

No commodity shortage in Ramadan

Says agriculture minister

BSS, Tangail

Agriculture Minister and Awami League presidium member Md Abdur Razzaque yesterday said there will be no shortage of essential commodities in the country during the upcoming holy month of Ramadan.

"The government is taking all-out preparations..." he said while speaking at a reunion programme at Paska High School in Dhanbari upazila of the district.

Razzaque said the people will bring Sheikh Hasina back to power in the next election to continue the trend of ongoing development.

He also urged students to dedicate themselves to nation building.

About 20,000 former and incumbent students of the 75-year-old school joined the event.

Later, the minister distributed stipends and bicycles among 350 students from the minority communities under the Development Assistance for Special Area Programme at Madhupur upazila in the district.

Besides, Razzaque inaugurated a three-day book fair there, marking International Mother Language Day.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Some students recovered broken parts of Rabindranath's sculpture from a garbage heap in Suhrawardy Udyan and started reconstructing it in front of Dhaka University's Raju Memorial yesterday. One of the banners, placed beside the sculpture read, "Abolish Digital Security Act, get rid of all types of censorship".

Envoys happy with facilities at Bhasan Char: ministry

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign envoys who visited Bhasan Char on Friday were impressed with the facilities and scope available to Rohingyas there, said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday.

Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen, PM's principle secretary, senior officials and ambassadors of Japan, China, France, Indonesia and resident representatives of UN, UNHCR, WFP in Bangladesh visited Bhasan Char on Friday.

The visit to Bhasan Char was hosted to discuss progress on the island and support to the approximately 30,000 Rohingyas living there.

"Increasing community self-reliance is a priority, particularly given the increased humanitarian funding challenges," UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh Gwyn Lewis tweeted.

Japanese Ambassador Iwama Kiminori, Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen, French Ambassador Marie

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Rabindranath returns

DU CORRESPONDENT

The arrival, "forced" disappearance, and reappearance of a Rabindranath Tagore sculpture at Dhaka University has recently been the talk of the town.

The matter grabbed fresh headlines yesterday after some students and activists of left-leaning organisations in the university recovered broken pieces of the sculpture, including the severed head from a garbage heap at Suhrawardy Udyan and re-positioned it in front of the Raju Memorial Sculpture at TSC, by outlining the structure with bamboo.

However, the head of the sculpture was bent to its left side, protesting the university's steps to remove it in the first place. Besides, two new banners were placed next to it.

One of the banners reads,

"The sculpture was placed demanding freedom of speech and Rabindranath was chosen as a symbol of creative writing. But DU proctor demolished it, which proved that there is no freedom in the country."

NAZIR AMIN CHOWDHURY
Acting president of Chhatra Union

"Abolish the Digital Security Act and stop all forms of censorship", while the other reads, "In the pretence of pious prayer, I remain oblivious of you [Tomar Pujar Chhole, Tomay Bhule Thakil]."

Talking to The Daily Star, Nazir Amin Chowdhury, acting president of a faction of Chhatra

Union's central committee, said, "Rabindranath's sculpture was removed and broken into pieces because we demanded freedom of expression through that. But we put the broken pieces together and placed it in its previous spot."

"The sculpture was placed demanding freedom of speech and Rabindranath was chosen as a symbol of creative writing. But DU proctor demolished it, which proved that there is no freedom in the country," he added.

DU Chhatra Union President Shimul Kumbhakar said, "We heard that the sculpture was removed by the proctorial team followed by an order from Proctor Prof AKM Golam Rabbani."

Some students of DU's Faculty of Fine Arts and activists of Chhatra Union placed the structure beside the Raju Memorial on Tuesday, protesting the "recent incidents

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BOI MELA A window into world literature

DIPAN NANDY

Literature can leave a lifetime impact on our minds. It helps us understand ourselves and the world around us, and it transcends boundaries through translation. This year's Ekushey book fair saw a large number of translated versions of world literature by prominent authors.

Curious booklovers were seen buying, flipping pages, and searching for books to satisfy their literary palate at Suhrawardy Udyan yesterday.

A large crowd was seen in front of the Oitijhya pavilion. Shuvro, a student of North South University, said, "Translated books are like a window into world literature. However, translation has to be up to the mark as well for readers to enjoy them to its fullest."

Amjad Hossain Kajal, manager of Oitijhya, said they have published five books, which are translated by writer Syed Shamsul Haq. They are: The Odyssey by Homer, The coming of the Kings by Ted Hughes, Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey



Chaucer, Tess of the d'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy and The Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan.

According to the Bangla Academy, 20 new translation books have been published at the fair till yesterday. However, it has been seen that this number is even higher.

Some of the translated literature include: Pedro Paramo by Juan Rulfo, translated by Anisu Zamman (Pathak Shamabesh); The Color Purple by Alice Walker, translated by Mostak Sharif (Batighar); Notes from Underground and The Meek One by Feodor Dostoevsky, translated by Mashiul Alam (Mowla Brothers); The Housekeeper and the Professor by Yoko Ogawa, translated by Santa Rickey (Aboshor).

Translator Mashiul Alam said, "Translation of literature is a complex phenomenon. It's not just translating word by word, a translator has to understand the subject and have a clear idea of what he or she is writing about. Besides, accuracy

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ADDRESSING DHAKA'S PARKING CHAOS

Lone draft policy still in limbo

The lack of designated parking spaces for commercial buildings, markets, and city buses has led to vehicles being parked on the roads, causing severe gridlocks and huge loss of productivity. However, there is no clear parking policy in place as of yet to address the issue. An initiative to prepare a policy by Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA) is still in the works.

MD ABBAS and HELEMUL ALAM

Scattered parking of vehicles in the capital continue to be a menace for commuters and hinder their movement on roads.

The lack of designated parking spaces for commercial buildings, markets, and city buses has led to vehicles being parked on the roads, causing severe gridlocks and huge loss of productivity.

However, there is no clear parking policy in place as of yet to address the issue. An initiative to prepare a policy by Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA) is still in the works.

According to DTCA sources, the draft policy was sent to the road, transport, and bridges ministry in June 2020. In December 2021, the ministry held a meeting on the draft policy and sent it back to DTCA to incorporate some issues.

Later in November 2022, DTCA formed a 16-member committee to finalise the draft. The committee could not sit for a meeting on this as of yet.

Sources at DTCA said the committee is likely to sit with all the stakeholders any day next week.



In August 2022, Dhaka North City Corporation's Mayor Md Atiqul Islam, announced the launch of a pilot project, titled "Smart Parking", at eight locations. The project was supposed to start by September 2022 in Gulshan. A mobile application was also developed in this regard. However, to date, the project is yet to commence.

According to the draft policy, the local authorities – with approval from the DTCA – will determine parking demand, identify locations, and set fees.

Local roads can be used for parking with a time-bound system, and multi-level parking lots may be considered for densely populated areas. A committee will make decisions on on-street parking. The local administration will maintain parking facilities and set fees based on various factors.

Fees will be higher for on street parking, and fines will be used for developing the parking system. The system will be implemented by the local administration and police with coordination and approval from the DTCA, the draft policy read.

Prof Md Shamsul Hoque, a transport expert from the civil engineering department of Buet, said while constructing

a building, it is crucial to designate parking areas for all types of vehicles, not just cars.

Prof Hoque highlighted that drivers in the country tend to avoid parking in the basement of a building as it is often dark and uninviting.

To address this problem, he suggested that the city's development authority, Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk), should only grant permission for new building construction if the owners agree to provide free parking spaces in front of the building, apart from its basement parking.

Joint Secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, Iqbal Habib, recommended strict actions, such as conducting mobile court drives, stopping people from parking their vehicles beyond capacity, could be a solution to the existing problem.

"A comprehensive policy that addresses the parking crisis in its entirety is crucial

for a permanent remedy to the crisis," he added.

DTCA Executive Director Shabiha Pervin, said, "We've formed a 16-member committee making Muhtasim Billah the additional executive director (Policies & Planning), DTCA to finalise the draft."

The correspondents could not contact Muhtasim as he is currently on a one-month leave for training purposes. He could not be reached over the phone despite repeated attempts.

In addition, the two city corporations chose 68 different places for on-street parking in Dhaka city. However, there is no progress on that end as well.

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September 2022 in Gulshan. A mobile application was also developed in this regard. However, to date, the project is yet to commence.

During recent visits to these locations, the correspondents found that signboards were hung in all the dedicated places. However, the designated parking areas marked in yellow were becoming indistinct. Moreover, there was indiscriminate parking in all these locations.

"The implementation of the pilot project was delayed due to some technical difficulties with the app. However, the issues have been resolved and we are ready to launch the project," said Nayeem Raihan Khan, executive engineer of the DNCC Traffic Engineering Circle.

He said the project will be officially launched by Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan once the schedule is confirmed.