

Want to build a WALKABLE DHAKA

Says DSCC mayor

DSCC BUDGET	2021-2022 FY (in crore)	2022-2023 FY (in crore)
Dev expenditure	5,472.83	5,608.62
Revenue income target	1,211.46	1,208.70
Road, traffic infrastructure dev	238.81	256.10
Garbage management	10.68	15.05
Mosquito control activities	31.50	27
Environment development	52.80	49.35
Dev of recreation facilities	5.25	56.10
Income target from govt, foreign sources	4,829.23	4,816.09
TOTAL BUDGET	6,593.26	6,741.28

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday said they want to build Dhaka city as a pedestrian-friendly city.

"Forty percent of commuters in the city move on foot and we are working to ensure smooth pedestrian movement. Unplanned urbanisation and encroachment are the main obstacles to making the city pedestrian friendly," he said.

The mayor was addressing a press conference on budget announcement at Nagar Bhaban.

"We will hold discussion with all

stakeholders to come up with a better solution for hawker management. We will also continue our efforts to remove them from footpaths," Taposh said.

He said they have a plan to mark some areas or roads as "red" where hawkers will not be allowed, some roads will be marked as "yellow" where hawkers will run their business for a certain time.

The mayor said they understand that hawkers need rehabilitation and they will take initiative in this regard.

He also mentioned that they have taken initiative to recover the old Buriganga channel.

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Although palm-leaf hand fans (locally known as haat pakha) were deemed to be a victim of modernisation -- it has come back in trend again with the recent load-shedding crisis. These fans, therefore, were being transported to Dhaka's Mirpur area, after the vendor purchased those from Savar's Naama Bazaar for Tk 25 per fan. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

DU TEACHER

Demotion of Samia Rahman illegal: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday declared that the decision by Dhaka University authorities to demote Samia Rahman from the post of associate professor to the rank of assistant professor on charges of plagiarism was "illegal".

The court also ordered the government and DU to give all due service and financial benefits to Samia from January 28 last year, when she was demoted, till the date she resigns from the post of assistant professor.

The HC bench led by Justice Zafar Ahmed and Justice Md Akhtarruzzaman delivered the verdict after holding hearing on a petition filed by Samia, her lawyer Hassan MS Azim told The Daily Star.

The article in question was not prepared by Samia and there was no signature from her in the article, her lawyer said.

She had informed the DU authorities about it but she was demoted without providing her with any probe report, he said.

Three Dhaka University faculty members including Samia were demoted on charge of plagiarism in their research papers, at a monthly syndicate meeting of DU. The others are Syed Mahfujul Haque Marjan and Muhammad Omor Faruq.

'Think twice before signing'

Say experts on Energy Charter Treaty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Energy experts of the country yesterday urged the government to be cautious in its bid to sign Energy Charter Treaty, warning that it might jeopardise the already volatile energy sector due to its design to safeguard the interest of the energy giants.

They came up with the warning in a dialogue titled "Bangladesh Energy Transition Policy-2022 and Energy Charter Treaty", organised by Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) along with NGO representatives on raising social awareness about energy sector.

Prof Shamsul Alam, eminent energy expert and vice-president of CAB, said the treaty was designed in a way that ensures profits of energy giants would never be affected no matter what the situation is in the country.

Such a beneficiary (like the giants) has already grown in our country, like the 22 families of erstwhile Pakistan who used state machineries for such undue benefit, he said.

Coming up with the example of KAPCO, he said the government is still supplying gas to KAPCO with the price fixed around 30 years ago under a contract. In this way, the country's national capacity was threatened, which is alarming for an independent nation.

He said taking the advantage of lax regulation, Oxidental and NIKO -- two energy companies -- endangered our national energy security.

"They were let off the hook as Petrobangla and Energy Division facilitated them to bypass legal



The Energy Charter Treaty was designed in a way that the profit, interest of the energy giants would never be affected no matter what the situation is in the country.

PROF SHAMSUL ALAM
Energy Expert and Vice-President of CAB



The signatory country won't have the right to compel the companies to use its product and impose any obligation for local employment.

PROF TANZIMUDDIN KHAN
International Relations, DU



We were supposed to sign the treaty a long time ago. As we are lagging behind for not doing so in due time, we are taking preparation to sign it.

NASRUL HAMID
State Minister for Energy, Power and Mineral Resources Ministry

action. We have been losing the capacity gradually in the energy sector. We can't design a power plant, can't construct a power plant, and thus, we became paralysed in this sector", he lamented.

Indicating policymakers, he said, "They were not making mistakes. They are doing this because they are benefiting from this in many ways, which led to the rise of Begum Para in various developed countries. We have to stop this."

"We won't let them commercialise the energy sector as we did not let the government proceed with gas export once," he added.

He urged all to stand united to

put an end to such activities.

Prof Tanzimuddin Khan of international relations at Dhaka University explained how the Energy Charter Treaty is risky for the country's energy sovereignty.

He said section-18 of the treaty and its declaration contradicts each other. Though section-18 ensured the right and sovereignty on energy of the signatory countries, the declaration states that it has to be ensured that sovereign policy won't hamper the other sections of energy treaty.

"The signatory country won't have the right to compel the companies to use its products and

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Will take steps to start migration to Malaysia
Says expatriates' welfare minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expatriates' Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad yesterday said the ministry will take steps to ensure that the flow of migrant workers to Malaysia starts soon.

"We did whatever we could, but people's flow has not started yet... We will look into whether there is any problem [in the process] so that people can go," he said.

He was addressing an event to award children of expatriate Bangladeshis with education scholarships, organised by Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB), at the capital's Prothom Kallyan Bhaban.

The minister's remarks came amid a delay in sending workers to Malaysia after a memorandum of understanding in this regard was signed between the two countries in December last year.

Recently, the expatriates' welfare ministry started issuing employment approvals to local recruiting agencies for sending workers to the Southeast Asian country.

Attending the event as chief guest, Imran said besides blue-collar work, there is also high demand for skilled workers for white-collar jobs, such as nursing, in some migrant-receiving countries

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Make names of conspirators public Fakhrul tells PM

STAR REPORT

Stating that an anti-government movement cannot be a plot, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday urged Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to make public the names of those conspiring against her.

Speaking at a discussion programme, he categorically said any movement for toppling a government is not a conspiracy, reports UNB.

"We would like to clearly and openly declare that we want to establish a pro-people government by removing this authoritarian regime through a mass movement. There's no question of any plot here," the BNP leader said.

He said it is Awami League that came to power by resorting to conspiracy in 2008.

The pro-BNP faction of the Dhaka Union of Journalists arranged the programme at Jatiya Press Club, marking its founding anniversary.

On Thursday, the PM said a fresh plot has

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Who will be the BNP leader in next polls? Asks Quader

BS, DHAKA

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said the country's people want to know who will be the leader of BNP in the next general elections.

Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, came up with the remarks, responding to the statements of BNP leaders that they had made a mistake in 2018 by making Gonoforum President Dr Kamal Hossain as their leader.

About the decision of the BNP and its allies that they will form a national government if they win in the next general polls, he said, "They (BNP leaders) are dreaming again. In the last election, they formed Jatiya Oikya Front. It will be seen whether the national government dreamed by them is a national mockery with the nation or not".

The AL general secretary said at first BNP should join the polls and if the people want it, the party would win the polls.

'Better service, better returns'

Biman MD seeks to expand airline to increase yearly turnover

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has planned to expand its business in a bid to make a yearly turnover of Tk 9,500 crore, from the current Tk 6,650 crore, said Biman Managing Director and CEO Zahid Hossain yesterday.

"We want to establish and run Biman as a commercial entity like any other commercial airline -- which is the biggest challenge in itself," he said while speaking at a press meet at Biman's headquarters in the capital's Kurmitola.

He said customer service and luggage handling services of the national flag carrier aren't at the expected level. "There are opportunities to improve Biman's customer service."

"Why will people buy our tickets if we can't provide services as per their expectations?" he also said.

"Passengers will increase and the business will grow if services are improved," he added. "We've asked our cockpit and cabin crew to be more cordial with passengers on board, treating them with respect and humanity."

He said at present, the national airliner makes a yearly turnover of USD 700 million. "But we want to increase it to

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ACC may look into allegations Says HC on Grameen Telecom

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday observed that Anti-Corruption Commission may look into the allegations of Grameen Telecom illegally diverting funds to other companies and sending money to its trade union and lawyer's account.

The HC bench of Justice Muhammad Khurshid Alam Sarkar delivered the order after disposing of an application filed by Grameen Telecom Sramik Karmuchury Union, seeking winding up of the company.

During the application's hearing yesterday, the

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Even though traditional sailboats are a rare sight in Buriganga, several of them were spotted on the river, with their sails hoisted against the winds. One of the boats, with a vermilion sail, caught the attention of this photographer, as it painted a quintessential scene of Bangladesh's natural beauty against the green of the water hyacinths. This photo was taken at Gudaraghat in Mill Barracks area yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

