

Pran Fruto Viharunnisa Noon Science Festival begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Pran Fruto Viharunnisa Noon 13th Science Festival 2009 organised by Viharunnisa Noon Science Club began on the school campus in the city yesterday.

Workers' Party President and lawmaker Rashed Khan Menon inaugurated the fair as the chief guest.

A total of 350 scientific projects of 12 schools and 13 colleges of the city were showcased at the festival, says a press release.

Apart from scientific projects, scientific seminars, general knowledge and quiz competition, screening of films based on science fiction, sky observation session, and science, maths, physics, astro and chemistry olympiads will also be held during the four-day festival.

Speaking on the occasion, Menon called on other educational institutions to organise such festivals and said the students will have to be more involved in creative activities alongside their studies.

Scientist Mohammad Ibrahim, Uzma Chowdhury, director of Pran-RFL Group, Rokeya Aktar Begum, principal of the college, and Zillur Rahman, chairman of the governing body, were also present on the occasion.

Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, vice chancellor of Dhaka University, will be present at the concluding ceremony on March 14 as the chief guest while Prof Mohammad Kaikobad will be present as special guest.



British Minister for International Development Mike Foster talks to children during his visit to an open school for street children at Kamalapur Railway Station in the city yesterday.

UK minister visits street children teaching programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The UK Minister for International Development Mike Foster said the teaching programme for the street children in Bangladesh maintains international standard.

The underprivileged children in Britain are also taught in the same way, he said.

Foster made this remark while visiting Aparajeyo Boys and Girls Centre at Arambagh in the city yesterday. He was impressed to see the centre and the children talking in English.

Earlier, he observed the teaching programme for the street children at Shahartali platform in Kamalapur Railway Station.

Aparajeyo Bangladesh, a non-governmental organisation, has been working for the street children with the financial assistance of the DFID.

The UK High Commissioner Steffen Ivans and officials of Aparajeyo Bangladesh and Manusher Jonno Foundation were also present during his visit.

FUTURE DIRECTION OF DHAKA URBAN TRANSPORT Integrated multi-modal transport network stressed

BSS, Dhaka

Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain yesterday underscored the need for developing a well-planned and integrated multi-modal transport network system in the metropolis for smooth transportation of masses and vehicles.

In doing so, initially a feasibility study needs to be carried out without any delay and afterwards next course of action for the multi-modal network system, said the minister and urged the Japan government to

provide Bangladesh with necessary technical assistance to that end.

The communications minister was inaugurating a seminar on "Future direction of Dhaka urban transport," jointly organised by the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and the Japan International Technical Cooperation (JICA).

BuET Vice Chancellor Prof Dr AMM Shafulullah chaired the inaugural session while Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Masayuki Inoue spoke as the guest of honour.

Chief Representative of the JICA Nobuko Kayashima gave the welcome address.

Secretary to Bridge Division, Ministry of Communications, M Abdul Karim and Secretary to the Roads and Highways Division ASM Ali Kabir spoke as the special guests.

He said shortage of lands, increase in population as responsible for the aggravated traffic system.

The government has already taken several steps to bring changes in the transport sector of urban while the experts have projected that the Dhaka's population is expected to hit 36 million by 2024.

The Strategic Transport Plan (STP) has been prepared under the direction of the DTCB with an aim to guide the development of transportation structure for the next 20 years, said Syed Abul Hossain.

The administration has, of late, taken a decision to build up a railway cum road bridge at Kalurghat in Chittagong. Besides, steps to be taken for long cherished elevated expressway as well as a metro rail, he said.

Nobuko said, the city's traffic system has become a major bottleneck in the country's overall economic prosperity. To overcome the problems, he suggested, a comprehensive study on Dhaka urban transport needs to be done and afterwards an integrated transport network must be established.

Kayashima committed his government's support to the transport sector of the country saying that about 14 percent of the Japan government's supports so far dedicated to the transportation sector of Bangladesh.

Dhaka has become a densely populated mega city due to massive urbanization as 10 percent of the total population now live in the capital, said Abdul Karim adding as many as 130 new vehicles come in the metropolis every day.

JICA sources said, a study on 'Dhaka Urban Transportation Design' to be carried out this month ahead of the establishing the planned integrated multi-modal transport network.

Tk 1.1 crore Japanese grant for 2 NGOs

UNB, Dhaka

Japan will provide grants 172,373 US dollar (approximately Tk 1.1 crore) to two Bangladeshi NGOs -- Mukti and Institute of Development Affairs (IDEA) -- under Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGHSP).

Japanese Ambassador Masayuki Inoue signed two grant contracts with Mukti and IDEA at the Embassy yesterday, says a press release.

Mukti, working for uplifting lives of the poor, women and children in Kushtia since 1990, will be provided 85,608 US dollar by the Japanese government for its project "Construction of Health Clinic cum Training Centre in Tantibond Village".

Mukti will establish a new health center to ensure easy access for villagers to the healthcare services at affordable prices. Training programmes on sanitation and hygiene will also be held for the villagers at the new centre.

IDEA, which is supporting the poor people in Sylhet region since 1993 on various fields, such as education, health and agriculture, will be granted 86,765 US dollar for its project "Construction of IDEA Healthcare Centre" in Rowail village of Sunamganj district, where IDEA has been working for more than 10 years.

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