



Foreign Minister Dipu Moni unveils the jacket of Nazneen Haque Mim's publication titled 'Homes of Bangladesh' at 'Made in Bangladesh' themed fair in New York City recently.

Book on home décor launched in New York

METRO DESK

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni unveiled the jacket of Nazneen Haque Mim's publication titled 'Homes of Bangladesh' as part of the 'Made in Bangladesh' themed fair in New York City recently, says a press release.

Divided into thirteen chapters, the 356-page treatise deals with the tradition of Bangladeshi home décor, surveys into the modern developments in concepts of décor and its fine execution as well as craftsmanship that turn the vision into tangible reality.

Bangladesh High Commissioner in Washington Akramul Quader, UN Bangladesh representative Dr AK Abdul Momen, Consul General of Bangladesh consulate in New York M Shamsul Haque, media personality Muhammad Jahangir, actor Afzal Hossain and Channel i Director Zahiruddin Mahmud Mamun were also present at the ceremony.

The work has proved wildly popular among the expatriate Bangladeshis visiting the fair.

The book has been published by Journeyman and distributed by Agami Prokashoni.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Special database in next census: Minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is planning to make a special database of persons with disabilities according to different natures of disability and gender in the next census to be held in 2011, Minister for Social Welfare Enamul Haque Mostafa Shahid said yesterday.

In the national ID cards, the persons with disability will be regarded as Golden Citizens and they will get an increased coverage of social security protection scheme, he also said.

He was speaking at a seminar on 'UN Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disability' organised by Bangladesh Protibandhi Kalyan Samity (BPKS) at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city.

The minister said the government is committed to bringing every child with disability to school. Stern actions will be taken against any school that refuses to admit children with disability.

Speakers at the seminar said according to the last census held

in 2001 there are about 15 million persons with disability in the country. However, the actual number is much higher. They also added another 56 million people with age related disability to the total number.

They said although disability is a major social and economic phenomenon in Bangladesh, there is very little reliable data available on this issue, especially in the absence of a comprehensive national survey on persons with disabilities.

Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, president of Bangladesh Economic Association, said it is a must to know the actual number of disabled persons to include them in the mainstream of the country's socio-economic development.

Without appropriate statistics it will not be possible to address their needs, he added.

Advocate Salma Ali, executive director of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association, stressed ensuring the rights of women and children with disability.

She said it is still not possible to implement different terms of

the UN convention in the legal system, as they are not yet incorporated into the domestic law.

Abdus Sattar Dulal, executive director of BPKS, pointed out that the Ministry of Social Welfare is not solely responsible for disability related issues. Welfare and charity cannot be the solution to disability.

Promoting rights-based approach incorporating disability related development plans under all ministries is necessary, he added.

The speakers also underscored the need for implementing the UN convention adding that the persons with disability should also have access to decision making.

Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Justin Lee, Prof Mahmuda Islam of Dhaka University, Jean-Jacques Lature, first counsellor at the Delegation of the European Commission, Jonathan Foret, chief, PSID Worldwide, BPKS, and Gazi Mohammad Nurul Kabir, managing director of Jatiya Protibandhi Unnayan Foundation, also spoke.

'Give priority to public transport'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a view exchange meeting yesterday stressed the need for fixing parking fees depending on the location and time to establish a sound parking system in the city.

WBB Trust organised the view exchange meeting at its office in the city.

Project Officer of WBB Trust Maruf Rahman presented the keynote paper at the meeting.

He said as the value of land in Dhaka city is very high, it is a must to fix the parking fee on the basis of the real price of the land that will be used for parking.

Prof Mahbub-Un-Nabi of Buet said it is very important to prioritise public transport for a sound transport system.

Giving private cars the priority in the transport plan will not only make the city unlivable, rather it is also a crime in a highly populated city like Dhaka, he said.

Secretary General of Citizen Rights Movement Tushar Rehman, environmentalist Mohidul Haque Khan, urban planning expert Khandakar Niyaz Rahman, Coordinator of Green Voice Alamgir Kabir and Programme Officer of The Hunger Project Bangladesh Bidhan Chandra Pal addressed the meeting.

Pavement dwellers 'special category' of urban poor

Says study

DU CORRESPONDENT

All concerned stakeholders should recognise pavement dwellers as a 'special category' of the urban poor, recommended two anthropology professors after a five-month study on pavement dwellers in the city yesterday.

Dr SM Nurul Alam and Dr Siddiqur Rahman of Jahangirnagar University conducted the study on 173 pavement dwellers living on nine spots from January to May this year under the project of 'Amrao Manush' (we are humans too).

The baseline study revealed that pavement dwellers belong to the lowest tier of the poverty spectrum and are deprived of basic citizens' rights.

Drug addiction is getting worse among adult and child pavement dwellers and drug dealers often use children as drug carriers. Eviction and harassment by law enforcers pose serious threats to them, the findings claimed.

Dr SM Nurul Alam presented the outcome of the study at a press conference organised by Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP) at the National Press Club.

The researchers also recommended that income-generating opportunities be

increased in rural areas to reduce the trend of migration to urban areas.

The findings showed pavement dwellers are involved in 14 types of occupations and switching to other occupations is common, as there is no occupational security.

The dwellers face a number of problems, including sleeping disturbance, toilet problem, cooking and availability of water.

The dwellers choose pavements because they cannot afford to rent residence, do not have any place to live and proximity to their workplaces, said the study.

Bangladesh chapter of Concern Worldwide started the five-year project in 2008 for the development of pavement dwellers in Dhaka city. Four NGOs and Dhaka City Corporation are also involved in the project.

Since its beginning, the project has enrolled 6,768 pavement dwellers and providing them with different services, including space for sleeping, cooking, medical treatment and non-formal education, to pavement children.

Country Director of Concern Worldwide Kieron Crawley, Mostafa Kaiyum Khan of CIJF and Khandaker Millatul Islam of DCC also spoke at the programme.



Dr A Atiq Rahman, left, exchanges document after signing MoU with Prof Tore Furevik at the residence of Norwegian ambassador in the city yesterday. Norwegian envoy Ingebjørg Støffing, centre, was present on the occasion.

MoU on climate change with Norwegian centre signed

METRO DESK

Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) in Dhaka and Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research (BCCR) in Norway signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to work in collaboration on the issues of climate change at the residence of Norwegian Ambassador in the city on Wednesday, says a press release.

Four principal areas of collaboration will be: sea level changes and impacts for Bangladesh, South Asia and Southeast Asia summer monsoon changes and impacts on Bangladesh, mass balance changes of Himalayan and Tibetan glaciers and its effects on Bangladesh and research training and exchange of scientific staff.

The collaboration aims to involve other institutions both from Bangladesh and Norway.

Both institutions are strong players towards the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC).

JOHNY MURDER One arrested from Uttara

A CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Moudud Quazi, 25, an accused in the US citizen Johnny Baroi murder case from Uttara in Dhaka yesterday.

Moudud was a warranted fugitive accused in the murder case of Johnny of Muksudpur in Gopalganj.

The US government repeatedly urged Bangladesh government to arrest Moudud.

Rab sources said Moudud and his accomplices abducted Johnny from Jolir Par in Muksudpur on April 20, 2008. They took him to Shibchar in Madaripur and demanded ransom for his release.

At one stage after not getting ransom they killed him. The body was found the following day.

A case was filed with Muksudpur Police Station in this connection on April 23, 2008.

He has been handed over to Madaripur Police Station.

Special training for Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A five-day training on 'crime scene management' given to 21 officials of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) by British forensic experts ended yesterday.

British High Commission in Dhaka organised the training at the Rab headquarters in Uttara aiming to increase knowledge to the participants on the special field.

The experts from the National Policing Improvements

Agency in the UK trained the participants on protection and preservation of a crime scene that is important for the criminal investigations.

Rab Director General (DG) Hassan Mahmood Khandkar distributed certificate among the participants. Duncan Brown of the British High Commission spoke at the programme.

Hassan Mahmood said since they have some specified job in regard to investigation, the training will be very helpful to their officials.



Rab Director General Hassan Mahmood Khandkar hands over certificate to a participant at the concluding day of a training at Rab headquarters in the city yesterday.

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