

Japan assures help in socio-economic dev

UNB, Dhaka

Japan lauded the new national budget 2009-2010 of Bangladesh with the expectation that it would accelerate the desired socio-economic and infrastructural development of the country and assured assistance in its implementation.

Japanese Ambassador in Bangladesh Masayuki Inoue made the observation when he paid a farewell call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday.

"The budget reflects the visions and programmes of the government properly" in building Bangladesh as a modern and prosperous country, he was quoted as saying during the meeting.

Hasina sought more assistance from Japan in various sectors, including develop-

ment of roads and highways, waterways, energy and power.

Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad briefed newsmen after the meeting.

As the electricity crisis came up for discussion, the prime minister underscored the need for setting up solar panels and windmills as alternative ways to meet the increasing demand for electricity.

Besides, to make the communications between Dhaka and adjacent areas easier, the government has a plan to introduce commuter train services, she said.

The government has also planned to launch capital and maintenance dredging in the major rivers to save people from unexpected flooding, one of impacts of the global warming, the prime minister

told the envoy.

She sought Japanese assistance in implementing the development programmes.

The Japanese envoy assured the PM of extending necessary cooperation in socio-economic and infrastructural development of Bangladesh.

Inoue hoped that under her leadership Bangladesh would advance towards overall development of its people.

Hasina reiterated her government's strong commitment towards flourishing the country's economy through well-coordinated effort under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) paradigm introduced through the maiden budget of her government.

The PM and the Japanese Ambassador underscored the need for widening educational linkages and more

people-to-people contacts between the two countries for common benefit.

Hasina told the envoy that the last BNP-Jamaat government had caused severe harm to the country's economy through corruption and irregularities in all sectors.

Now, she said, the country has started its journey towards sustainable development as the people have got their democratically elected government in a free, fair, neutral and acceptable parliamentary polls held on December 29 last year.

"Now we are trying our best to recover the losses and give people a modern and prosperous life," she said.

Inoue formally handed over a letter of invitation from Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso to Hasina.

She also invited the Japanese PM to visit Bangladesh at his convenience.

The PM said Bangladesh attaches due importance to its relations with Japan as it is one of the major development partners of the country.

Japan has been assisting Bangladesh in various socio-economic sectors since the independence, she said.

She recalled the visit of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to Japan after Bangladesh's independence and said Bangabandhu's tour had played a tremendous role in building friendly relations between the two countries.

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Md Abdul Karim, Prime Minister's Office Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman and former Ambassador M Ziauddin were present.



Japanese Ambassador in Bangladesh Masayuki Inoue calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday.

TIPAIMUKH DAM
Send expert
team along
with MPs
Pro-BNP lawyers
urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-BNP lawyers yesterday demanded of the government to send a team of experts along with the parliamentary delegation to visit the site of 'controversial' Tipaimukh dam in order to determine what consequences Bangladesh might face if the dam is constructed by India.

They also urged people from all walks of life to forge unity against the construction of Tipaimukh dam for the greater interest of the country.

The appeal was made at a meeting organised by Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum (BJAF) at South Hall of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) in the city yesterday.

Former speaker to Jatiya Sangsad Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar told the meeting that the BNP government never agreed to allow India to use the land of Bangladesh as transit or corridor, but this government is trying to give such facilities to India by damaging the interest of the country.

He said the parliamentary standing committee, which brought allegation against him of misappropriating state money has no legal authority to probe into the matter as this committee has not been formed following the rules of procedure.

Barrister Moudud Ahmed demanded formation of a probe body to conduct an inquiry into the allegation brought by Awami League (AL) leader Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury about the serving of poisoned food to AL President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in jail.

He said if the allegation is proved true, he then chief adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed and the then army chief General Moeen U Ahmed will have to take the responsibility for it.

Barrister Nazmul Huda said the present government is trying to satisfy those who had enabled this government to come to power at the cost of the country's interest.

Presided over by BJAF President Advocate Khandaker Mahbubuddin Ahmed, the meeting was also addressed by Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia, Advocate Saidur Rahman, Barrister Mahbubuddin Khokon and Advocate Sanaullah Miah.

Body to evaluate creative question method

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has formed an evaluation and advisory committee for making necessary recommendations to

Mother, son electrocuted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A live electric cable fell on stagnant rainwater and electrocuted a mother and her son at Lalbagh in the capital yesterday.

The deceased are Mariam Begum, 40, wife of auto-rickshaw driver Sahadat Hossain of Nazim Uddin Road in Lalbagh and her son Shawan, 4.

Locals said they heard a cry and rushed to the spot. They found the boy floating and his mother standing in the knee-deep stagnant water near their house around 4:15pm. They used a bamboo to get them out of the water.

They were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors on duty declared them dead.

Sumon, elder brother of Shawan, said he was sent to a convenience store but he had to return due to the downpour. Meanwhile, his mother sent Shawan to see what was delaying his return, Sumon said.

Mariam then went out to look for Shawan, he added.

After yesterday's shower all roads in the area went under knee-deep water. Electricity supply was suspended in the area following the incident.

evaluate the creative question method and training standards of teachers in this regard, said an official hand-out yesterday.

Headed by Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, the committee includes Prof Md Ibrahim of physics department at Dhaka University, Prof Muhammad Zafar Iqbal of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (Sust), former professor of Sust Dr Safiuddin Ahmed, the director general of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) and the member of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB).

The committee will submit its recommendations within a month.

It will make recommendations on a number of issues including evaluation of training standard for the headmasters for creative question system, evaluation of the effectiveness of the training, formulation of creative question, evaluation of skill of the trained teachers, and evaluation of the training standard of the teachers examining answer sheets of creative question.

Apart from subject wise training to a total of 18,364 headmasters and 1,22,000 class teachers from different institutions at secondary level, a special training on formulation, revision and evaluation of question papers to 1200 teachers selected by eight secondary and higher secondary boards of the country has already been completed with a view to introducing the cre-

Tk 115.10 cr BOU budget announced

METRO DESK

Bangladesh Open University (BOU) has announced its annual budget worth Tk 115 crore 10.1 lakh for the 2009-2010 financial year.

Of the announced budget, Tk 90 crore 28.66 lakh has been allocated for revenue sector and Tk 24 crore 81.44 lakh for development sector, says a press release.

BOU Treasurer Prof Shanti Narayan Ghosh placed the budget at the 110th meeting of the Board of Governors chaired by BOU Vice Chancellor Prof RIM Aminur Rashid on Tuesday.

Bangladesh University Grants Commission (UGC) will provide Tk 18.50 crore as govt grant, which is 20.49% only in the revenue budget.

Tk 63.55 crore has been financed from BOU's own sources, which is 69.77% of the revenue budget.

The meeting also approved the revised budget of Tk 78 core 58.56 lakh for the fiscal year 2008-2009.

A total of 74.85% of the budget will be spent for academic purpose while 25.11% will be spent on salary and wages, and 27.04% in the general services sector of the budget.

The proposed budget is almost double of the previous two budgets of BOU, said the release.



Home-bound passengers wait for buses in ankle-deep water at Bangabandhu Avenue as the city witnessed a heavy downpour yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Join movement to save earth

UK envoy urges Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

British High Commissioner in Dhaka Stephen Evans yesterday met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Hasan Mahmud at the foreign ministry.

They discussed different important issues of bilateral interest.

The high commissioner urged Bangladesh to join the movement for saving the earth from the disastrous effects of climate change caused by rise in temperature.

Mentioning British Prime Minister Gordon Brown's proposal for building up a 100 billion dollar fund to face the challenge of climate change, Stephen Evans hoped that Bangladesh would join it.

He said as a leading member of G-77, Bangladesh would play an effective role in facing the challenge of global climate change.

Welcoming the high commissioner, Dr Hasan said Bangladesh is considering with utmost importance the Copenhagen conference to be

held in December and hoped that Dhaka would effectively participate in it.

He also hoped that Bangladesh would benefit from the proposed 100 billion dollar fund for facing the challenge of climate change.

Meanwhile, Libyan Ambassador Ahmed Ateya Al-Imam also met the state min-

ister for foreign affairs at his ministry yesterday.

The ambassador invited Dr Hasan to visit Libya.

The state minister urged the Libyan envoy to recruit more workers from Bangladesh.

He said the Bangladeshi workers are highly skilled and sincere.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Mahbubul Alam, editor of The Independent, and other guests hold copies of a book titled 'Kaleidoscope: A compilation' by Sabiha Mahmud Sumi at its publication ceremony at ASA Tower recently. Sumi is a Grade-12 student at Kodaikanal International School in Tamil Nadu, India.

Mamun gets bail in another case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday granted bail to detained Giasuddin Al Mamun, a close aide to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's elder son Tarique Rahman, in an extortion case.

An HC bench of Justice Syed Muhammad Dastagir Husain and Justice Md Rais Uddin granted the bail upon a petition filed by Mamun.

Mamun's lawyer Advocate Sabbir Hamza Chowdhury yesterday told The Daily Star that his client (Mamun) couldn't be released from the jail at this moment since he is accused in some other criminal cases. A total of 18 cases were filed against him. Of them, he was granted bail in most of the cases so far, he said.

Harun Ferdous, a businessman filed the case with Gulshan Police Station on March 27, 2007 against Mamun on charges of extorting Tk 35 lakh from him.

The case was placed under Emergency Power Rules (EPR), 2007 during the rule of the last caretaker government.

The HC earlier issued a rule upon the government to explain why Mamun should not be granted bail in this case. After holding hearing on the rule, the HC yesterday delivered the verdict.

Mamun was arrested on March 25 in 2007 during the caretaker government.

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PHOTO: COURTESY

A total of 18 students who were selected for theatre round, also known as SMS round, of 'Marks All-Rounder 2009: Protibhar Jhaloke Shera Hao Poloke' contest pose for a photograph recently.