

'Stop arresting our people without a warrant'

BNP urges DMP

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday requested Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) not to arrest the party's leaders and activists without any warrant.

A five-member BNP delegation made the request during its meeting with DMP Commissioner Khandker Golam Faruq at his Minto Road office.

Talking to reporters after the meeting, BNP Dhaka north city unit convener Amanullah Aman said the leaders and activists of BNP and its associate bodies are being arrested in the capital without any warrant.

"We saw that our party leaders and activists have been arrested, harassed, and implicated in false and ghost cases in the same way ahead of the national election in 2018 and 2014. We told them such arrests

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A portion of the Ashrayan-2 housing project site in Gazipur's Nayapara. Inset, one of the 142 families moving into the new home on Wednesday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON



An address for everyone

PM hands houses over to beneficiaries of Ashrayan-2

ASHIK ABDULLAH APU, back from Gazipur

"Maa, by your grace I got a house... I don't have any more worries. I don't have to beg anymore," Mohammad Hanif, a beneficiary of the Ashrayan-2 project, told Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina when she virtually handed houses over to the beneficiaries of the project in Gazipur's Nayapara on Wednesday.

Like Hanif, as many as 39,365 landless and homeless families were handed over a semi-pucca house and two decimals of land in the fourth phase of the project.

The premier also spoke with the beneficiaries of the Uttarpar housing project of Barishal's Banaripara upazila and the Nawagaon project in Sylhet's Gowainghat upazila.

"I will open a small shop and spend the rest of my life here," said Hanif, who could not hold back his tears of joy.

At the ceremony, Hasina declared that there will be no homeless or landless people in seven more districts of the country.

While addressing the event, the premier said, "The government is also providing employment opportunities for the marginalised people. Putting a smile on their face is a big achievement."

"Awami League is a pro-people party. This party stands by the people and works for them. Our only goal is that no one will remain without an address in Bangabandhu's country. We want everyone in the country to have houses," she said.

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Just promoting renewables won't cut it

Says CPD on sustainable development

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Promoting renewable energy will not be sufficient enough for sustainable development, rather there should be a policy on discouraging fossil fuel use, said Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) at a media briefing yesterday.

The think tank, at a media briefing, yesterday said policies regarding renewable energy and fossil fuel are discriminatory as they unfairly favour the investors of gas or coal-based power plants.

"The Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply Act, 2010 should be repealed immediately. With this act, there is no competitive space for renewable energy. There are grey areas in the bidding process and power purchase agreements," said CPD Research Director Khondaker Golam Moazzem, while presenting the keynote paper in the briefing, titled "Rethinking Renewable Energy Policy (Draft): A Comprehensive Assessments".

"We are wondering how the prices of electricity produced in coal-based power plants like Payra and Adani increased despite the government's promises to make them cheaper. The deals should be made clear and open to all," said Moazzem.

"The government provides a lot more fiscal incentives for nonrenewable fuels. Unless these supports are removed, it will not be possible to convince investors and consumers to shift to renewables."

He also mentioned that the high subsidies in the power sector are the result of the government's wrong decisions, such as providing "extra benefits" to power plants owners in the name of capacity charges.

"One of the main conditions of the

IMF's loan programme is to reduce the subsidy in the power sector. The government is reducing it by only increasing prices."

"If the subsidies are withdrawn from the power sector, then the price of electricity produced in fossil fuel-based power plants will be much higher than those based on renewable sources. Why does such a contrast exist?" asked Moazzem, demanding an open tender process.

"Introduce a process where the fittest companies can get the contracts to generate electricity at lower costs," he urged.

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KHONDAKER GOLAM MOAZZEM
CPD Research Director

The briefing appreciated the new renewable energy policy draft and termed it a "good initiative". However, CPD also demanded some inclusions.

"Though the revised draft is much more detailed than the original one, the policy has the potential to be more accurate -- the focus should be on renewable energy," said Moazzem.

"Compared to other countries, Bangladesh is far behind in terms of policy-making on renewable energy. A carbon cap should be introduced for all industries and eventually (the country

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LNG imports likely to increase

Says Petrobangla chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's energy mix will be dominated by liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the future, according to the plan of Petrobangla, the flagship organisation for supplying the primary fuel.

Petrobangla Chairman Zanendra Nath Sarker yesterday said they have plans to increase LNG imports.

"The demand for gas is increasing every day. We have planned to increase gas production from local sources, but it will not be sufficient to meet the demand," he said at a views-exchange programme with reporters at his office.

Petrobangla had the plan to explore and work

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US HUMAN-RIGHTS REPORT Claims about Jamaat worrying Says Nirmul Committee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Slamming the recently published US human-rights report on Bangladesh, Ekkattor Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee yesterday said the report's "untrue" claims about Jamaat-e-Islam will instigate Jamaat-led "fundamentalism and terrorism" in the entire subcontinent, including Bangladesh.

"Being in an alliance with BNP and with connivance of the US State Department, Jamaat is still engaged in various forms of evil conspiracy against democracy and sovereignty of the country through their sponsored militant, terrorist organisations," reads a statement of the pro-liberation platform.

In response to the State Department reporting that Jamaat candidates are not being able to

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MY DHAKA



EXPERIENCING IFTAR in Old Dhaka other than Chawk

RBR

The first day's iftar menu is an elaborate one in almost every household. Even when iftar preparation goes on in full swing at home, your mind oscillates between iftar bazaars, restaurant offers, and home-made dishes.

For many, getting food from Chawkbazar is a Ramadan family ritual. Old Dhaka is always bustling with food thrills; it has a rich unknown gem in almost every nook and cranny. However, many argue that the iftar hub of Chawk is highly overrated. Rather, the food available in various eateries of Dholaikhal, Dhoopkhola, Narinda, Laxmibazar, Nazirabazar and Nazimuddin Road is

Restaurant in Lalbagh comes to mind.

The roller ice-cream in Laxmibazar is also a notable offering. Shakib, the owner, took inspiration from Delhi street food and tried to introduce it in Dhaka. A plate of this soft ice cream, made from a blend of fruit juices rolled over ice in a roller and sprinkled with nuts, is sweet enough to be your light iftar.

The options for the main course are of course aplenty.

There is a new favourite to Old Dhaka's palate — nihari from Babubazar Mazar Lane. A nihari is generally cooked as a stew with shanks and marrow; in this dish, a whole mutton head is slow cooked and it is one rich stew to chew on.

"The kachchi market is in high



also worth a shot.

"During Ramadan, people who do not have a shop will open one to sell iftar. Iftar throughout the old town is a grand affair, and there is a lot of variation in places other than Chawk," says Abed Ali Khan, a food connoisseur and principal of Old Dhaka International School.

You can start with the classic Beauty Lassi and Lemonade. The refreshing drinks available there can quench thirst and be gulped at one go after you break your fast. A tall glass of almond-pistachio milk shake or badam shorbot with crushed ice, or a goblet of salty whey or matta of Royal

demand during Ramadan, and places like Kolkata Kacchi, Nawab's, Sultan's Dine, which were not in the scene 10 years ago, will be buzzing with special orders.

"You are spoilt for choice when it comes to kababs: shutli kabab, boti kabab, beef sheekh, and chicken tikkas are to be eaten with soft naans or chapati, and rumali rotis. The special ghee-fried thin and crunchy jilapi of Ananda Confectionery is to die for," says Abed.

So, think beyond the usual. If you simply take a rickshaw ride and visit the hidden gems of Old Dhaka food scene, you will have a far better iftar experience.



For as far as the eye can see, vehicles, one behind another, wait for the light to go green. Owing to the last workday and possibly to prepare for the first day of Ramadan, the city saw gridlocks throughout the day. This photo was taken on Mirpur Road yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS