

SONARGOAN, PANAM NAGAR

Historic archaeological sites need to be preserved

UNB, Dhaka

Significant archaeological sites in the country such as Sonargoan and Panam Nagar need to be preserved for the benefit of next generations and to attract tourists.

"These historic sites are in risk of being lost due to lack of coordinated programmes to protect those," Abdullah Al Mamun, a former student of Islamic History and Culture department of Dhaka University, told UNB recently.

Mamun said Sonargoan as a historic place bears many symbols of archaeological development of ancient Bengal and these should be protected by the authorities concerned for the next generation. "It's a place which can attract tourists from abroad too."

Khadiza Akhter, a tourist from Dhaka, said the government should take immediate steps to provide transport facility, especially bus services up to the spot, so that people from capital Dhaka can visit the place comfortably.

"In absence of bus services, drivers of CNG-run three-wheelers are charging excess fares from tourists. And they hardly bother in harassing passengers," she alleged, demanding security for the tourists.

When asked, Prof Dr Akhtaruzzaman, a teacher of Dhaka University's Islamic History and Culture department, said although some steps to protect

Sonargoan archaeological sites have been taken by the government, it should give further attention to protect the old capital of Bengal.

Describing the historical importance of Sonargoan, Dr Akhtaruzzaman said a famous university was established there in the 14th century and many greatest scholars from across the world used to teach the students. "Among many historical events, there was a slave market there during the Muslim rulers."

He said a planned city, Panam Nagar, was built there which is now in shabby condition. "We should protect these historical sites for the future generation."

According to history, Sonargoan was the capital of eastern Bengal under the rulers of Shahi Sultan during the medieval age. It now survives as a township about 27 kilometers southeast of Dhaka but from the old remains it appears to encompass a wide tract bounded on the east, west and south by the Meghna, the Shitalakhyia and the Dhaleshwari rivers respectively and on the north by the Brahmaputra.

With the annexation of the Muslim principality of Lakhnauti by Shamsuddin Firuz Shah in the 14th century, Sonargoan became the seat of an independent ruler under his son and successor Ghiyasuddin Bahadur Shah, and after the fall it became the headquarters of the eastern province of Bengal under Tughlaqs till 1338.

Sonargoan emerged as the capital of independent Sultanate under Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah (1338-1349) and his son Ikhtiyaruddin Ghazi Shah (1349-1352).

By the second quarter of the 14th century, Sonargoan developed into a commercial metropolis. Ibn Batuta describes Sonargoan as an important port city which had direct commercial relation with the countries like China, Indonesia, and the Maldives. Famous Muslin produced in Sonargoan, especially its finest variety called Khaza, had a worldwide reputation.

With the advent of Mughals and establishment of capital in Dhaka, Sonargoan is thought to have fallen fast into decay. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Panam Nagar was developed as part of the medieval Sonargoan. With the loss of political status in the second decade of 17th century, Sonargoan gradually lost its commercial importance as well.

The existing remains now are a few medieval buildings, mostly religious, belonging to the Sultanate and Mughal periods, some Mughal bridges, and a few residential buildings of the colonial periods. The other remains are Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah's tomb at Shah Chalapur, Panch Pir Dargah and a mosque at Bhagalpur, Sonakanda fort, Dewanbagh mosque at Dewanbagh.



Vendors occupy a portion of Mirpur Mazar Road to sell vegetables every day, causing suffering to road users, but the authorities appear to be indifferent.

PHOTO: STAR

Sunny, Promiti, Anni win Horlicks Future Force contest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The grand finale of Horlicks Future Force 2009, a talent hunt programme for the children, was held at a city hotel yesterday.

Kazi Sainul Islam Rabi Sunny and Nusrat Tahsin Kamali Promiti of Dhaka and Kaniz Taslima Anni of Khulna were adjudged Horlicks Future Force 2009.

Each of the three winners won a scholarship worth Tk 5 lakh courtesy of Horlicks while media partner of the event Channel 1 provided them with desktop computers.

Besides, Horlicks awarded the best ten participants with desktop computers.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, litterateur and Deputy Editor of the daily Prothom Alo Anisul Hoque and Managing Director of GlaxoSmithKline Bangladesh Limited Azizul Huq distributed the prizes among the winners.

Lauding the initiative of Horlicks, the education minister hoped that these kids would play an important role in forming a better Bangladesh.

More of such talent hunt programmes should be organised, he added.

Azizul Huq said, "We organised the programme with a view to giving the children a platform to explore their potential."

A total of 12000 children submitted applications for participating in the event. Among them, 200 were selected primarily while 30 were selected for the camp episode, said organisers.

The programme will be telecast on Channel 1 at 8:30pm today.

Six mobile phone thieves held in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Detective Branch (DB) of Chittagong Metropolitan Police after a two-day drive arrested six members, including a woman of a thief gang, and recovered stolen cell phones, cash and valuables in the port city yesterday afternoon.

Sources said a DB team raided different city areas including Madarbari and Dewanhat and caught the thieves.

The arrestees are Md Murad, 34, Mujibur Rahman, 30, Kamal Hossain, 28, Akash Ahmed Babul, 25, Bipul Barua, 20, and Swapna Begum, 20.

Police recovered 18 cell phone sets, prepaid recharge cards worth Tk 2500, cash Tk 12,500, tools like scissors, pliers, screw driver from their possession.

The arrestees confessed to burglaries at Bashar Enterprise and Brothers, an Aktel Touch Point and mobile phone shop, located in the city's Dewanhat intersection.

On August 8, thieves stole at least 370 cell phone sets and valuables worth Tk 16 lakh from the shop cutting grilles and breaking ventilators. Another theft took place there in the same way on August 12.

AC Wahidul of DB said the shop owner filed two cases with Double Mooring Police Station that were later transferred to the DB.

The arrestees have been involved in burglaries at shops and residences for long, the AC said.

Discriminatory laws against women to be amended Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will take initiatives to amend any laws if they found discriminatory against women, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed said.

"Find out discriminatory provisions in the laws and inform the government. We will take steps to amend them," he told women's rights activists at a discussion.

The minister also urged the women's organisations and their leaders to work for the welfare of the poor and marginalised women living in vulnerable conditions at slums and on the footpaths.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organised the discussion at Girdap auditorium in the city on Thursday on the occasion of the Convention on the

Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Day 2009.

Speaking as the chief guest, the law minister said the Constitution of 1972, which was based on the spirit of the liberation war, would have to be restored in order to enact a law to remove all the discriminations against women.

He, however, said that the government would not enact any such laws that can hurt the religious sentiments of the people.

He also stressed the need to forge a social movement against Fatwa or religious edicts.

Prof Imtiaz Ahmed and Mahila Parishad General Secretary Maleka Banu also spoke at the discussion presided over by Mahila Parishad President Ayesha Khanam.

Marine Police to be introduced soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Marine Police would be introduced soon to ensure full security of the waterway journey on the river routes.

The new security force would be formed to maintain law and order as the number of transports in the rivers has registered an increase in the recent years.

Additional IGP Naba Bikram Kishore Tripura said this while talking to the district administration officials as well as newsmen at Habiganj district headquarters yesterday afternoon.

He admitted that the number of crimes-related incidents has increased in recent years in the river ways in Habiganj and other districts.

The number of accidents has also been on the rise on our river routes due to the absence of required number law enforcers as well as their transports, he added.

The additional IGP inaugurated a Service Delivery Centre at Habiganj Model Police Station.



Winners of Horlicks Future Force 2009, a talent hunt programme for the children, pose for photograph with Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid and other guests at the award giving ceremony at a city hotel yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Low over Bay intensifies

UNB, Dhaka

A low over northwest Bay and adjoining area has intensified into a well-marked low over the same area.

It is likely to intensify further and move in a northwesterly direction, said a special bulletin of Met Office yesterday.

Under its influence, deep convection is taking place over the North Bay, it added.

Squally weather may affect over North Bay and the maritime ports of Bangladesh.

The maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to hoist local cautionary signal number three.

All fishing boats and trawlers over North Bay and deep sea have been advised to remain close to the coast and proceed with caution until further notice.

More police, Rab men to be deployed ahead of Eid to ensure security

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) will deploy 12,000 additional forces, including 5,500 Rab members, across the country to ensure smooth travel of the countrymen and their hassle-free celebration of the holy Eid-ul-Fitr.

Besides, the police headquarters (PHQ) on Wednesday sent letters to all the district police authorities asking them to deploy additional forces as per requirements, said Rab and police sources.

Rab Director General Hassan Mahmood Khandker

on Thursday said they would deploy over 2,000 forces in the Dhaka metropolitan area while 3,500 others elsewhere in the country.

"Our regular forces are already on the fields and since the 15th Ramadan, the additional forces would start working at the stations and terminals of railway, bus and lunch so that they can give relief to the people from being harassed by the brokers or unscrupulous transport owners," he added.

Hassan said, "Our intelligence and plain-clothes personnel would remain vigilant to protect the people from

robbers, muggers and other criminals."

Besides, patrolling and monitoring activities would also be beefed up, the DG mentioned.

Meanwhile, PHQ official sources yesterday said they already deployed 3,000 traffic police personnel on the roads in and around the city while 4,000 other policemen, including intelligence and plain-clothes forces, would be deployed very soon.

DMP official sources said their intelligence personnel, plain-clothes forces and patrolling teams have already been stationed.



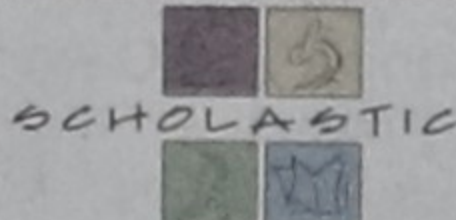
Sammilita Garment Sramik Oikya Parishad takes out a procession at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding payment of bonus and salary arrears to the garment workers before Eid.

PHOTO: STAR



Bangladesh Technical Education Board Medical Technologist Society forms an human chain in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday to raise awareness about swine flu.

PHOTO: STAR



SCHOLASTICA PLAYGROUP ADMISSION FOR 2010-2011 SESSION

Prescribed Playgroup Application Forms for campuses in Dhanmondi, Gulshan and Uttara are available now at the following Scholastica Fee Collection Booths:

Address and Phone Number	Timing During Working Days
1. MOHAKHALI - ASCENT Group Corporate Office Collection Department (7th floor) Khawaja Tower, 95 Mohakhali C/A, Dhaka - 1212 Phone - 8815222-3, 8819500, 8856018, 8819554 & 9887277	9 am to 3 pm
2. DHANMONDI - Middle Section (Dhanmondi) House # 78, Road # 11/A, Dhanmondi, Dhaka Telephone: 9120315, 8144918 & 8144919	8 am to 2 pm
3. UTTARA - Senior Section (Uttara) Plot - 2, Road 8 & 9, Sector - 1, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka Telephone: 8919544, 8916053 & 8912753	8 am to 2.30 pm
4. GULSHAN - Middle Section (Gulshan) House # 200NE (D) 3, Shaheed Major Najmul Haque Sarak Gulshan-2, Dhaka Telephone: 8828905-6 & 9886111	8 am to 2 pm
5. GULSHAN - Junior Section (Gulshan) House 8, Road 83, Gulshan 2, Dhaka Telephone: 9886367 & 9880100	8 am to 2 pm

Interviews are held immediately; therefore it is advisable to apply when the child is 2½ years old.

The last date of submission of the Application Form is 24 November 2009.

You are requested to submit the form at the Admissions Office in Khawaja Tower (12th Floor), 95 Mohakhali C/A, Dhaka only. Tel: 8815222-3, 8856019-20 & 9887277.
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