

Follow building code or face music

State minister for disaster management warns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Those who fail to construct buildings complying with the Bangladesh National Building Code will be brought under punishment, said State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Dr Md Enamur Rahman yesterday.

Addressing a debate competition at Bangladesh Film Development Corporation as the chief guest, Enamur said a team of skilled engineers will be formed to examine buildings and give necessary advice to owners during their construction.

The competition was organised by Debate for Democracy, a non-profit and non-government organisation, on the motion, "The role of building owners to tackle the risk of earthquake is more important than the government."

Dhaka Cantonment Girls Public School and College and St Joseph Higher Secondary School participated in the debate.

Hasan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiron, chairman of the organisation, said Rajuk takes more than a year to approve a building plan, which leads an owner to be more neglectful to comply with the BNBC.

"Some 72,000 buildings in Dhaka may collapse in a 7-8 magnitude earthquake, while 30 percent of buildings in Dhaka, including building no 1 of Bangladesh Secretariat, are at higher risk in case of an earthquake," said Kiron.

Debate for Democracy recommended that the government make all government, private buildings, hospitals, educational and religious institutes earthquake resilient and identify the risky buildings.



With the week coming to a close, traffic jams on Thursday have become a norm for Dhaka residents. Yesterday, many areas in the city saw severe gridlock. This photo was taken on Mirpur Road near Asad Gate.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Several injured as students of Dhaka, Ideal colleges clash

STAR REPORT

Several students got injured during a clash between two groups of Dhaka College and Ideal College in the capital's Science Laboratory intersection and nearby areas yesterday.

At least three students were hurt during the chase and counter-chase that followed the initial clash.

They were being treated at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Witnesses said there was a huge tailback during the clash.

Humayun Kobir Amjad, an honours student of Dhaka College, claimed the clash occurred after some Ideal College students vandalised a bus of Dhaka College.

A day before the incident, Dhaka College students allegedly beat up some Ideal College students, according to Shafiqul Islam Shabu, officer in-charge of New Market Police Station.

SP Mohiuddin suspended for breaching discipline

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muhammed Mohiuddin Faruq, former assistant inspector general of Police Headquarters, has been suspended on the charge of breaching departmental discipline and moral turpitude.

The home ministry on Wednesday issued a circular in this regard, stating it will come into effect immediately.

The circular did not elaborate on the cause of the suspension.

It invoked the Section 12 (1) of Bangladesh Service Rules-2018 and said he has been suspended considering the extent and nature of the allegations of breaching departmental discipline, moral lapses and misconduct.

Now an SP at Police Special Training School in Rangamati, he will be attached to the Police Headquarters, the circular added.

On March 15 last year, a woman claiming to be the police official's wife, filed a case with Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate's court accusing him of making her get an abortion against her will.

PRAYER TIMING		MARCH 3	
Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-15	12-30	4-30	6-05 7-30
JAMAAT 5-50	1-15	4-45	6-10 8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

'Digitalisation crucial for good governance'

Speakers tell dialogue on land management

Land rights have intertwined with the rights of women and indigenous communities. Given the multidimensional nature of this issue, it is not solely the responsibility of the Ministry of Land to address it.

DEBAPRIYA BHATTACHARYA

Many have fallen victim to the violence resulting from these disputes. Women and marginalised communities have particularly been affected. If the measures to digitalise land management are properly implemented, it will have a great impact on poverty alleviation.

SHAHEEN ANAM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The digitalisation of land management is crucial to ensure good governance and eliminate corruption, said speakers at a dialogue yesterday.

Although digitalisation is expected to bring a revolutionary change in land management, it is important to ensure that the process is participatory, they said.

Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, with support from Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), organised the event on "Contemporary initiatives in land management and citizens' rights" at the capital's Brac Centre Inn.

"Many people in Bangladesh do not have access to digital services, which is a challenge for them," said Itekhazuzaman, core group member of Citizen's Platform and executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh.

In Bangladesh, approximately 60 percent of the annual pending cases are related to land, indicating the prevalence and complexity of land-related

disputes. The government has taken various initiatives, including the digitalisation of land management, to resolve these issues.

But in many cases, the common people are left behind, as communities are not aware of these initiatives. On top of that, the lack of publicity campaigns about these initiatives is evident.

Debapriya Bhattacharya, convener of Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh and distinguished fellow of Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said, "Land rights have intertwined with the rights of women and indigenous communities. Given the multidimensional nature of this issue, it is not solely the responsibility of the Ministry of Land to address it."

Mustafizur Rahman, secretary at the Ministry of Land, mentioned the government's initiatives of introducing a digital map, saying, "The digital map will contain information about the boundaries, quantity and the past and present situation of land. There are

1,38,000 sheets, which have been digitised."

Shaheen Anam, core group member of Citizen's Platform and executive director of MJF, said land-related disputes have been going on for ages.

"Many have fallen victim to the violence resulting from these disputes. Women and marginalised communities have particularly been affected. If the measures to digitalise land management are properly implemented, it will have a great impact on poverty alleviation," said Shaheen.

"Women of the country should come forward to establish their land rights," she added.

Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury said necessary work is being done to solve land-related issues for sustainable development and to mitigate the sufferings of people.

"Through digitalisation, the work of officials up to the upazila level has been brought under accountability. However, service seekers have to be more aware as well," he added.

'Have so far identified 33 militants'

Says Rab after seizing another video of new militant outfit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion claimed to have seized a video from a member of newly-formed militant outfit Jama'atul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya in Chattogram on Wednesday.

In the video, the outfit asked people to join them.

During a briefing at Rab's media centre in the capital's Karwan Bazar, the law-enforcement agency disclosed the 7-minute video, purportedly created by the militant organisation.

The video also contains speeches of Jama'atul Ansar ameer Anisur Rahman alias Mahmud, and chief of dawah (invitation) wing Abdullah Maimun.

Several militants in combat dress and armed with firearms, including automatic rifles, were seen in the video.

Khandaker Al Moin, Rab's director of legal and media wing, said, "We have so far identified 33 militants from this one and another video..."

Besides, the Rab director said they have so far arrested 59 members of Jama'atul Ansar, returned two of its members to their families, while two died in the hills.

'We deserve better' House helps tell public gathering in Dhaka



PHOTO: COLLECTED

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"Our labour is worth more than the value it gets," said house helps at a public gathering yesterday.

They made the remark at the event titled "DigitALL Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality", jointly organised by Karmojibi Nari and Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK), held at the capital's Rabindra Sarobar.

MP Shirin Akhter said, "The government has a policy for house helps... Their rights have been long overdue. We won't wait any longer."

"Safe working environment, wage, social security, maternity leave must be ensured for them," she added.

About 500 domestic workers participated in the event and raised their voice to establish their rights, focusing on International Women's Day 2023.

Abul Hossain, trade union leader, claimed that a relevant law must be enacted before the upcoming national election.

The crowd also demanded the implementation of ILO Convention-189 and Home Workers Protection and Welfare Policy-2015.

Social activist Prof Mahfuza Khanam and Dr Dibalok Singha, managing director of DSK, among others, were present at the programme.

The government has a policy for house helps... Their rights have been long overdue. We won't wait any longer... Safe working environment, wage, social security, maternity leave must be ensured for them.

MP SHIRIN AKHTER



A passionate promoter of culture, tradition

Speakers fondly remember Ruby Ghuznavi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A discussion and exhibition, titled "Noibeddo/Offering", showcasing the works and designs by distinguished crafts exponent and Aranya founder Ruby Ghuznavi was held at Bengal Shilpalay in the capital's Dhanmondi.

Bengal Foundation, NCCB and Aranya Crafts jointly presented the discussion and exhibition that displayed her pioneering work in natural dyes, nakshi kantha embroidery and Jamdani weaving.

Speakers at the event shared fondly of their experiences with Ruby Ghuznavi. Many of her colleagues said Ruby always strived for perfection and yet dealt with coworkers with utmost care. They also said they were left without a guardian after her demise.

"She wore many hats but at the heart of it, she always wanted the very best representation of our culture. She elevated the cause of using natural colours since forming Aranya crafts and she has been an inspiration in sustainable business," said Nawshin Khair, creative and managing director of Aranya Crafts.

Ruby was also a founder of the National Crafts Council of Bangladesh. She worked tirelessly to raise

Colleagues and admirers of Aranya founder Ruby Ghuznavi, who passed away early this year, reminisced about her work in the arena of art and crafts at a discussion yesterday. In her memory, an exhibition was also inaugurated in the capital's Bengal Shilpalay. The event was followed by a cultural programme, inset. The exhibition will continue till March 11.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

OBITUARY



Mr. Khaled Rab, a prominent figure in Bangladesh's jute industry, passed away in Brussels on February 24, 2023, at the age of 79. He started his career at the Louis Dreyfus Company in 1965, joined Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation after Independence, and was posted in Brussels between 1978 and 2000, with responsibility for Bangladesh's jute exports to over 30 countries. He was elected Chairman of the Inter-Governmental Group on Jute (FAO), Chairman of the International Jute Council (UN International Jute Organization), and Associate Member of the UK Jute Goods Association. He was a keen sportsman and carried the Olympic torch in Pakistan for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. He leaves behind his wife, two sons, daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren.

Mr. Rab's Janaza will be held at Gulshan Azad Mosque on March 4, Ba'ad Asr. His Kulkhani will be held at his Gulshan residence on March 10, Ba'ad Asr.