

Bangladesh likely to keep attracting investments

Says US State Department report

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will likely continue to attract increasing investments due to its sustained economic growth, vibrant private sector, strategic location between South and Southeast Asia, as well as a large, hard-working and young workforce, despite severe economic headwinds related to the pandemic, said a new US report.

Bangladesh has enjoyed consistent annual GDP growth of more than six percent over the past decade, with the exception of the Covid-induced economic slowdown in 2020, it said.

The 2022 Investment Climate Statement released by the US State Department on Thursday is meant

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Amit Habib laid to rest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent journalist and Desh Rupantor Editor Amit Habib was laid to rest at his family graveyard in Jhenidah's Kazirber village yesterday.

The burial took place after Isha prayers, following his third namaz-e-janaza held at Jhenidah Press Club premises and attended by a large number of people.

Earlier, he was taken to Jatiya Press Club at 11:00am, where his second namaz-e-janaza was held. Eminent citizens, including his colleagues and political leaders of different parties, paid their last respects.

The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam, Jugantor Editor Saiful Alam, former president of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul, former BFUJ secretary general Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, Bonik Barta Editor Devan Hanif Mahmud, Samakal acting editor Muzzammil Husain, Protdinor Bangladesh Editor Mustafiz Shafi, Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Dr Zafarullah Chowdhury, participated in the second janaza among others.

His first namaz-e-janaza took place at

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65 patients hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 65 patients were admitted to different hospitals across the country in the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

With the new cases, 17 from outside Dhaka, the total number of dengue cases rose to 2,495, according to Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Among the patients, 336 are still undergoing treatment.

A total of 2,151 patients have been released from hospitals, while eight have died so far.

Warning the city corporations of a major outbreak of dengue virus this year, experts suggested taking extensive measures immediately to control Aedes mosquitoes.

Dhaka is at risk of a big outbreak, as clear, stagnant water, the breeding ground for Aedes mosquitoes, at under-construction buildings is abundant this time around.



Local children go down a “slide”, or rather a pathway that was meant for construction workers, to have fun. With no safety measures in sight, these children are able to enter the site freely, exposing themselves to risks of accidents. This photo was taken from Sayedabad area recently.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

A ray of hope for Dhaka's lifelines

City corporations to take action against building owners who connected sewerage lines to waterbodies

HELEMUL ALAM

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) is going to take action against building owners who connected their sewerage lines to lakes, canals or storm-water drains.

They will start taking measures from September 1 and have already identified 28 such connections in Gulshan and Banani areas.

“We have identified 23 lines at Gulshan and five at Banani, connected to Gulshan-Banani lake, and are working to identify more,” said DNCC chief waste management officer Commodore SM Sharif-ul-Islam.

DNCC Mayor Md Atiqul Islam said they are going to start the drive in posh areas like Gulshan, Banani, Baridhara and Niketan and will gradually cover all DNCC areas, to save aquatic life in lakes and canals.

“We have already held meetings with the societies of Gulshan Banani Baridhara and Niketan in this regard before taking action and have also given them solutions,” the mayor said.

“I have set up a soak pit for my house around four months ago, so that no one can point fingers at me and others will be encouraged to do so. The water my house now releases is not harmful for aquatic life,” he said.

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ATIQUUL ISLAM
DNCC Mayor

RECOMMENDATIONS

Pump out sewage water from soak pits twice a week

Release water after treatment

Set up plants at different locations

Introduce ‘pollution fee’

Provide support to owners to build septic tanks, soak pits

We are not allowing any new sewerage-line connections to surface drains or canals from July 1. We will implement installation of septic tanks and soak pits in old buildings gradually.

SHEIKH FAZLE NOOR TAPOSH
DSCC Mayor

A soak pit or soakaway is a closed, porous chamber that is directly connected to the primary treatment unit of a residential or commercial building. It serves the function of letting wastewater coming from the septic tank to slowly soak into the ground.

Former general secretary of Bangladesh Institute of Planners Adil Mohammad Khan said building owners have violated their Rajuk-approved plans in regards to sewage management, and thereby, are polluting waterbodies.

In modern cities, this type of violation is penalised with a high “pollution fee”. This should be introduced in the country’s cities immediately, said Adil, also executive director of Institute for Planning and Development.

In addition, city corporations and development authorities

should provide appropriate engineering and planning support for building owners to build septic tanks and soakaways, he added.

DSCC Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh said they are not allowing any new sewerage-line connections to surface drains or canals from July 1, but will implement installation of septic tanks and soak pits in old buildings gradually.

In the capital, Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) only has the capacity to treat sewage water in Pagla area, and even then, a large part of the system is not functioning.

Earlier at a programme, Prof Md Mujibur Rahman of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology said although 20 percent areas of Dhaka are connected to the

sewerage network that connects to Pagla Wastewater Treatment Plant, the plant treats sewage that is far lower than its capacity.

He said 71 percent household latrines (85 percent in slums) directly or indirectly discharge waste into open drains, leading to pollution of lakes and canals.

Mujibur said septic tank-soakaways do not work in Dhaka, because the soil’s ability to allow water movement is low. Septic tanks in most households are not designed and constructed properly, resulting in less sludge deposition in the tanks.

Iqbal Habib, joint secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon, said when one-storey buildings were abundant, setting up septic tanks and soak pits was conceptually valid. But for a building that houses 20 to 40

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SUNDARBANS

Forest officials target zero poaching

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

Forest Department wants to achieve zero poaching in the Sundarbans, the world’s largest mangrove forest and home to the critically endangered Royal Bengal Tigers.

Coming up with the desire in a ceremony organised to mark World Tiger Day at Bon Bhaban in the capital yesterday, department officials said that they want to follow the example of Nepal, as the Himalayan nation is the first to achieve this conservation feat.

Taking part in the discussion, Iqbal Abdullah Harun, additional secretary of environment, forest and climate change ministry said they will give a green light on the matter after receiving an official letter from forest officers.

Mihir Kumar, conservator of forest (CF) of Khulna Circle, said they are doing well to protect the Sundarbans tigers, as the area saw eight percent increase in tiger population since 2015.

As per data from Sundarbans Divisional Forest Office (east), around 46 tigers have died in the forest since 2001. Eight died of natural causes, 13 were killed by poachers, five were killed by locals and one died during cyclone Sidr.

Mihir narrated what activities are part of their conservation initiative.



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A trailblazer of the era

Say speakers at first instalment of “Abul Hasnat Memorial Lecture”

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Alongside a political upsurge, the 1960s also stands for the nation’s cultural resurgence. Literary minds like Abul Hasnat could be found as a trailblazer of that era, said eminent citizens, recalling the Kali O Kalom editor’s work and life.

Attending the first instalment of “Abul Hasnat Memorial Lecture”, speakers noted that Hasnat was a silent, behind-the-scenes figure in building a nation of rich cultural and literary legacy.

The event was organised by Bengal Foundation in the capital’s Bengal Shilpalaya.

Hasnat, who breathed his last on November 1, 2020, at the age of 75, is best recognised as the editor of “Kali O Kalom”, a revered monthly literary magazine. He was also a poet, essayist, art critic, litterateur and cultural personality.

Delivering the memorial lecture, Liberation War Museum Trustee Mofidul Hoque said not only Hasnat but the “magnificent” decade of the 1960s will be understood better if Hasnat’s works are evaluated and analysed properly.

“The unity showed by the nation was not only political or the merge of the historic six-point and 11-point demands. It was also a unity of politics and culture,” he added.

The quest for Hasnat should be in the silence of that era, behind the backdrop and behind the stage where he felt more comfortable because of his characteristics and perspective towards life, Mofidul said.

Mentioning that Hasnat’s demise came as a sudden shock, eminent artist Rafiqun Nabi, who addressed the event as a discussant, said Hasnat brought together poets, authors and artists through Kali o Kalom.

During the 1960s, Hasnat could involve every literary and cultural mind including great artists like “Shilpacharya” Zainul Abedin and Quamrul Hassan, Nabi added.

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Stop deaths on roads

Students march in Dhaka demanding safer roads

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road safety campaigners yesterday demanded authorities to take effective actions to stop deaths on road, in a march marking the fourth anniversary of the road safety movement.

The march started yesterday around 10:30am from the capital’s Khilkhet bus stand and ended at Kurmitola area, next to MES bus stand.

Some students dressed in white clothes took part in the procession with banners reading “Sarake Lasher Michil (Procession of the dead on road)”.

They also held placards stating “Increase public transport”, “Increase the number of zebra crossings”, “We want traffic-jam free roads”, “Why is the government failing to enforce the law?”

The deaths of Dia Khanam Mim and Abdul Karim Rajib of Shaheed Ramiz Uddin Cantonment College sparked unprecedented protests in the capital and across the country as students of schools, colleges and universities took to the streets, some attempting to enforce traffic laws that were routinely violated in the presence of police.

The protests moved the authorities into some action. The Road Transport Act was hastily passed in parliament, which provided for more stringent punishments for traffic law violations, and Prime Minister’s Office issued 17 directives. The following year, a high-powered taskforce headed by the home minister was formed to curb road crashes and deaths.

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

On the fourth anniversary of the student-led movement demanding safe roads, activists marched from Khilkhet bus stand yesterday, chanting slogans and demanding authorities take effective action to stop deaths on roads. The march halted at Kurmitola area’s MES bus stand – the same site where Shaheed Ramiz Uddin Cantonment College students Rajib and Dia were killed under a bus on July 29, 2018.