



Speakers at a roundtable on "Catalysing Growth: Strategies for Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Higher-Tier Clean Cooking" yesterday. The Daily Star organised the event in association with Practical Action and SNV Bangladesh at The Daily Star Centre.

PHOTO: STAR

Prepare a list of parks, playgrounds in Dhaka: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the authorities to prepare a complete list of all existing parks and playgrounds in Dhaka metropolitan within the next six months.

The HC bench of Justice KM Kamrul Kader and Justice Khizir Hayat also ordered stopping construction of commercial establishments on parks and playgrounds and ensuring public access to the existing ones.

The HC gave the order in response to a petition filed by BELA.

Mayors of Dhaka north and south city corporations, the Rajuk chairman, and chief engineer of the Public Works Department, were made respondents to the order.

Focus on clean cooking for healthier future

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday opined Bangladesh should focus more on clean and modern cooking technologies considering the health hazards to women and children, and the environmental impact posed by traditional methods.

"Clean cooking is not only a technical shift, but also a very critical step towards a sustainable and healthier future for communities," said Ismene RAC Stalpers, country director at SNV Bangladesh.

"With over 30 million people in Bangladesh still dependent on firewood, we need to think about how to move towards renewable energy," she said.

"We are targeting businesses and small-medium enterprises in the higher-tier clean cooking -- the tier two and above categories. We believe that we can strengthen the ecosystem in Bangladesh through e-cooking (electric cooking)," Ismene added.

The Daily Star organised the roundtable titled "Catalysing Growth: Strategies for Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Higher-Tier Clean Cooking", in association with Practical Action and SNV Bangladesh at The Daily Star Centre.

Nirod Chandra Mondal, joint secretary to the Renewable Energy Wing, Power Division of the Ministry of Power, Energy, and Mineral Resources, pointed out the challenges for Bangladesh in this context.

"Our present electricity generation mix is mostly gas-based. About 50 percent is gas-based generation, while the rest is from coal, diesel or heavy fuel oil, with some from renewable energy," he said.

"If you want to make the countries shift to clean cooking processes, then you have to convert the entire power generation mix from fossil fuel to renewable energy," he said.

"If we can generate 40 percent of electricity from renewable sources, it will significantly pave way for a clean cooking system. About 80 percent of our people live in rural areas. If we convert solar energy for cooking purposes, then it will be a great

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

HC seeks list of courtrooms with metal cages

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday sought a list of courtrooms across the country where there are iron cages to keep the accused during case proceedings.

It ordered the law secretary to submit the list in 60 days. The HC issued a rule asking the government to explain why they should not be directed to remove the metal cages from the courtrooms and to reestablish wooden docks in courtrooms throughout the country.

The HC bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Md Atabullah issued the order and rule following a petition filed by 10 Supreme Court lawyers on January 22.

Advocate Mohammad Shishir Manir, on behalf of the 10 lawyers, submitted the petition and requested the HC to direct the law secretary to submit a report providing list of courtrooms throughout the country where the metal cages have been installed.

The accused persons are imprisoned in an iron cage in open court before being found guilty at trial and the presumption of innocence is being violated, which is also against the existing laws of the country and established international norms, they said in the petition.

Putting someone in an iron cage before the open court is nothing but humiliation and mental torture, they added.

'TECHNICAL GLITCH'

Metro goes offline for over an hour

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Metro rail services from Uttara North to Motijheel remained halted for over one hour yesterday due to a "technical glitch".

Trains were seen running in both directions since around 4:00pm.

MAN Siddique, managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL), said there were problems in the electricity supply, leading to suspension of services.

"The operation resumed after checking the entire line manually. The suspension lasted for around 45 minutes," he said.

However, one of our correspondents found the Kazipara Station closed around 2:50pm, meaning services may have been suspended for over an hour.

Entrances to the Uttara North station was also kept closed from time to time to cope with the huge pressure of people leaving the Ijtema ground on the last day of the first phase of Biswa Ijtema, he noted.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Boi mela is not just for purchasing books, it's also a place where friends exchange banter over favourite genres and authors. It's a rendezvous of literary minds, like the two in the photo taken at Suhrawardy Udyan yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Love, loss and a cruel wait

Families of Benapole Express fire victims await DNA results

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

One month... 30 long days have passed since the nation was shaken by the horrifying images of fire victims on Benapole Express on the night of January 5.

The acrid scent of smoke and the desperate screams of passengers are still etched into the memories of the first responders -- mainly locals of Golapbagh -- who rushed in to help with everything they had.

Four people were burned to death and several others injured as miscreants set fire to the train.

However, the bodies are yet to be identified and DNA test results have not been announced.

While talking to the family members, this correspondent saw they are still hoping that their loved ones will return one day, as they

have not been declared dead.

Indrani Sarker's voice was choking with grief when this correspondent visited her recently. Her daughter, Chandrima, a pharmacy graduate, still remains "not found".



"My hopes rise every time the phone rings, wondering if it's news about my Chandrima. But a month has gone by, and no one has called. I don't even know where my child is," she said.

Abdul Haq carries the weight of a father's despair. His son, Abu Talha, a student at Bangladesh Army University of Engineering & Technology, is also missing. Each inquiry, each unanswered question, is a shard of glass tearing his soul.

"We still cling on to the hope of his return, but each day without him feels like a nightmare," said Haq.

"Talha's mother is devastated. All of our smiles have disappeared with him," he said.

Asif Khan, his body scarred and spirit broken, grapples with the unbearable absence of his wife, Natasha. He escaped the inferno, but she remained trapped in its nightmarish grip.

Asif, injured in the same incident, was released from the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



পূবালী ব্যাংক থেকে রেমিট্যান্স গ্রহণ স্বাভাৱেই দ্বিগুণ লাভ...

পূবালী ব্যাংক এর যে কোনো শাখা থেকে
পিন নম্বর এর মাধ্যমে রেমিট্যান্স গ্রহণ করলে
সরকার নির্ধারিত ২.৫% প্রণোদনার সাথে পাবেন
আরও ২.৫% পূবালী ব্যাংক প্রণোদনাসহ
মোট ৫% প্রণোদনা।

সাথে আরও আছে নিশ্চিত
আকর্ষণীয় পুরস্কার



Govt has no plan to arrest Dr Yunus unnecessarily

Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said the government has no plan to unnecessarily arrest Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus or send him to jail.

"I am telling once again that the government has no plan to arrest him [Yunus]. There are some pending cases against him. First of all, there are some cases filed by NBR and some cases filed under a labour court. These cases will be heard, and the judges will deliver verdicts based on the merits. Of course, the government has the responsibility to execute the verdicts and will do so. But the government has no plan to unnecessarily arrest Dr Yunus or send him to jail," he said.

The minister said these while talking to reporters after inaugurating the 49th foundation training course for assistant judges and equivalent judicial officials at Judicial Administration Training Institute in the capital.

While replying to a query on the seeming failure of Rapid Action Battalion to probe the journalist

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

We will map wetlands for conservation

Says Saber

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environment Minister Saber Hossain Chowdhury yesterday said the government will map the country's wetlands within the next year to conserve them.

"An inventory will also be conducted for the proper use of water resources," said the minister while speaking as the chief guest at a seminar organised by Forest Department marking World Wetlands Day.

He also emphasised the need for coordinated efforts to determine the best course of action for the sustainable use of natural resources.

Wetlands play an important role in protecting biodiversity, controlling climate, controlling floods, and providing livelihoods, he said, adding that the government has taken various steps to protect wetlands. The minister also called upon everyone to help in the endeavour.