

Proposed DAP only to serve purpose of housing cos

Say Urban planners, architects, environmentalists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The proposed Detail Area Plan (DAP) of Dhaka metropolitan city will only serve the purpose of housing companies and endanger the well-being of future generations.

Urban planners, architects and environmentalists said this yesterday at a view exchange meeting where they also demanded that the time for review of the plan be extended for at least three months before its approval.

Rajuk organised the meeting at its auditorium as the plan is scheduled to be approved today.

The experts said DAP will go in favour of land grabbers filling up water bodies and occupying open spaces. It has not mentioned any illegal housing projects developed in the flood flow zones in and around the city.

"All the housing projects which are facing legal battle will get legitimacy if the draft DAP gets approval," said Dr Ishrat Islam who gave a presentation on the proposed DAP on behalf of five organisations - Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa), Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers' Association (BELA), Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP), Institute of Architects, Bangladesh (IAB) and Centre for Urban Studies (CUS).

A technical committee should be formed to properly review DAP and seek experts' recommendations before its finalisation, Bapa President Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, director (programmes) of BELA, said one of the four consulting firms, which has prepared DAP, is a developer. So, they prepared the plan with a view to serving the interest of developers.

Besides, the proposed DAP is inconsistent with Wetland and Open Space Protection Act 2000, Bangladesh Environmental Protection Act 1995, Building Construction Rules 2007 and Private Housing Project Land Development Rules 2004, she said.

Speaking as the chief guest, Housing and Public Works Adviser Maj Gen (ret'd) Ghulam Quader said the government will take the views of the experts into consideration and try to work out an acceptable solution.

In her presentation, Dr Ishrat Islam said that although sub flood flow zone is identified in the structure plan of Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan (DMDP), it has been dropped from the proposed DAP.

In the proposed DAP, agricultural land has been defined as 'Agriculture with rural homestead', which put the agricul-

tural land under threat of encroachment. Also, flood flow zone and agriculture land of DMDP was identified as urban residential zone and agriculture with rural homestead, she said.

Even Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) in its study proposed that 12 percent of total land area should be designated as retention ponds, but DAP proposes only 5.05 percent of total embankment area of Dhaka, she added.

Ishrat said proposed retention ponds in DAP have already been filled up by developers while it is still possible to designate higher percentage of retention pond areas there.

She demanded immediate restoration of land use classification according to DMDP.

She said a technical committee comprising professionals/planners and representatives from civil society should be entrusted with the task of reviewing DAP in the light of DMDP policies to rectify the flaws in DAP.

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, Prof Nazrul Islam, Dr Rokshana Hafiz, housing and public works secretary ASM Rashidul Hai, Rajuk Chairman Md Shafiqul Islam, BIP President Prof Sarwar Jahang, architect Iqbal Habib, Dr Rahmatullah, Dr Golam Rahman and Dr Mohsin also spoke at the meeting.



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina introduces her party candidate actress Sara Begum Kabari at an electoral meeting at Osmani Stadium in Narayanganj yesterday.

Call to beef up security of Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Pachattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee formed a human chain at Mukhtangan in the city yesterday with a call not to vote for Jamaat-e-Islami, which is castigated for its role against the War of Liberation in 1971, in the upcoming general election.

Protesting the reported plan to kill Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, the committee urged the government to beef up her security.

The committee members also demanded immediate trial of the war criminals, said a press release.

Faruk Ahmed, Kazi Nizamuddin Shahin and SK Badal were present on the occasion.



Several hundred people stage a demonstration on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Shanir Akhra in the city yesterday to protest a road extension project under the Detail Area Plan (DAP).

Protest against road project under DAP

Huge traffic jam on Dhaka-Ctg highway

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several hundred people staged a demonstration on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Shanir Akhra in the city yesterday in protest against a road extension project under the Detail Area Plan (DAP) of Dhaka metropolitan city.

They also put up a barricade on the highway during their three-hour protest from 8:30am, creating a huge gridlock from Sayedabad in the city to Sonargaon at Rugganj.

Zakir Hossain, a demonstrator, said that several hundred houses inside Dhaka-Narayanganj-Demra (DND) embankment will have to be demolished if Rajdhani Ummayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk) extends roads in the area as per DAP.

Witnesses said local people led by Tajul Islam, convenor of a committee formed to protest the road construction project, blocked the highway.

The protesters withdrew their barricade programme after the police assured them of holding a meeting between local people and the Rajuk authorities to settle the issue.

Tapan Kumar Nath, project director of Rajuk, said local people gave him an application containing signatures of 1087 people who oppose the road extension project.

HEADMASTER MURDER Two to die, six others get life

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced two people to death and six others to life in jail for killing a headmaster at Srinagar in Munshiganj district in August 2005.

Mohammad Shahabuddin, headmaster of Swarup Chandra High School of Srinagar, was shot dead by a group of his rival led by one Momtaj Begum on August 1, 2005. The accused launched the attack for giving statement in a murder case against Momtaj's husband.

The convicts with death are MS Khan and Momtaj Begum while Rumi Begum, Hannan Shah, Rubel, Mirhas, Alamgir and Idris Talukder were given life term imprisonment in the case.

Of the convicts, Idris was present in the court during the delivery of the judgement while the rest were tried in absentia.

Judge Mohammad Nurul Huda of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-3 handed down the sentence at a packed courtroom. The punishment of the fugitives will be effective from the date of their arrest or surrender, the judge said.

The court acquitted 22

others as the charges brought against them were not proved.

According to the prosecution, Momtaj Begum and her accomplices attacked the victim with sharp weapons at about 7:45am on August 1 in 2005 at Bagra village after her husband was sentenced to death following the statement in a murder case given by the victim. Of them, MS Khan shot dead the victim.

Later, a murder case was filed against Momtaj and 29 others in this connection and the investigation officer pressed charges against them on February 14, 2007.

SCF rally today

UNB, Dhaka

Sector Commanders Forum (SCF) will hold a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar at 11:00am today demanding trial of war criminals and anti-liberation forces.

The rally will be followed by a procession, which will be terminated at Mukhtangan.

People from all walks of life have been requested to join the programme.

BAIL TO MOUDUD, FALU SC chamber judge asks govt to file regular appeals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) chamber judge yesterday asked the government to file regular appeals with this court after vacation against the High Court (HC) orders granting bail to former BNP minister Moudud Ahmed and former BNP lawmaker Mosaddek Ali Falu in separate corruption cases filed by the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC).

Chamber judge Justice Mohammad Fazlul Karim also adjourned till reopening of the court the hearing on a government petition to halt the HC order staying the proceedings against former BNP minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan in Barapukuria coalmine corruption case.

The judge passed the orders after hearing the stay petitions filed by the government and the ACC against the HC orders.

The court will reopen on January 4 after its winter vacation.

Earlier, the HC upon separate petitions granted bail to Moudud in an FDR embezzlement case and to Falu in a relief tin scam case. Falu was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in this relief scam case.

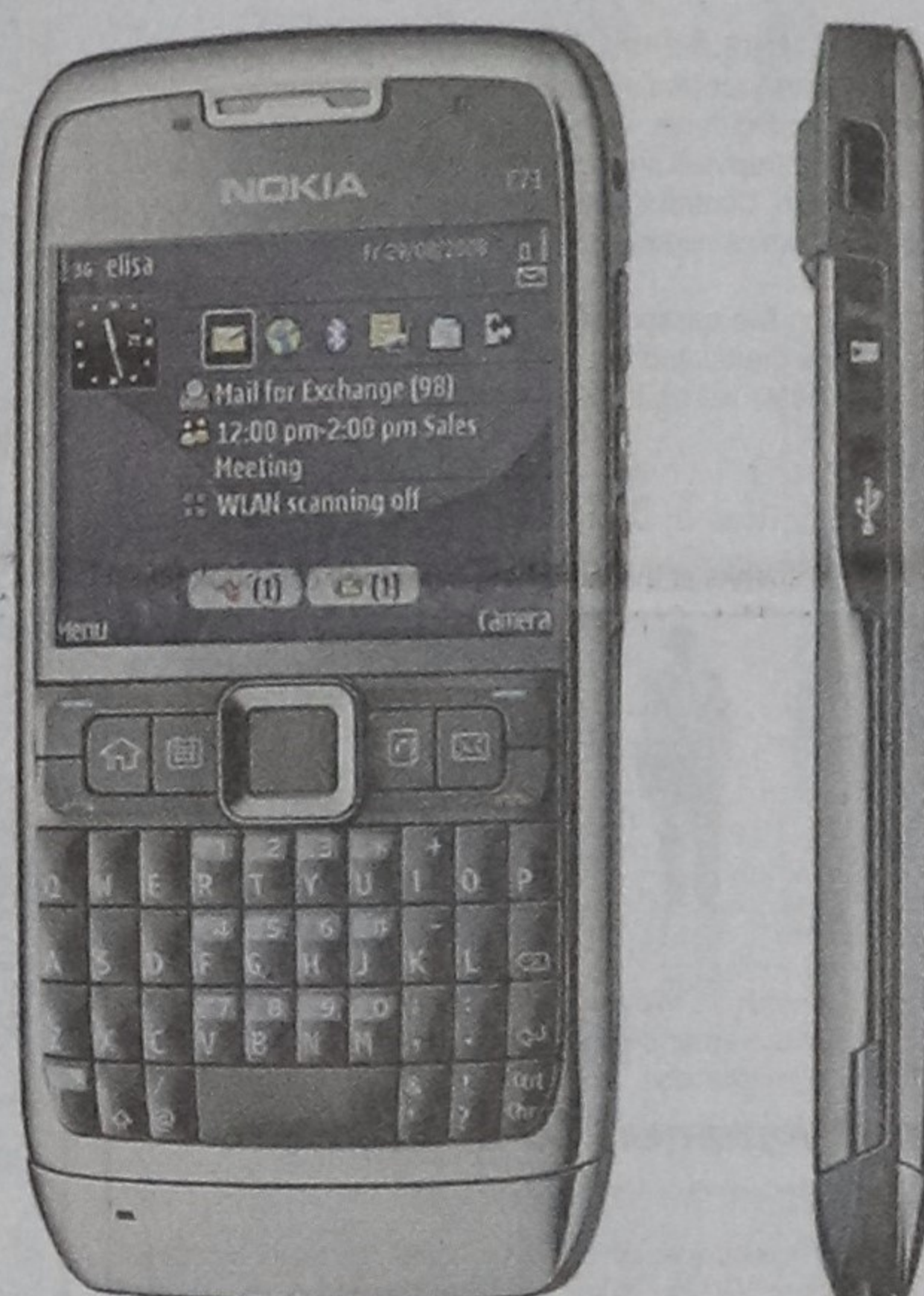
The HC earlier also stayed the proceedings against Mannan Bhuiyan in the Barapukuria coalmine corruption case.

The three accused have already been released on the HC bail from jail in the cases.

The government and ACC recently filed separate petitions with the SC to stay the HC orders.

Deputy Attorney General JBM Hassan appeared for the government, Advocate MA Aziz Khan stood for the ACC, while Barrister Ahsanul argued for the accused.

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Refrain from formulating law to punish guide writers, publishers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Book publishers at a press conference yesterday called on the government to refrain from formulating a law which will punish guidebook writers, publishers and sellers published by private publishers across the country.

Bangladesh Pustak Prokashak O Bikteta Samity organised the press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium in the city protesting the seizure of unapproved guidebooks from market through mobile courts.

Presenting a keynote paper, President of the organisation Md Abu Taher placed a proposal to the government to reconsider the issue of short timeframe within which the

writers and publishers will have to submit the books.

He said as different books have different contents, pictures and illustrations, they cannot have the same prize, adding, "The government should not go for the average costing of all books and should not give the whole authority to the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) for fixing the costs."

He drew the attention of the government in regard to evaluating scripts as sometimes the evaluators might be less educated than the authors who might leave the books full of mistakes and lack of standards.

He called for changing the system and structure of education to make today's stu-

dents competent for coping with the age of science and technology.

Lauding the government move of changing the question method, he also urged the government to consider the issue of amendment to the standards of textbook, teaching methods in classrooms and examination methods.

He said such initiative of banning all the guidebooks would close the way of the poor students to raise their standards along with creating a big unemployment margin, as thousands of people are involved in the book industry.

Vice presidents of the organisation Md Tajul Islam, Md Kamrul Hasan Shayak, SM Mohsin and SM Omar Faruk also spoke.

33 Moghbazar

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