

DAP threatens 70pc natural waterbodies

Architects, urban planners slam proposed mega plan for Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite LGRD Minister Tajul Islam’s assurance at a press conference last Sunday that Dhaka will be transformed into a modern and liveable city, the proposed Detailed Area Plan (DAP) for the capital is facing severe criticism from architects and urban planners.

At a press conference yesterday, members of Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB) spoke at length about the flaws in the DAP draft, which has been formulated by consulting firms Sheltech and DDC under a work order by Rajdhani Unnayan Katripakkha (Rajuk).

Implementation of this draft will result in seventy percent of natural waterbodies disappearing, architects warned, adding that flood flow zones will be severely hindered under this plan.

“There is a clear point in the Terms of Reference for preparation of the DAP, which mentions demarcating rivers, canals, water bodies, water retention and catchment areas based on surveys done during the British and Pakistani eras and mouja maps,” said Jalal Ahmed, president of IAB.

“The draft DAP has ignored this point, and proposed a modification in the classification of flood flow zones,” he said.

Flood flow zones are areas which typically remain dry, but store water during rainy season. These are essential to prevent waterlogging in the city.

“The draft DAP proposes two separate terms for the current zones -- primary waterbody and general waterbody. This draft mentions allowing construction (conditionally) on the general waterbodies, which will be severely detrimental to the city and its people,” said Jalal Ahmed.

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Barred by police, victims of Tazreen Fashions factory fire could not go to Gono Bhaban as planned on the occasion of eighth anniversary of the tragedy yesterday. In protest, they laid down on the street near Jatiya Press Club with banners and placards, and to press home their three-point demand, which include proper compensation and treatment.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Tazreen tragedy victims barred from reaching Gono Bhaban

Eight years on, survivors still cry for justice

STAR REPORT

Police yesterday barred the victims of Tazreen Fashions factory fire from going to Gono Bhaban, on the eighth anniversary of the tragedy where at least 113 workers were killed and 172 injured as fire wrecked the garments factory in November 2012.

The workers -- injured in the deadly fire -- were marching to see the prime minister to press home their three-point demand.

They had been staging a sit-in in front of Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka for more than two months, day and night, demanding proper compensation and treatment.

The workers were barred by the law enforcers around 12:15pm. When they faced the barricade, they started to protest there and shouted slogans in favour of their demands.

Rehana Akhter, an injured worker, told reporters that four of her family members died in the deadly fire.

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BOOKS BRIEFING

Youthmag‘Quirky’launched

SHABABA IQBAL

Worthy Publications launched their first ever monthly magazine, Quirky, at Prezzie café in the capital’s Dhanmondi on Friday. The publication will be like the Reader’s Digest, with segments devoted to health, advice, lifestyle, entertainment, business, food, travel and literature.

“We wanted to introduce a magazine that is one of a kind, easy to read, yet informative—a quick read for people even on their busiest days. Quirky will have short, factual, engaging articles,” says Nuzaimul Haque Xishan, publisher of Worthy Publications.

The first issue contains reviews of Netflix’s The Haunting of Bly Manor, and books Playing with Fire by and When No One is Watching.

“For story ideas, we rely largely on

our young writers, who represent our target audience,” said Mithila Haque, head of public relations at Worthy. The writing team currently comprises 20 contributors.

“There will be more paid opportunities for guest writers,” says Kasfia Haque Samara, co-founder of Worthy. “Guidelines for submissions will be available in the magazine and on our social media pages.”

Issues of Quirky will be on sale from today at Worthy Books’s social media pages, at bookstores including Baatighar, Bengal Boi, Pathak Shamabesh, PBS, shops in Nilkhet and New Market, as well as popular cafes and online stores.

For more book-related news, follow fb.com/DailyStarBooks, @thedailystarbooks on Instagram, and @DailyStarBooks on Twitter.



CASES AGAINST ‘GOLDEN MONIR’

Rab calls on NBR, BRTA, CID for investigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday sent letters to three separate agencies to investigate the irregularities and wealth of Monir Hossain, also known as Golden Monir.

Those three agencies are National Board of Revenue (NBR), Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) and Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

Lt Col Ashique Billah, legal and media wing director of Rab headquarters, confirmed the development to The Daily Star.

“We have sent the letters to BRTA to check documents of his vehicle, CID to check money laundering issues and NBR to check whether he evaded tax. We would provide all necessary legal assistance to the agencies if they need any,” said the media wing director.

Meanwhile, the investigation of the three cases filed against Monir were transferred to the Detective Branch (DB) of police yesterday, Parvez Islam, officer-in-charge of Badda Police Station, told The Daily Star.

Rapid Action Battalion filed the three cases under the Special Powers Act, Narcotics Control Act and Arms Act with Badda Police Station on November 22.

Never-ending wait for justice

Perpetrators of rape, violence thrive amid perpetual legal proceedings, activists say

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On February 12, 2018, a Tangail court -- in just 14 days -- sentenced four men to death and another to seven years’ imprisonment for raping and murdering law student Rupa Khatun on a moving bus.

Many praised the quick trial, which is regarded as a milestone for the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal.

“Around three years has passed, and proceedings are still ongoing at the High Court. I don’t know when this’ll end and whether we’ll get justice. I don’t know anyone at the HC and couldn’t get any update about the case,” said Rupa’s brother Hafizur Rahman Pramanik, in a press conference at Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Amrai Pari Paribarik Nirjaton Protirodh Jote (We Can) and Nari Nirapotta Jote, a platform working for women’s safety, organised the conference.

Ramzan Hossain, father of Suraiya Akter Risha -- who was knifed on a footbridge by her stalker Obaidul on August 24, 2016 in the capital’s Kakrail -- also shared a similar experience, as Obaidul received death

penalty and Tk 50,000 fine in August last year, but proceedings are still ongoing at the HC.

Ramzan could hardly speak a few sentences and broke into tears.

The two platforms organised the conference to present a nine-point demand to stop violence against women (VAW) and children, and ensure speedy trial of VAW cases. Of the nine points, two were that VAW cases should be settled in 180 days, and the HC must settle such cases on a priority basis within the prescribed time.

The other demands include ensuring proper security, necessary treatment and compensation for survivors, children and their families during trial proceedings; modernising and sensitising the process of taking witnesses in VAW cases; ensuring necessary policies and actions by the government to execute the 2009 High Court guideline to prevent sexual harassment; making the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2020 successful; adopting a zero-tolerance policy

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Plants bearing bright pink flowers now greet drivers passing through Dhaka-Aricha highway, as Roads and Highways Department planted them on the road divider to beautify the area. This photo was taken yesterday from Savar’s Hemayetpur area.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Investigate forced marriage between 85-year-old man and minor: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed authorities to conduct an inquiry into the reported incident of forced marriage of an 85-year-old man and 11-year-old girl in Jamalpur and to submit the probe report to this court on November 29.

According to a news report published in the daily Samakal on November 21, local influentials of Bairapara village under Dewanganj upazila in Jamalpur on November 18 forced 85-year-old Mohir Uddin and 11-year-old girl to marry each other. They also tortured the elderly man at an arbitration, as his grandson Mihir Uddin allegedly raped the girl, the report said.

The HC asked the DC and super-intendent of police in Jamalpur and OC of Dewanganj Police Station to conduct the inquiry and provide victims with protection. The bench of Justice FRM Nazmul Ahasan and Justice Shahed Nuruddin came up with the suo moto order after Deputy Attorney General Abdullah Al Mahmud Bashir placed the newspaper report before the judges.

ATTACK ON HASINA’S MOTORCADE

SC clears way to resume trial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court verdict that cleared the way for a lower court to resume trial proceedings of a case filed over the attack on motorcade of the then opposition leader and now Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in Satkhira in 2002.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain came up with the order after dismissing a petition filed by Rakibur Rahman, an accused in the case, challenging the HC verdict.

On October 8, an HC bench led by Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam cleared the way for the lower court concerned to resume the case’s trial proceedings.

Following the petition filed by Rakib, another HC bench on August 23, 2017 stayed the proceedings and issued a rule asking the state why the trial proceedings against Rakib should not be scrapped.

In the petition, Rakib claimed that he was 10 years old when the incident took place in 2002 and therefore, the trial proceedings of the case filed under the Penal Code against him cannot be run.

During hearing on the petition, Rakib’s lawyer AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon told the court that the trial proceedings against his client (Rakib) could take place under the Child Act, 2013 as he was a minor at the time of bomb attack.

Meanwhile, Additional Attorney General SM Munir argued that Rakib was 32 years old during the incident as per the FIR. He did not inform the trial court that he was 10 years old during the time and therefore there is no legal bar to run the trial against him.

Endangered geckos seized while being smuggled in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CTG

Chattogram Metropolitan Police have arrested two people and seized two geckos from their possession, while the duo were smuggling them from Bandarban to Dhaka.

The arrestees are Monirul Haque (60) and Md Delwar (50), said police.

They were arrested from Maijartek area under Karnaphuli Police Station of the city early yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, police detained Monirul from near the Shah Amanat Bridge area, while he was carrying a shopping bag which held the endangered species, Assistant Commissioner of CMP Yasin Arafat said.

Police later arrested Delwar, who had originally given the lizards to Monirul for smuggling, the official said. The lizards will be handed over to the forest department, he added. A case has been lodged against the duo in this connection.

Tokay geckos are attributed supernatural powers in East Asian folklore, and it is an ingredient in traditional Chinese medicine. Some buyers are rumoured to pay thousands of dollars for specimens, making them a target for poachers.

Weapons used in Liberation War cannot be sold: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued an injunction restraining the authorities concerned of the government to sell weapons used during the country’s Liberation War in 1971.

In response to a writ petition, the court also asked the authorities to submit a report to it in six months describing what steps have been taken to preserve and protect the weapons and what their present status is.

The court also issued a rule asking the authorities concerned to explain in four weeks why their reported wishes to sell these weapons should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Mohi Uddin Shamim came up with the order and rule, following the petition filed challenging the government’s reported move to sell the weapons.

ZI Khan Panna, a Supreme Court lawyer, and Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), a leading rights organisation, jointly submitted the petition as a public interest litigation on November 15 based on a report published by Bangla daily Prothom Alo on October 5 in this regard.

In the petition, they sought necessary directives from the HC on the authorities concerned to not sell the weapons and preserve those as national heritage for the future generations.

Lawyers ZI Khan Panna, Shamsuddin Babul, Syeda Nasrin and Shahinuzzaman appeared for the writ petitioners while Deputy Attorney General Nawroz MR Chowdhury represented the state during virtual hearing on the petition yesterday.



Md Rashed dabbles in small businesses, and takes care of his small household. He was seen gutting a fish to get it ready for cooking, beside the rail line at port city’s Jhautola area. His wife is a worker at a readymade garments factory, and Rashed doesn’t mind taking care of the cooking while she is at work.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN