

President asks DCs to work for dev

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged the deputy commissioners to put in their best efforts for holistic development of the country.

"Holistic development of the country and successful implementation of various programmes mostly depend on efforts, skill and sincerity of divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners. I hope, you'll put in your best efforts while discharge your duties. Remember, the government is with you," he said.

He made the remarks while addressing the DCs conference at Bangabhaban.

The president asked the deputy commissioners to timely supply fertilisers and seeds, ensure irrigation, and disburse loans among the farmers to help make the country self-reliant to achieve food safety by 2013.

Zillur Rahman asked them to strengthen their activities to stop dropout at primary schools, achieve hundred percent literacy rate and improve education at all levels.

He emphasised continuing regular monitoring to prevent the price hike of essentials and said all sorts of legal measures to be taken to keep the prices under the purchasing capacity of the common people.

Rahman said the DCs' responsibilities will have to be dedicated to people's welfare while implementing development programmes taken both the government and at their own initiatives. "You're guardians and directors of the administration to fulfill the people's expectations of an independent state. So, your thinking should be people oriented, humanitarian and universal," he said.

Moderated by cabinet secretary Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, the conference was attended by among others, secretaries to the President's Office, all divisional commissioners and senior officials.



President Zillur Rahman with deputy commissioners at Bangabhaban in the capital yesterday on the occasion of DC conference.

ROHINGYA ISSUE DCs asked to be cautious in issuing passports

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The foreign ministry has asked the deputy commissioners (DCs), especially of Cox's Bazar and Bandarban, to be cautious in issuing passports to ensure that the Rohingyas cannot get Bangladeshi passports.

"Previously many Rohingyas managed voter IDs and passports of Bangladesh. Thus, they went abroad and created huge problems in Saudi Arabia. So, we asked the local administration for double-check," Foreign Secretary Mijarul Quayes told reporters yesterday.

After a meeting with the DCs at the ministry, Quayes said usually the border guards and coast guards are instructed to be alert when any tension arises with the neighbouring countries.

"But, we also want the local administration to remain well aware of the issues," he said adding that as maritime dispute with Myanmar is settled, there is an issue of more vigilance in the Bay of Bengal.

According to an estimate by the government, around four lakh illegal Rohingyas, alongside 29,000 registered Rohingyas, are staying mostly in the country's southeastern districts bordering Myanmar.

The issue has come to the forefront recently as Rohingyas made desperate efforts to intrude Bangladesh following sectarian clashes in Myanmar.

Meanwhile, forty three Rohingyas, who entered Bangladesh territory yesterday, were sent back hours later, reports UNB.

Major Shafiqur Rahman, deputy commander of 42 Battalion of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) at Teknaf, said BGB members in separate drives held 38 Rohingyas from Shah Pur Dwip, two from Damdamia and three others from Rilain in the morning.

WORLD POPULATION DAY OBSERVED '60pc women under family planning'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around sixty percent women have been brought under the family planning services across the country as part of the government's move to control overpopulation, said Prime Minister's Adviser for Health and Family Welfare Affairs Syed Modasser Ali yesterday.

"Although we have brought sixty percent women under the family planning services in order to reduce birth rate, we can not claim it as a success because we have to ensure hundred percent success," he said.

He was addressing as chief guest a discussion jointly organised by the health and family planning ministry and the family planning department in the capital's Osmani Auditorium marking the World Population Day yesterday.

As elsewhere in the world, government and non-government organisations in the country observed the day through different programmes on this year's theme "Universal access to reproductive health services".

Earlier, the ministry organised a colourful procession from National Museum to Osmani

Memorial Auditorium on the occasion.

State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Mozibur Rahman Fakir and UNFPA Representative in Bangladesh Arthur Erken also addressed the programme.

At the function, several workers and institutions of the country were awarded for their contributions to family planning and maternal health care services.

Besides, seven electronic and print media journalists were awarded for best reporting on population and health.

In another programme, Food and Disaster Management Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque termed overpopulation a challenge and laid emphasis on effective family planning strategy to control the country's population growth.

Debate for Democracy organised the programme including a debate competition at Basundhara City celebrating World Population Day.

Department of Population Sciences of Dhaka University also organised elaborate programmes to observe the day including a rally and debate competition.

Hanging body of domestic help recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the hanging body of a domestic help from a flat in the capital's Hazaribagh yesterday.

Rumi Aktar, 14, daughter of Mohammad Murad from Choubaria of Atghoria in Pabna, had been working in the flat rented by a brother and a sister, students of a private university.

Quoting the sister police said the brother and sister went out of home around 1:30pm and found the body hanging from a ceiling fan when the sister returned around 3:30pm.

Rumi was suffering from depression as her mother died 7 to 8 months ago and her father got married again, police said.

The body was sent to Sir Salimullah Medical College morgue for autopsy.

Kuakata boat antique

Says expert

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The boat that surfaced from beneath the sandy beach in Kuakata is of great antique value, said Research Assistant Md Golam Ferdous, head of the three-member investigation team, over phone from Kuakata yesterday morning.

The Department of Archaeology of Khulna Division dispatched the three-member team following reports published in The Daily Star.

"We have examined the boat very closely and there is no doubt that it is an ancient boat, 200 or more years old," said the researcher.

"Our initial challenge lies in how to extract it out from the beach without inflicting any damage to the frame," he said.

Ferdous, however, added that his concern at the moment also lies in guarding the boat from thieves until the excavation work begins.

"Since our arrival on Tuesday we have not seen any initiatives taken to guard the boat," he said.

The ancient boat, belonging to the first Rakhine settlers from the Arakan Province

of Myanmar over 200 years ago, was found on June 29 during low tide in the Bay of Bengal.

Sources in the department's Dhaka office said that the Department of Archaeology does not possess any modern equipment, expertise, or adequate fund to bring out the boat from underneath the sand and restore it to its original look.

"We may seek help from outside sources with permission from our ministry and restore it," said an official of the department in Dhaka willing not to be quoted.

French born Bangladeshi, Yves Marre, who initiated a traditional boat museum under the banner "Protection and Preservation of National Naval Heritage of Bangladesh", said he would be willing to assist the department in extraction and restoration of the ancient boat.

"We have to solve the fund problem and also work jointly with the administration to carry out this job," Marre said.

"I can tell you, the prime minister of our country, Sheikh Hasina, is very eager and serious in protection and preservation of our naval heritage and she will come forward to help us in this regard," he added.

Continue financing Padma bridge

Dipu Moni urges Japan

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni has expressed the Bangladesh government's firm determination to embark on the Padma bridge project with its own resources at the earliest.

In this context, she urged the government of Japan to continue financing for the project in a new arrangement while expressing the readiness of the Bangladesh government to continue negotiation with other co-financiers of the project.

Dipu Moni, who was on an official visit to Japan from July 8-10, said these when she paid a courtesy call on the Speaker of the House of Representatives Takahiro Yokomichi at his official residence in Tokyo on Tuesday.

Yokomichi expressed satisfaction at the increased level of parliamentary exchanges and the rising trend of bilateral trade and investment between Japan and Bangladesh.

He urged the Bangladesh government to create a better business environment to accommodate more Japanese firms in the country's thriving sectors.

Dipu Moni assured that Bangladesh would do its best to facilitate further Japanese investment by creating exclusive economic zone.

Earlier, Dipu Moni also called on the Japan Bangladesh Parliamentary League President and former Japanese prime minister Taro Aso at his office.

In the evening, Foreign Minister had exchange of views with our expatriate nationals.



Staff of Maasranga Television form a human chain in front of their office at Banani in the capital yesterday demanding arrest and trial of killers of Sagar Sarowar, a news editor of Maasranga Television, and his wife Meherun Rumi, senior reporter for ATN Bangla.

PHOTO: STAR

HAZRAT SHAHJALAL AIRPORT Customs staff stop working for an hour

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Outbound and incoming passengers suffered at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday as customs officials and staffers stopped working for about an hour alleging that Armed Police Battalion (APBn) members are interfering with their work, said airport sources.

Almost all customs officials and staffers crowded the customs scanning machine for about 50 minutes after an APBn member took back a passenger, suspected of carrying smuggled goods, for scanning.

Officials at the airport said the customs officials were enraged at the APBn, as the police force on Tuesday caught Zahar Lal Biswas, assistant revenue officer of customs, with Tk 15,000 that he took as bribe from a passenger named Alamgir Mondol.

Alamgir filed a case in this connection against the customs official.

On June 9, APBn members detained another customs inspector for drinking alcohol.

Meanwhile, Anwar Hossain, additional commissioner of customs, said that there was an attempt to stop work but nothing happened as he interfered.

Airport APBn Commanding Officer Hasan UI Haider said as per the law police are authorised to arrest anyone on suspicion of committing any cognisable offence.

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