

## Cultural belt on cards to protect heritage

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The government is planning to establish a "cultural belt" at Dhaka University and its adjacent areas for protecting all historical heritages and preserving information about Bangladesh, including the 1952 language movement and 1971 liberation war.

The feature or design of the cultural belt is yet to be sketched as this project is now at the preliminary stage, Information and Cultural Affairs Minister Abul Kalam Azad told The Daily Star recently.

"We have planned to make the cultural belt involving Central Shaheed Minar, Bangla Academy and Karzon Hall of Dhaka University, International Mother Language Institute and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy at Segunbagicha to uphold our culture and historical heritage," said the minister.

He said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has given her consent to establish the belt and the government has already formed an expert committee in this regard.

Replying to a question, he said it has not been decided whether the structure of the cultural belt will be like a monorail or flyover.

Earlier in April this year, the ministry of cultural affairs submitted a statement to the High Court, informing that the government is planning to improve the environment of the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka by establishing a cultural belt for protecting its historical heritage and preserving information about it.

The statement was placed before the court in response to a rule in February this year. The court issued the rule following a

writ petition filed as a public interest litigation (PIL) by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB).

Following that petition, the HC on August 24 this year issued eight directives upon the government to protect sanctity and dignity of the Central Shaheed Minar that was set up to maintain spirit of the language movement and pay tribute to its heroes.

It ordered the government to set up Shaheed Minars on the premises of all universities and other educational institutions across the country to show respect to the memories of the language heroes.

It also directed the authorities concerned to set up a museum along with a library at any side of the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka and take effective measures so that no unsocial activities take place there.

On February 9, the HC has issued a rule upon the government and the Dhaka University authorities to explain why they should not be directed to take appropriate measures to protect the sanctity and honour of the Shaheed Minar, and set up a museum on its premises so that the visitors can know the history of 1952 language movement.

The HRPB filed the writ petition as a PIL stating that the 21st February is observed every year as International Mother Language Day, and the sanctity and honour of the Central Shaheed Minar are maintained for that day only.

But other days throughout the year, the Shaheed Minar is used by the people in different ways, and its honour and



dignity and the memories of the language heroes are undermined, said the petition.

In response to the HC rule, Abdul Wahab Khan, a deputy secretary of the ministry, submitted a statement to it on April 27 this year, saying that discussion with the Dhaka University authorities will be needed to implement the project as the university owns its land.

The university authorities are properly taking care of Shaheed Minar to protect its sanctity and honour, it said, adding

International Mother Language Institute

Photo: SHAWKAT JAMIL

that the government always helps the university in this regard.

The government is trying to uphold the historical heritage of the language movement and will take all necessary steps in future, it added.

## Ensure permanent infrastructure for students

President asks private universities

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged all private universities in the country to impart quality education to students ensuring required infrastructural facilities.

The president made the appeal when Vice Chancellor of Prime University Prof Dr M Abdus Samad called on him at Bangabhaban.

Zillur said most of the private universities have no permanent infrastructure for their students needed for congenial academic atmosphere.

"We think the scattered locations of faculties are an impediment to smooth learning," he said, emphasising that libraries with adequate number of

books and research materials should be established on campuses of all private universities.

The president mentioned that all universities should have spacious class rooms, rich libraries, big playgrounds and gymnasiums for the students to grow up as a complete man.

The vice chancellor told the president that he would try to abide by all the rules and criteria for ensuring higher education for students. "I will follow your directions during my tenure," he said.

President's Military Secretary Maj Gen Abul Kalam Md Humayun Kabir and Press secretary AKM Nesar Uddin Bhuiyan were present.

## POST-DISASTER MANAGEMENT Alem-Olamas to create awareness

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Islamic Foundation has decided to involve Imams and Alem-Olamas to create awareness among people about post-disaster actions, a press release said.

Advisory committee of the foundation took the decision with Samim Mohammad Afzal, director general of the foundation, in the chair at its Agargaon office in the city yesterday.

According to the decision, a three-day programme to train about 3.15 lakh religious institutes, 1.40 Imams, and 42,000 workforce of Islamic Foundation will be organised by Disaster Management Bureau and IFA's training academy for Imams.

To come forward to inform people of the duties after a natural disaster is a moral obligation of the foundation, said the press release.

About 2.70 lakh mosques; 12,500 Aleya madrasas; 9,500 Kawmi madrasas; 13,000 Hafizia madrasas; seven shrines; and 3.15 lakh religious institutes are affiliated with Islamic Foundation.

The meeting was also attended by the foundation Secretary Md Rezaul Karim, and its Director of Finance and Account Aiub Ali Chowdhury.



see page 5

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## HINDU KALYAN TRUST HC stay on appointment of Justice Gour Gopal to remain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court order that stayed the appointment of Justice Gour Gopal Saha as the vice chairman of Bangladesh Hindu Kalyan Trust.

Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division Justice ABM Khairul Haque passed the order in response to a petition filed by the government seeking stay on the HC order.

The judge also asked the government to file a leave to appeal petition with the apex court against the HC order within eight weeks.

The government appointed Gour Gopal Saha, chairman of the Administrative Appellate Tribunal, as the vice chairman of the trust on June 6 this year.

The High Court on August 26 stayed for three months the appointment of Justice Gour Gopal as vice chairman of the trust. The court also stayed the appointment of 20 other trust officials.

It also issued a rule upon the government and Justice Gour Gopal to explain under what authority he (Gour Gopal) has been holding two posts simultaneously.

The HC passed the order following a writ petition filed by Taposh Kumar Paul, a lawyer, challenging the legality of holding two posts by Justice Gour Gopal simultaneously.

The government recently filed a petition with the SC seeking stay on the HC's stay order.

The chamber judge of the Appellate Division yesterday modified the HC order and stayed for eight weeks the portion of the HC order regarding the appointment of other officials of the trust other than Gour Gopal Saha.

Additional Attorney General MK Rahman and Advocate Manzil Murshid, a lawyer for the writ petitioner, told The Daily Star that following the chamber judge's order Justice Gour Gopal cannot function as vice chairman of the trust but the other officials can continue their services.

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