

# More low-cost flats for the middle class

## Cabinet purchase body okays project to construct 168 flats in Dohar

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The government is going to construct 168 residential flats for the middle income earners in Dohar upazila on the outskirts of the capital.

A meeting of the cabinet committee on purchase, yesterday chaired by Finance Minister AMA Muhith, also approved a proposal for procuring two choppers for Rab and extended the tenure of Pre-Shipment Inspection (PSI) companies.

The three 15-storey buildings will have 56 flats each with a floor area of 1,298 square feet.

The housing and public works ministry will pay Tk 53 crore to Navana Constructions Ltd, which got the job as the lowest bidder. Each flat will be built at a cost of Tk 32 lakh.

The committee has also approved a proposal for building 360 flats, each measuring 1,336 square feet, for government officials in the capital's Mirpur.

Kushali Nirmata Ltd will also construct a 6-storey community centre for the residential project on payment of Tk 4.32 crore.

The committee has also nodded to the procurement of two choppers at a cost of Tk 90 crore to equip Rab for carrying out anti-crime operations more efficiently.

Bell Helicopter Asia (Pte) Ltd will supply the copters to be purchased from the US.

Moreover, the committee also extended the tenure of four PSI companies till December next year.

The companies are: SGS Societe Generale de Surveillance SA, Bureau Veritas International SA, OMIC Overseas Merchandise Inspection Co Ltd, and Intertek International Ltd.

The committee meeting also okayed a proposal for constructing a 770m long bridge on the Titas River at Brahmanbaria at a cost of Tk 84 crore.

# PM to arrive in France Wednesday

**UNB, Dhaka**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will arrive in France from Canada on Wednesday to attend the global partnership programmes on girls' and women's education next day.

Unesco is launching the programmes titled 'Global Partnership on Girls' and 'Women's Education and High-Level Panel on Girls' and 'Women's Education for Empowerment and Gender Equality' at its headquarters in Paris.

Hasina will deliver her speech on Thursday at the high level panel discussion.

On Wednesday, the PM is likely to attend an award receiving ceremony at Dauphine University. She is scheduled to attend a community reception at Hotel Inter-Continental the same day.

Apart from joining the main programme on Thursday, the premier has a schedule to have talks with Unesco Director General (DG) Irina Bokova and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

She will also attend the African Exhibition at Unesco Headquarters and attend a reception hosted by the Unesco DG.

The PM will leave Paris for Dhaka on that night.

# 80 new BRTC buses to hit city roads May 13

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Eighty new buses will hit the city roads on Thursday amid an acute crisis for transport and a chaotic situation in transport sector since price of compressed natural gas was raised on May 13.

Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) imported the buses from South Korea while 85 more will arrive in June and 90 in August. The government plans to import 950 different types of buses from different countries by end of this year, said communications ministry officials.

These Korean buses costing Tk 70 lakh each excluding import tax are better than

those from China which cost Tk 33 lakh. South Korean company Daewoo will assemble those, they added.

Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain hoped that the increasing demand for transport in the city would greatly be eased after the new additions.

He said many of these buses would ply between the capital and various districts.

The government is also going to import a large number of Indian buses with loan from India. Among those are 300 double-deckers, 100 single-deckers and 50 articulated buses, popularly known as bendy bus, the officials said.

# HARASSMENT OF GIRLS JU expels 4 students

**BSS, JU**

Jahangirnagar University (JU) authorities yesterday expelled four students for a year for harassing female students on the campus.

The expelled are Md Nurunnabi Nabin of Economics department, Md Mirazul Islam of International Relations, Jahangir Alam Arnab of Bangla and Ferdaus Ahmed of Govt and Politics department.

They have also been asked to pay fine of Tk 5,000 each.

# Call for coordinated efforts to manage water resources

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Speakers at a workshop yesterday stressed the need for coordinated management of fishery, water and water reservoirs of the country for proper management of the country's natural resources.

Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) held the workshop on "Integrated Floodplain Management in Bangladesh" at Brac Centre Inn in the city.

AKM Moazzam Haque, chairman of parliamentary standing committee on Ministry of Land, speaking as the chief guest, said the policy for water bodies is faulty, as the cabinet prepared it.

It is not possible to manage all kinds of water bodies using the policy as it mentions only some big water bodies. As the policy is faulty there is a scope for corruption in it, he said.

Dr Robert Arthur of MRAG said findings of research conducted on the issue could be

shared with the local administration, local people and community-based organisations so that they can take lesson from it.

Syeda Riwana Hasan, chief executive of Bela, said discussions with community-based organisations are needed before any decision on water bodies is taken.

Integrated Floodplain Management is undertaken by Bela, Middlesex University Flood Hazard Research Centre, Banche Shekha, Centre for Natural Resources Studies and MRAG, with the support from the UK department for international development's Research Into Use programme.

Dr Parvin Sultana and Dr Paul Thompson, senior research fellows of Middlesex University, said the project helped community-based organisations cultivate some sunflower, maize, wheat and garlic as an alternative of rice, costing less money and water.

The workshop was presided over by LGED Engineer Moshir Rahman.

# 'Protect rivers around city'

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Speakers at a human chain yesterday stressed on collaborative efforts from all stakeholders to protect dying (to be unable to sustain life) rivers around the city from grabbers and pollution.

The present government, always sincere about saving the rivers, reformed the river task force to attain that objective, they said.

The opinions came at a human chain and rally organised by Initiative for Peace

(IFP) at the bank of Turag River in Tongi, says a press release.

Moderated by IFP Chief Coordinator Muhammad Arifur Rahman, the programme was chaired by IFP Executive Director Mosaddeq Hossain.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority Deputy Director Rafiqul Islam, Member (finance) Matiur Rahman, local district officials, citizens and environmentalists were also present.

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