youth of today should be made aware on the burning issue through various social programmes of debating, counselling, cultural events in their respective areas along with building up healthy and friendly relations between teachers and students with all due respect.

Masuda urged the students to play a central role in protesting sexual harassment and repression and develop a gender-sensitive culture at the education institutions.

General Secretary of the Parishad Dr Maleka Banu, Secretary of the central legal aid sub-committee Shahana Kabir, lawyers Nizamul Haq Nasim and Tania Amir, Prof Ainun Nahar, and Prof Dr Shourov Shikdar also spoke as the panel discussants.

The programme started with screening of the docudrama on the controversial incidents of the victims of eve-teasing from Gaibandha and Narayanganj. The floor was open to the discussion with the youths at the function.

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One in seven suffers from kidney disease in Bangladesh

BSS, Dhaka

One in every seven people in the country has been suffering from kidney diseases and 40,000 die of long-time kidney failures annually, experts told a convention and scientific seminar yesterday.

They said about two crore people are now somehow suffering from kidney ailments which was about one crore 10 years ago. The rate of chronic kidney disease has now increased to 18 percent from nine percent during the period.

"If the present rate of the disease continues it will rise to 28-30 percent in next 10 years turning the situation alarming," they said. In the context of kidney patients, they said, replacing stem cells with dead cells of damaged kidney without transplant and dialysis could restore its effectiveness.

Different countries in the world are carrying out research on stem cells, but it is yet to start in Bangladesh, they said.

Kidney Foundation, Bangladesh arranged the 4th national convention and scientific seminar at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

The theme of the conference was 'Stem cell transplant in the prevention of chronic kidney disease: Dream and reality'.

Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser for Social Welfare Brig Gen (retd) MA Malek attended the function as the chief guest.

National Prof Dr MR Khan, vice-chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib

Medical University (BSMMU) Prof M Nazrul Islam and chairman of Dhaka Bank Limited Altaf Hossain Sarkar were present as special guests.

With president of Kidney Foundation Prof Harun-Ur-Rasid in the chair, vice-president of the foundation Prof MA Wahab, secretary Prof Muhibur Rahman and Managing Director Tiny Ferdous Rashid, addressed the function.

Brig Gen Malek said thousands of people die each year in the country due to liver, kidney and lung failures and their lives could be saved by replacing stem cells.

Placing emphasis on

introduction of cadaveric For the first time in Bangladesh, Prof Harun said, the Kidney Foundation is discussing the issue of stem cell to create awareness about it among the Bangladeshi doctors.

Stressing the need for the prevention of kidney disease, he said lack of awareness among the people is also responsible for increasing the number of kidney patients in the country.

Experts from Germany, Japan and Thailand presented scientific papers at the daylong seminar joined by about 200 Bangladeshi doctors.



PHOTO STAR
Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser Brig Gen (retd) MA Malek speaks at the 4th national convention and scientific seminar of Kidney Foundation at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

Skilled workforce has huge potential in UK eateries

Says foreign adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Foreign Adviser Iftakhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday said non-resident Bangladeshis have been contributing a lot to the country's national economic development for decades.

There are huge opportunities for our youth abroad. But they will have to be skilled to compete with others in a changing scenario worldwide, he added.

As many as 12,000 restaurants in the UK need huge workers every year. Since the restaurants are owned by the Bangladeshis, skilled workforce has potential there, he said, adding that the institute will be able to make the people skilled for those as it will be an institute of international standard.

The adviser said this at the foundation laying ceremony of the UCEP-BMET Hotel Management and Catering Institute in Sylhet. Official aid agency of the British government DFID is funding for its establishment.

He hoped that the graduates from this institute, which is being built at the cost of 1.96 crore, would be able to work in any country.

Chowdhury said, "The expatriates' welfare ministry as well as the present government took the joint-venture project to meet the long-standing demand. Accordingly, we had convinced the DFID for funding the institute."

The institute will no doubt benefit our people in a big way to meet the ever-growing

demand for skilled manpower at home and abroad in the near future for its high standard, he added.

Speaking as the special guest, Entry Clearance Manager of British High Commission Neil Angell said the institute would provide skills and training for the urban poor that are directly linked to getting a job in the private sector.

It will provide a model for future skills development in Bangladesh. It helps the country expand a sector in which they have a tradition of success -- hospitality and catering, he added.

UCEP Executive Director Brig Gen (retd) Aftab Uddin Ahmed, Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training Director Md Abdul Maleque, Divisional Commissioner Dr Zafar Ahmed Khan, Deputy Commissioner Sazzadul Hassan, Metropolitan University VC Dr Kabir Hossain Chowdhury and UCEP Chairperson board of governors AGM Shamsul Alam also spoke.

The institute will offer skills training on food preparation and cooking, food and beverage service, reception operation and service accommodation services.

The institute will provide two-year courses, accredited by City and Guilds, UK, for 240 students in addition to other short courses every year. The academic activities will begin from March 2009.

Campaign for Cox's Bazar, Sundarbans

RU CORRESPONDENT

University of Information Technology and Science (UITS), Rajshahi campus and Banglalink jointly launched a programme to vote for Cox's Bazar and the Sundarbans in the global contest for new seven wonders of the nature at UITS campus yesterday. Teachers, students and officials of the university joined the programme.

The UITS students also urged the students of other universities to vote for Cox's Bazar and Sundarbans at www.new7wonders.com.

Meanwhile, Brac University National Heritage Forum organised a campaign for online voting for Cox's Bazar and the Sundarbans at the cafeteria of the university at Mohakhali in the city yesterday, says a press release.

Shafiq Alam Mehdi, chairman of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, was present at the inaugural ceremony of the programme as the chief guest.

Brac University Vice Chancellor Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury presided over the programme. Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr Saleh Uddin Ahmed and dean of Brac Business School Prof Iftakhar Gani were present at the programme.

12 poachers arrested in Sundarbans

UNB, Bagerhat

Forest officials, in separate drives, arrested 12 poachers from the Sundarbans area early yesterday.

Sundarbans East Zone officials also seized a deer, a slaughtered deer, six deer heads and 100 kgs of venison and 600 traps during the drives.

The arrested were identified as Motalab Biswas, 45, Alam Biswas, 50, Shahajan Khan, 48, Sohrab Hawladar, 50, Kala Biswas, 22, Badal Chandra Mistri, 24, Elias Hawladar, 22, Mohsin Hawladar, 22, Firoz Howladar,

23, Al-Amin Forazi, 24, Ramananda Haldar, 55, and Masudur Rahman, 42.

Sundarbans East Zone DFO SM Shahidullah said, acting on a tip-off, forest officials conducted a drive at Kachikhali in Sharankhola upazila and arrested 10 deer poachers along with a slaughtered deer, three deer heads, 20 kgs of venison and 600 traps.

Another team of forest officials arrested two poachers from the Pashur river in Mongla upazila and recovered a deer, three deer heads and 80 kgs of venison from their boat.

Separate cases were filed in this connection.

Jamaat leader Shahjahan freed on bail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Convicted former Jamaat lawmaker Shahjahan Chowdhury was released on bail here yesterday.

Chittagong Jail sources said he was released from a cabin of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) at about 12:50pm on receipt of the High Court bail order.

Shahjahan, a former lawmaker from Satkania constituency, was shifted to CMCH from jail few weeks ago as he was suffering from chest pain and other complications, they said.

He got bails from the High Court in all the five cases, including two murders.

A court sentenced Shahjahan to 10 years of imprisonment in a graft case related to import of a Sport Utility Vehicle under duty-free quota.

Shahjahan was sent to jail on October 29 in 2007 when he surrendered before the 5th Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court of Judge Mirza Mohammad Ayub Ali on the date for hearing on charge framing in a case filed against him and Faisal Morshed Khan, son of former foreign minister M Morshed Khan.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed the case on July 1 last year with Bandar Police Station accusing him of concealing wealth in the statement he submitted to ACC earlier.

Robbery in city house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Robbers looted gold ornaments and other valuables worth about Tk 15 lakh from the house of a banker at Mirpur in the city yesterday morning.

Police said a gang of five to seven robbers stormed into the flat of Abdul Awal, a senior principal officer of Rupali Bank Principal Office, on the third floor of a six-storey building at Madhya Manipur under Mirpur Police Station at about 7:15 am.

They held inmates of the house hostage at gunpoint and looted 40 tolas of gold ornaments, Tk 15,000 in cash, one laptop, three digital cameras and other valuables.

Tk 8.5cr fake stamps, 1500 bottles of phensidyl seized in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-4) seized fake revenue stamps worth about Tk 8.5 crore in the city on Sunday night and arrested two traders.

Meanwhile, another team of Rab-10 seized 1500 bottles of phensidyl from an onion-laden truck in the city early Monday and arrested the truck driver.

The fake stamp traders have been identified as Abdul Khaleque, 52, of Jamira Lota, and Ohidul Islam, 30, of Charpata under Bholadistrict, while the truck driver as Abul Hossain alias Khokon, 40.

Rab-4 officials said they raided the house of Khaleque and Ohidul at Paikpara in Mirpur and seized the fake stamps at about 6:00pm.

During the preliminary interrogation, they said the fake revenue stamps were supplied to them by one of their partners, and they supplied the stamps to different garment factories and other offices.

Rab officials said they were hunting for others involved in illegal trading.

Acting on a tip-off, Rab-10 officials intercepted the onion-laden truck at Elephant Road under New Market Police Station at about 1:45am and recovered the bottles of phensidyl.

They arrested the truck driver for carrying the contraband item in his vehicle.



Eighteen returned fellows of JDS pose for photograph with Japanese Ambassador Masayuki Inoue at a reception at the envoy's residence in the city on Monday.

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