



PHOTO: STAR

People wait in queues to purchase train tickets in advance at Kamalapur Railway Station in the city yesterday to celebrate Eid-ul-Azha with their near and dear ones.

Digital map to save Tk 374cr a yr: Study

BSS, Dhaka

Digital topographic map, which is now under preparation, can save at least Tk 374 crore in a year, according to a recent study of Survey of Bangladesh (SOB), the national surveying and mapping agency.

The study said digital topography maps can be used in field of communication, agriculture, infrastructure development, enforcement of law and order, disaster warning, defence, engineering and establishing e-governance for expediting work as well as reducing activation cost.

Of Tk 374 crore, the SOB study estimated that transportation sector could save the highest amount, Tk 98 crore, in a year.

Electricity follows by saving Tk 55 crore, health and population by Tk 41 crore, rural development by Tk 39 crore, physical planning, water distribution and housing by Tk 36.5 crore and agriculture by Tk 30.16 crore.

The study also estimated that the total economic benefit would be Tk 1,890 crore in a year, if indirect economic affects were accumulated with the direct benefit of the upcoming new digital map.

Considering the increase of demands of new maps, the SOB has decided to take a project

under 'Improvement of Digital Mapping System (IDMS)' programme.

The programme targets to prepare a new 1:25,000 scale digital topographic maps covering whole territory and 1:5,000 scale digital topographic maps covering five major cities.

Japan government has decided to support this project under its technical cooperation programme named 'Bangladesh Digital Mapping Assistance Programme (BDMAP)' to end in March 2012, Chief Representative of Japan International Cooperation Agency Bangladesh Dr Takao Tada told the news agency yesterday.

For public and private sectors, statistical data especially geographic information like topographic maps is the fundamental need for planning and implementation of various types of development projects, he said.

Official source of SOB said the existing 1:50,000 scale national base maps covering whole territory of Bangladesh have been prepared at approximately 50 to 60 years ago.

In this backdrop, SOB decided to take the initiative to set up six permanent Global Positioning System stations in six districts by next year which will help to convert all maps in the country into digital format with creation of a geo-database, it said.

Women seek divorce more than men, say DCC records

50,000 divorce-seeking petitions in last 3 months; extra marital affairs, torture main reasons

ALPHA ARZU

The incidence of divorce (dissolution of marriage) is increasing significantly in the city as 50,000 divorce-seeking petitions were recorded at the Dhaka City Corporation's (DCC) marriage and divorce section in last three months.

Now women seek divorce more than men for various reasons, said DCC officials.

Seventy percent of the petitions recorded in marriage registrar offices (Kazi Office) and the courts in the city have been filed by women with allegation of their husbands' extra marital affairs, tortures and rude behaviors, said administrative officials of DCC's ten zonal offices.

The zonal offices receive all the petitions from Kazi offices or courts.

Muhammad Mafizul Islam, legal officer of the DCC section, told The Daily Star that most of the divorce cases have been filed with the allegations of extra marital affairs and offensive behaviors, dowry and torture. A handful number of spouses are

seeking divorce on ground of impotency, he added.

"Women are also issuing divorce notice on their husbands through the DCC's Shalishi Parishad," said Masudur Rahman, another legal officer of DCC.

"In the last one month, we have issued 500 notices to husbands asking them to show cause for alleged offenses," he said.

Zonal office-2 recorded 2,500 divorces while zonal office-5 documented 2,000 from January to September this year.

Administrative officer of zone-2, Muhammad Reazul Hossain said women filed 116 divorce petitions out of 177 alone in September. In the entire year of 2008, zone-2 recorded 587 divorce cases, he added.

Abu Naser Kochi, administrative officer of Zone-5, said the trend of divorce sought by women is definitely increasing day by day. In October this year, women filed 365 divorce petitions while the number of total cases was 517, he said.

Since August 2006 to December

2009, 1,646 divorce cases were filed, of them 1,152 were filed by wives and rest 633 by husbands in zone-5 of DCC.

The lawyers dealing with such cases said the trend of extra marital affairs is increasing and both wives and husbands are filing divorce cases on the same ground.

On an average, at least 30 women every day come to the Women Repression Prevention Cell (Nari Nirjatan Protirodh Cell) under the women and children affairs ministry at the city's Eskaton.

They mainly come to the lawyers for counseling and legal support on conjugal problems involving separation, refusal to financially support the family, divorce without paying den-mohar, polygamy, women's and female child's property rights, said Advocate Pervin Aktar Khan of the cell.

According to the cell record of 2008 and 2009, a total of 4,436 women filed complaints with family problems, 2,781 filed complaints of physical torture by husbands, 1,472 for second marriage and 1,109 for divorce on grounds of husbands abandoning the family for a long time.

Ayesha Khanam, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, said the trend of divorce sought by women is increasing these days. "Only a few years ago this sort of attitude by women was unthinkable in our society," she said.

"Now many women have decent jobs, they are self-reliant and aware of their rights. So, if they sense that the partnership is a miss-match, they immediately seek relief from it," Ayesha said. "Problem starts when one of the separated spouses refuses to take responsibility of the kids," she added.

"Husband and wife have the right to take decision of divorce or separation, but they should think about the fate of their children who suffer most in the process," said Prof Mehtab Khanam of psychology department of Dhaka University.

"In case of a divorce in a family, we should be truthful to our children and tell them that divorce or separation is a social and legal experience which may occur due to various reasons but they (children) are always loveable to both parents," Prof Khanam said.

Help challenged people

Dy speaker urges all BSS, Dhaka

Jatiya Sangsad Deputy Speaker Shaukat Ali urged the people of all strata to extend their helping hand to the people with disability.

He was speaking at a meeting and award-giving ceremony organised by Helen Keller Research Centre at National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Shaukat Ali called upon all to take lessons from the life of Helen Keller and help the people with disability live happily.

The deputy speaker handed over Helen Keller Gold Medal-2010 to 31 persons for their contribution to respective fields.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Jagannath University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Mesbahuddin Ahmed gives away certificate to a participant of a two-week long training course on 'Modern technique of public relations and communication' organised by Bangladesh Institute of Journalism and Electronic Media at its conference room yesterday. On his right is BIJEM Executive Director Mirza Tarequl Qader.

US believes in cooperation

Says special representative to Muslim community

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The United State's Special Representative to Muslim Community Farah Anwar Pandith yesterday said her government believes in cooperation among all communities in the world and President Barak Obama is trying to develop relations among the communities.

President Barak Obama during his visit in India and Indonesia for the last few days has already termed Islam a "great religion" and there is no war of America against Islam or Muslims, she said.

She told these while addressing a view exchange meeting with people, from a large cross section of society, in Tangail Press Club.

The government of USA wants to know about the new ideas and concepts of the Bangladeshi youth under 30 and wants to work with them, she said.

On harassment of Bangladeshi Muslims in American airports, Farah said it is a matter of security and not only America but also all countries including Bangladesh have tightened and developed their security systems at airports.

Among others, Director of American Centre Lauren Lovelace accompanied Farah during the visit.

Invent climate-tolerant crops: Ainun Nishat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Noted climate expert Prof Ainun Nishat stressed the need for more agricultural researches to invent climate-tolerant crop varieties to address the challenges of food crisis in near future because of climate change.

Due to the climate change, food production will drastically fall in near future resulting severe food crisis across the globe as well as in the country.

Prof Nishat was delivering lecture at a function styled 'Role of Media in Climate Change Negotiation' organised by the Journalism Training and Research Initiative (JATRI) at its office in the city on Thursday.

He urged those journalists who will cover the Cancun climate conference scheduled to start in Mexico on November 29 to know about the procedure of negotiation and disseminate objective information.

Due to climate change, saline water of the Bay of Bengal has already started to enter into the country's inland fresh water posing threat to bio-diversity of fishes, he mentioned.

Former managing director of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Jaglu Ahmed Chowdhury and journalist Quamrul Islam Chowdhury among others attended the lecture.

Theodore calls on chiefs of three services

BSS, Dhaka

US Oregon State Governor Theodore (Ted) Kulongoski and Commander 1st Marine Air Wing Brigadier General Beydler called on Acting Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Md Mainul Islam at Army Headquarters on Thursday.

They spent some time with the acting army chief, exchanged greetings and discussed on matters of bilateral interest, an ISPR press release said.

Theodore also called on Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Z U Ahmed at Naval Headquarters at Banani and Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman at Air Headquarters at Dhaka Cantonment.

Uzbek urges Dhaka to identify trade barriers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Uzbekistan has proposed Bangladesh to form a joint trade commission to identify problems standing in the way of furthering trade ties and solve those, a commerce ministry statement said yesterday.

Uzbek Deputy Prime Minister Ganiev Elyor Majidovich made the proposals during talks with Bangladeshi Commerce Minister M Faruk Khan, who was in Tashkent on Thursday leading a trade delegation.

According to his proposals, the joint trade commission will submit recommendations to improve trade relations between the two countries and take steps accordingly.

Majidovich, also the minister of foreign economic relations, investments and trade, assured the trade delegation of supplying half of the Bangladesh's total cotton consumption.

Currently, Bangladesh imports about 4 lakh tonnes of cotton from Uzbekistan.

Majidovich also proposed Bangladesh to set up yarn mills in Uzbekistan. Of the production, half will be exported to Bangladesh and his country will use the other half for domestic consumption.

He proposed to sell all cotton at 15 percent less price, added the statement.

Majidovich also urged Bangladesh to set up textile and pharmaceutical units in the central Asian country, as the South Asian country has come a long way in the two sectors.

During talks, Faruk Khan, who returned to Dhaka yesterday, urged Majidovich to open an embassy in Bangladesh.

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