

Govt working to ensure equal facilities for all

Says planning minister

UNB, Dhaka

Highlighting the necessity of innovative ideas, Planning Minister MA Mannan yesterday said the government is working to ensure equal facilities for all.

"Instead of imitating other countries, we have plans of our own to achieve this goal... so far they have been successful," he said.

The minister made the comments at the inaugural ceremony of the first International Planning and Development Conference at the National Academy for Planning and Development (NAPD) in the capital.

Mentioning Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is also invested in research and educational activities, he said, "At each Ecneec and cabinet meeting, she asks us why more research is not being carried out. We can actually plan beforehand with new ideas through research," the minister added.

Mannan noted that through proper research and innovative ideas, welfare of people can be ensured.

"We need more research so that we can spend our people's money in the right place and reduce deprivation to some extent," he said.

He also said the country is under the right leadership and it will be working to ensure justice for all.

NAPD Director General Md Abul Kashem and its Additional Director General AAM Nasirul Kamal also spoke.

Ctg Wasa

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LGRD Minister Md Tajul Islam, who attended the programme as chief guest, said waterbodies have been bearing the brunt of the human and liquid sludge in absence of a functioning sewerage system.

The government has aimed to treat the sludge so that it can meet the criteria for Bangladesh of being a developed country, a goal set to be achieved by 2030, Tajul said.

"We must have preparation for treating our waste," he added.

The speakers said two million people will come under the sewerage system after completion of the project to be implemented in six phases.

Chattogram City Corporation Mayor AJM Nasir Uddin and Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Atiqul Islam were present among others on the occasion.



With worn-out surface and potholes at numerous spots, commuters are always in for a bumpy ride on Babubazar bridge in Old Dhaka. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

A Mediterranean

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With the aim of promoting Italian cuisine and farm produce, the theme for this edition has been set as "Food Education: The Culture of Taste". The Italian Embassy in Dhaka, along with other Italian diplomatic and consular offices and Italian cultural institutes all over the world, are organising many culinary events throughout the week.

In Dhaka, the Embassy of Italy is promoting an Italian food itinerary in a number of restaurants in town, which are offering special dishes of the Mediterranean diet. The week has also seen local chefs being trained on Italian cuisine, by respected chefs such as Eliana Vigneti.

The week is part of the "Italian Way of Life" plan, launched by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, to involve public and private entities in the integrated promotion of the country.

Age no barrier

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"In absence of the mayor, I had to deal with the municipality's officials and engineers. At those times, I felt an identity crisis and a sense of inferiority," Dolhar said.

After becoming councillor, he left his work as a mason and began working as a contractor of Education Engineering Department.

"When the engineers enquired about my qualification, I had nothing to say. I felt ashamed," he said.

Speaking about his family, Dolhar said his wife had completed her higher secondary education.

"She sat for BA examinations, but she was unsuccessful in one subject so she gave up," he said.

His youngest son is two-and-a-half years-old while the elder is eight. Dolhar said he will ensure highest education for them.

When contacted, college principal Ziaul Alam told The Daily Star that they allowed Dolhar to enroll in ninth grade, honouring his will to be educated.

"Our institute has previous records of teaching elderly people," he said, adding that a 80-year-old man and a 55-year-old union council member attended SSC examinations from the college.

BNP slams PM

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India Feni river's water without exchanging anything although the people in the country's northern region -- including Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat and Kurigram -- are facing serious water crisis in irrigation since India is not giving Bangladesh the fair share of water from Teesta.

"But the prime minister didn't talk about the problem. People are getting killed along the border almost every day, but Sheikh Hasina has kept mum about the matter too," Rizvi alleged.

The prime minister is least concerned about the water crisis and border killing, he observed.

"She [Hasina] can't sense the resentment of the people of her own country. She can only give, not take -- as she's satisfied only with the guarantee for staying power," Rizvi added. He said Awami League's ideal is to repress the country's people, but remain subservient to other countries.

Sheikh Hasina on Friday morning went to Kolkata on a short visit and jointly rang the bell for the opening of the first-ever day-night Test match between Bangladesh and India.

Later, she had a meeting with the West Bengal chief minister.

Rizvi criticised AL general secretary Obaidul Quader for his remark that the government could control everything in the country except for BNP.

"His [Quader's] comment echoes an autocratic ruler," the BNP leader observed.

He also alleged that the commerce minister is making bizarre comments about onion when the prices of the essential items are soaring.

Rizvi said there is a public perception that thousands of crores of taka are being plundered from markets by a business syndicate, led by the businessmen-turned-ministers.

He said no activity of the commerce minister was visible when the onion crisis hit the country and the prices of essential commodities have gone out of control.

Rizvi said people believe that the business syndicate, under the leadership of the commerce minister, has abnormally raised the prices of essential commodities, including that of onion.

Police arrest 15

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Ariful Islam and Kamrul Hasan are students of Chattogram Government Model College. Arif and Kamrul were also BNCC members of the college unit, said police officials.

The 15-year-old boy is a second-year student of Ispahani Public School and College.

During the drive, Afzal Hossain Atik alias Akash, 35, a supposed top central leader of the militant outfit and a part-time teacher of BN School Chattogram, and Md Tahmid Sufiyan, 35, director of Chattogram Digital School, managed to flee.

"The militant outfit is active and it has two teachers who used to instigate students in guise of private tuition, keeping guardians in the dark," added Ameena.

The police officials said, "We request guardians to keep eyes on their children about their private tuition and also their teachers."

COURT GRANTS REMAND

A court in Chattogram granted remand for the arrestees. The court of Metropolitan Magistrate Abu Salem Noman placed Arshadul on five-day remand, while the court also granted three-day remand for the other operatives after police produced the arrestees before the court in a case filed with Kotwali Police Station, said ADC (Prosecution) Kamruzzaman.

7 special tribunals

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Addressing the event, other speakers stressed broader coordination among different ministries and civil society organisations between India and Bangladesh for preventing trafficking, rescue and repatriation of the victims.

They also called for bilateral and regional engagement for child friendly rescue, repatriation, protection and integration services, and rethinking legal and policy tools regarding child trafficking for addressing cross-border trafficking of children.

They hoped that continual dialogue and engagement of cross-border actors can help gain insights into actual implementation of regional and bilateral commitments.

INCIDIN Bangladesh, a member of the consortium "Prevention of Child Trafficking through Strengthening Community and Networking (PCTSCN)", organised the event.

Ferdousi Akhter, additional secretary, Public Security Division of the Home Ministry; Advocate Salma Ali, human rights activist; AKM Masud Ali, executive director of INCIDIN Bangladesh, chair of ATSEC Bangladesh & NACC; Manabendra Nath Mandal, executive director of SLARTC and national coordinator of ATSEC India, among others, spoke at the event.

Government officials and representatives from international and national NGOs from Bangladesh and India attended the daylong event.

83pc women face abuse

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transports, carrying out campaigns in media by the government about women's safety, and enactment of necessary law and its implementation to stop harassment of women in public transportation.

Hosne Ara Begum of gender justice and diversity programme of Brac; Rajekuzzaman Ratan, president of Samajtantrik Sramik Front; Abu Bakar Siddique, deputy general manager of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation; and MS Siddiqui, the federation's another vice-chairman, among others, spoke the programme with Jyotirmoy in the chair.



Cadet College Club yesterday organised a reception for Lal Mia, a rickshaw puller who displayed remarkable honesty by returning Tk 18.50 lakh to its owner recently.

Unite against dishonesty

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transparency and accountability for the development of the nation, formation of a better society and creation of world-class graduates.

"The government is aware of this and various projects have been undertaken to improve the quality of higher education," Hamid, also the chancellor of the university, added.

"Students should not confine themselves to textbooks only..." he suggested.

He urged graduates to work for the betterment of the country. "You are now stepping into your professional life... remember, there is no end to acquiring education, knowledge and experience."

At the event, 3,250 students were conferred graduation degree. Of them, four received the Chancellor's Gold Medal from the president.

Former UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon was the convocation speaker.

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen, Education Minister Dr Dipu Moni, Chairperson of Brac University's Board of Trustees Tamara Hasan Abed and Vice Chancellor of the university Prof Vincent Chang spoke on the occasion, among others.

Cruising thru' traffic

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TRIAL RUN

Yesterday, the authorities arranged a trial run from Sadarghat to Karnaphuli Ghat-15 in Naval area.

While taking the trip, this correspondent noticed there were life jackets for all passengers. The waterbus is air-conditioned, has ample leg and luggage space and free wifi access.

The highlight of the trip was of course watching small and medium vessels over the river as well as the surroundings from

inside. Commuters were seen staying glued to the window glasses, enjoying the view.

The waterbus reached Naval jetty in 18 minutes. A bus was standby to take commuters to the airport, which took five minutes.

Engineer Md Shakhawat Hossain, chief executive officer of SS Trading, said their target is to save people's time and money. "Our initiative will also serve the environment as around 2,000 cars will not have to travel to the airport from the city once the service starts," he said.

Arshad Mansoor named

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Chief Executive Officer Dr Michael Howard, who has served as president and CEO since 2011.

Dr Mansoor brings over 25 years of experience in the industry. He completed his bachelor's degree from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology,

and went on to earn a doctoral degree in electrical engineering from the University of Texas, Austin.

EPRI is an independent, nonprofit organisation that conducts research and development on the generation, delivery and use of electricity for the benefit of the people.

Healthy children

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Regarding government's activities, he said there is a block allocation of Tk 100 crore for children in every budget.

Unicef Bangladesh Representative Tomoo Hozumi said, "Investing in child's development is not charity, it is an investment for the future."

Pointing out different examples, he said, "Bangladesh is doing well in child-related issues; however more needs to be done. For example, around 4.3 million children [aged between 6 and 15] are still out of school..."

Lawmaker Meher Afroz Chumki spoke about the need for vocational training to empower women.

"With that in mind, the government is constructing vocational training centre in every district," the Gazipur-5 MP added.

Everyone deserves to have

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be protected from all types of hazards.

In a changed residential pattern, now it can be found that well-off families are also living in apartment flats, he said. Besides, there are "gated communities" of different classes like the Defense Officers Housing Society (DOHS) or staff and teachers' quarters at Dhaka University or Buet, Prof Nazrul said.

So, an idea about Bangladesh's social system could be found through analysing its residential patterns from the sociological perspective, he said.

Terming Dhaka a "monolingual city", he said research should be done on the city to know why it attracts so many people despite being labeled as one of the "worst liveable cities" in the world.

He also said future urban cities should

not consist of buildings higher than six storeys.

Chairing the programme, National Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury said Dhaka city's communications system will be developed significantly in about 15 years, once the on-going projects including the construction of mass rapid transit are completed.

Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation Director General Prof Ahrar Ahmad delivered the welcome address.

Yesterday's lecture was the second of the second edition of the Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Distinguished Lectures.

In the first edition, seven eminent personalities delivered as many lectures in 2017-2018.

Those were compiled in a book published recently by Bengal Publications.

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- One (01) student achieved the first place in the combined merit list in the 2nd professional exam in May 2016.
- In 2017-2018 session, the success rate of International Medical College is 84.67% which is the second highest of all the Dhaka University affiliated govt. and private medical colleges' result (Reference: Dhaka University Annual Report, Page-849)

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