



A devastating fire reduced to ruins what was just two days ago home to around 2,000 people at Begunbari near the capital's Hatirjheel on Thursday. About 400 shanties which housed the people were burnt to ashes. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

PADMA BRIDGE Obstructionists are country's enemies Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir yesterday said the people hindering the development projects, including Padma bridge, are the "enemies of the country."

"When we are going to implement Padma Bridge and other development projects for the country, they are hindering the implementation process. In the case of temporary interruption (in the process), they become happy," he said.

"As they become happy with temporary interruption, they are not related to the interests of the country. They are enemies of Bangladesh. They are the all-time Mir Zafars (betrayers) of Bangladesh," Alamgir told a discussion.

He said these people are also working to hinder the ongoing war crimes trial.

Dhaka city unit of Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote organised the discussion titled "War Criminals and Militancy Free Non-Communal Bangladesh: Pledge of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina" at the capital's Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh, marking its 32nd founding anniversary.

Alamgir, also a presidium member of ruling Awami League, alleged that the last BNP-led government did not work for the country's development but "only inflated their pockets."

Eminent actor Pijush Bandyopadhyay said he was sensing "conspiracy" in BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's rejection to the Supreme Court's full verdict declaring the caretaker government system illegal.

Shahe Alam Murad, organising secretary of Dhaka city unit Awami League, and Balram Poddar, director of Janata Bank, among others, spoke at the discussion with Fatema Zaman Sathi, joint convener of Dhaka city unit Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote, in the chair.

Cellphone credit rechargers observe strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Providers of credit recharging service of mobile phones kept their shops closed in the northern part of the capital on Thursday demanding a raise in commissions, stated the president of Bangladesh Mobile Phone Recharge Baboshay Association yesterday.

The strike, called by the association, was participated by some 20,000 of the service providers in Gulshan, Farmgate, Shyamoli, Mohammadpur, Uttara and Adabar, said the president, Aminul Islam Bulu.

Bulu said they had demanded a commission of Tk 100 from the country's mobile phone operators for recharging every Tk 1,000 in the mobile phones of customers.

At present they receive a commission of Tk 27 for every Tk 1,000 recharge, which is not adequate to cover the expenses of the credit recharging service providers, he said.

"Over the last three years, we have demanded that the telecom operators increase the recharge commission but the operators have never listened to us or taken any step in this regard.

"We can not even pay the shop rent with the meagre amount we get out of this business," he said.

An official of a mobile operator said nobody takes credit recharging service of mobile phones as a business but more of a means to earn some extra money and so the demand was not valid.

3-day Asian tourism fair begins in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Aiming to showcase promotional packages to attract travelers to exciting tourist destinations of Asia, a three-day, "Second Asian Tourism Fair", kicked off in the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre yesterday.

For a Tk 20 entry fee, the offers at 120 stalls of tour operators, travel agents, airlines, hotels and other service providers from private and public sectors of over 10 Asian countries are available from 11:00am to 7:00pm.

The countries include Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Japan, China and Nepal.

Parjatan Bichitra, a monthly magazine, organised the fair in association with Bangladesh Tourism Board, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation and the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Reform Project of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Dhaka.

Inaugurating the fair, Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Faruk Khan said, "Tourism is one of the country's thrust sectors as it can generate the highest number of jobs. So, we need to work together to promote tourism globally."

He said the combined effort of all in promoting tourism would increase people-to-people contact and help establish world peace.

The fair's chief organiser, Mohiuddin Helal, said, "We want to promote Bangladesh as the tourism hub of Asia by arranging combined promotional activities."

He said the fair would help the country's tourism industry, strengthening networking mechanisms with the industry partners of

other Asian countries.

ILO released a comprehensive training manual at the fair to promote decent work in the tourism industry and contribute to poverty reduction via the promotion of jobs in rural areas.

"The toolkit is designed to strengthen the capacities of stakeholders for poverty reduction and sustainable tourism," said Arthur E Shears, chief technical adviser to the TVET Reform Project of the ILO, Dhaka.

Welcoming the initiative, Sri Lankan High Commissioner Sarath K Weragoda said Sri Lanka drew around one million foreign tourists last year and aims to make it 2.3 million by 2016.

He said South Asian countries have all the elements that can attract global tourists such as sea beaches, mountains, mangrove forests, archeological sites and scenic natural beauty.

Stating that Indonesia drew eight million foreign tourists last year, alongside millions of local ones, outgoing Indonesian Ambassador Zet Mirzal Zainuddin said the fair will facilitate networking among Asia's tourism industry partners.

"Tourism is one of the biggest and fastest growing sectors in Asia," said the Philippines Ambassador Bahnamir Abu Guinomla.

Vietnamese Ambassador Nguyen Quang Thuc said Vietnam expected 6.5 million foreign tourists and 32 million local ones this year and an estimated turnover of around US \$ 7.1 billion.

Over 900 million tourists travel globally in a year but only a small number from the total arrive in Asian countries, said Krishna C Aryal, deputy head of mission in Nepal Embassy.

LYNCHING OF WOMAN Two arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police on Thursday night arrested two people in connection with the lynching of a woman, assaulting policemen and vandalising a police van in the capital's Jatrabari area.

The arrestees are Abdullah, 25, and Hasan Ali, 28.

Earlier on Thursday noon, angry locals beat Maksud Begum, 40, suspecting her as a child-trafficker at Hashem road of Matuail. Maksud died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The mob also attacked the policemen while trying to control the rowdy crowd.

Masud Hossain, a brother-in-law of Maksud, said Maksud was mentally ill and she was not a child-trafficker at all. He demanded fair investigation in this regard.

Two cases have been filed in this connection.

Do more applied research Prime minister urges scientists

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday stressed the need for taking massive programmes to make progress in science and technology in the country.

"We need to take programmes so that we can use the latest technology for development in agriculture, industry, health, education, employment and in economic development," she said.

She called upon the researchers, teachers, scientists and students to pay attention in conducting applied researches apart from the basic ones.

Sheikh Hasina was addressing the inaugural function of a three-day international workshop titled "Nanotechnology and its Prospects in Bangladesh" at a hotel in the capital.

The University of Dhaka (DU) and Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) jointly organised the workshop in collaboration with the ISESCO,

COMSATS and COMSTECH.

Industries Minister Dilip Barua spoke on the occasion as special guest. Buet Vice Chancellor Dr SM Nazrul Islam, and deputy director general of ISESCO Dr Mukhtar Ahmed, among others, also addressed the function. DU VC Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique gave the welcome address.

Sheikh Hasina said the government will provide support for the development of infrastructure and other facilities and make international collaboration for academic and research activities in this new and emerging area of science and technology.

She expressed her government's support for setting up a national centre of nanotechnology on public-private-partnership (PPP) basis hoping that this will be a 'Centre of Excellence' in nanotechnology.

Local industries will be the direct beneficiaries and a public private partnership may be worked out for infrastructure, equipment, and other modalities, the prime minister added.

Income Tax Fair
Last Day



Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Faruk Khan speaks at the inaugural ceremony of Asian Tourism Fair 2012 at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

বিস্মিল্লাহির রাহমানির রাহিম

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০১৮৩৩-১০৫৪৩৮	০১৮৩৩-১০৫৪৩৭	০১৭৫৫-৫৮২২৪০	০১৭৫৫-৫৮২২৪৬

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