

'A friendship deeply valued' PM on Bangladesh-Sri Lanka bilateral cooperation



BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said multi-sectoral bilateral cooperation between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka will be further strengthened in future.

"In recent years, our bilateral cooperation has widened, and I believe it will grow even more through multi-sectoral cooperation, particularly in agriculture, trade, shipping, people-to-people ties, and tourism," she said.

The PM said this in a video message for a virtual event marking the golden jubilee of Sri Lanka's recognition of Bangladesh.

The PM recalled the Sri Lankan prime minister's visit to Bangladesh -- to join the twin celebrations of the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the golden jubilee of Bangladesh's independence last year -- with gratitude.

"We deeply value Sri Lanka's partnership in our incredible journey towards the attainment of socio-economic emancipation," she said.

In the message, the PM wished good health, happiness, peace, and prosperity for her Sri Lankan counterpart and for the people of Sri Lanka.



Right next to Begum Rokeya Sarani's divider at the Mirpur-10 roundabout, no fewer than 100 garbage vans stand in a queue -- which stretches up to at least 200 yards -- hindering traffic movement and spreading a foul stench throughout the area.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

MIRPUR-10

Roundabout turns into garbage-van stand

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Amidst the chaos that is Dhaka, Mirpur-10 stands almost as a perfect representation of the city's frenzy, albeit with a bizarre aesthetic of its own.

On one corner, there are furniture and hardware shops, and on the other are hospitals. Then come the shopping complexes, street vendors and restaurants.

However, this diverse landscape is not free from the complexities that surround Dhaka, one of them being waste management.

Right next to Begum Rokeya Sarani's divider at the Mirpur-10 roundabout, no fewer than 100 garbage vans stand in a

queue -- which stretches up to 200 yards -- hindering traffic movement and spreading a foul stench throughout the area.

The vans start to arrive around 10:00am and stay there pretty much the entire day.

According to garbage collector Rustom Ali, the issue comes down to the timing of when the vans collect garbage from households and when city corporation trucks pick it up from them.

This process continues till midnight -- making the traffic situation even worse.

Earlier, the city corporation allowed the vans used to make two trips, one in the morning and another in the evening. However, that directive changed after a Dhaka North City Corporation garbage

truck hit a motorbike in Panthapath last year. Since then, the official timing shifted solely to evening shifts.

Despite the directive, the situation is still as chaotic as ever.

"The city corporation told us to collect waste in the afternoon and evening, but most people dump waste in the morning and don't want to keep it there the entire day. Since we charge them Tk 100 per month, we have to listen to them -- and hence, we collect the waste in the morning," Rustom said.

What adds to the crisis is the absence of permanent secondary transfer station (STS).

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No mandatory dope tests at the moment Necessary rules still not enacted, as lab facilities insufficient

SHARIFUL ISLAM

The government move to make dope tests mandatory for all public and private recruitment as well as university admissions will take some time to implement, as necessary rules of the narcotics act are yet to be enacted, due to lack of sufficient test facilities.

A draft of the rules has already been formulated, and once the rules are enacted, even a salesperson of a shop will require a negative dope test result to get a job, while aircraft pilots will also require negative result certificate to get licence.

- Move taken to curb drug abuse
- DNC has undertaken project to build 22 testing labs across country
- Tk 156.57-crore project finalised
- DNC testing 60 to 70 people maximum at Central Drug Addiction Treatment Centre
- Police already testing recruits, other members suspected to be addicted to drugs

The move is being taken to curb drug abuse, said an official of Narcotics Control Department (DNC).

The draft dope test rules, formulated in light of Narcotics Control Act 2018 (Amended 2020), had been sent to the law ministry for vetting.

The ministry, however, returned it to the home ministry a couple of months ago, suggesting to increase lab facilities first before enacting rules, said the DNC officer, who is involved in drafting the rules.

Following the law ministry's observation, DNC

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PRAYER
TIMING
MAR 5



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	5-15	12-45	4-30	6-05	7-30
Jamaat	5-50	1-15	4-45	6-10	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

No one returned EMPTY HANDED 'Shishu Prohor' sees flock of young readers

DIPAN NANDY

After the entrance of the fair was opened at 11:00am for "Shishu Prohor" (Children's Hour) on the second last Friday of this year's Amar Ekushey Boi Mela, the fair saw an increasing number of sales -- continuing till the closure at 9:00pm. The fair ground was flooded with a sea of book-lovers, none of whom seemed to return empty handed.

During "Shishu Prohor", Halum, Tuktuki and Ikri of the popular cartoon series "Sisimpur" were a delight for the children as always.

Almost all the children were seen immersed in new books. Four-year-old Azzan's eyes were set on the book his parents got him, instead of the path ahead.

Little Abanti got a colourful book for herself from the Sisimpur stall, which she likes to call the

"Halum and Ikri stall".

"A special day for children at the book fair is really a wonderful thing. Children have more agency here, and can enjoy the time according to their wish," said Nazmul Ibne Fahim, Abanti's father.



Lipi Khandaker, a mother, said, "The way the children are getting acquainted with books from an early age with special segments like the 'Shishu Prohor', will help them develop their creativity."

Imran Hasan, sales officer of Shishubela Prakashan, said that sales are relatively better this time.

Parents are handing over all sorts of great books on various subjects to their children.

Meanwhile, Daily Star Books is at the fair with books for readers of different tastes.

Asik Mir, who is in charge of the stall, said people are coming from all parts of the capital every day to get books of their choice. However, sales on Fridays are always better compared to other days.

According to Rabin Ahsan, proprietor of Shraavan Publications, sales are expected to increase with each passing day now.

A discussion programme titled "Remember: Gaziul Haque and Sikandar Abu Jafar" was held on the fair's main stage yesterday. Secretary of cultural affairs ministry Md Abul Mansur presided over the function, which was followed by a cultural programme in the evening.



Amar Ekushey Boi Mela saw an increasing number of sales on its 18th day, also the second last Friday of the fair. What helped accelerate the sales was the "Shishu Prohor" organised for children. The venue was flooded with a sea of book-lovers, none of whom returned empty-handed.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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