

Seminar on blue economy held at Maritime University

CITY DESK

A seminar titled "Blue Economy: Unlocking the Potential of Oceans for Sustainable Development of Bangladesh" was held at Bangladesh Maritime University, located at Senapranjan, Dhaka Cantonment, on April 21, said a press release.

Education Adviser Prof Chowdhury Rafiqul Abrar was present as the chief guest during the closing ceremony.

Chief of Naval Staff Admiral MNazmul Hassan attended as the chief guest during the inaugural ceremony of the daylong seminar.

The seminar was presided over by the university's Vice-Chancellor, Rear Admiral Ashraful Hoq Chowdhury.

The keynote paper was presented by Prof Pierre Failer of the University of Portsmouth, UK.



Govt to form task force

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the government policies, he said government facilities and advertisements will be available for the newspapers that will follow the government policies.

Tax return of the mass media organisations should also be verified, he noted.

Mahfuj said the government does not want to terminate publication of any newspaper. However, it's required for all newspapers to ensure transparency at every level.

He also said an environment of competition must be created among newspapers.

Mahfuj said many ministers and parliament members became owner of mass media in various ways

during the regime of last fascist government. The present condition of those media should be examined and necessary steps should be taken, he added.

At the meeting, Media Reform Commission chief Kamal Ahmed said the government should not patronise those newspapers which are "out of the competition".

He stressed making separate policy for English newspapers.

Director General of the DFP Khaleda Begum said the newspaper audit system needs to be reformed. She sought cooperation of all concerned to allow the DFP to work freely and transparently.

Information and Broadcasting Secretary

Mahbuba Farjana, Media Reform Commission Member and Dhaka University Mass Communication and Journalism Department faculty Prof Giti Ara Nasrin, Jatiya Press Club President Hasan Hafiz, Daily Manabzamin Editor Matiur Rahman Chowdhury, BFUJ Secretary General Kader Gani Chowdhury, DUJ President Shahidul Islam, Prothom Alo Executive Editor Sajjad Sharif, Daily Dinkal Managing Editor Shimul Biswas, Daily Naya Diganta Executive Editor Masumur Rahman Khalifi and representatives of various media houses and government officials were present.

Govt to open 10 BR hospitals

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Currently, BR operates 10 hospitals with a total of 431 beds in Dhaka, Chattogram, Rajshahi, Pakshi, Syedpur, Lalmonirhat, Parbatipur, and Santahar. All doctors, nurses, and staff are appointed and paid by BR.

Under the new MoU, all movable and immovable assets of the hospitals will be jointly managed by a central committee, formed in coordination with the Health Services Division and Railways Ministry and led by the latter's secretary.

An inventory committee comprising representatives from both ministries will list all movable assets and recommend actions for their maintenance, repair, replacement, enhancement,

addition, or removal.

The Health Services Division will bear the cost of development and operations, while existing staff will remain under BR's employment.

As BR's manpower structure lacks posts for specialist doctors, the Health Services Division will assign such doctors to ensure advanced care.

The railways adviser said many general hospitals are overwhelmed, while BR hospitals remain underutilised.

Government resources must not remain idle, he said.

A joint committee will assess each hospital's needs and potential next week. Further actions

will follow based on its recommendations, he added.

"More doctors, nurses, and medicines will be provided, and these hospitals will be open to the general public," he also said.

Speaking at the event, Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum said there is currently a shortage of 8,000 doctors nationwide, so it would be unrealistic to expect these hospitals to become fully functional overnight.

However, she expressed hope that about 2,000 doctors could be appointed through a special BCS by mid-September. Once the minimum requirements are met, the hospitals will be opened to the public, she added.

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2nd tribunal to be formed

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killings, and the repeal of repressive laws enacted during the Awami League regime.

Their key demands include repealing the 2013 (Amended) Anti-Terrorism Act, which they deem unconstitutional; ending extrajudicial killings and holding perpetrators accountable; unconditionally releasing all individuals falsely imprisoned, particularly under the anti-terrorism law; and withdrawing all politically or personally

motivated cases.

VOED also called for locating the disappeared and informing their families, rehabilitating victims through a dedicated department of the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs, providing lifelong pensions and medical support, identifying and punishing those responsible, publishing a white paper on the role of state forces, disclosing all related government documents, and issuing a formal state apology to victims' families and the nation.

Victims of enforced disappearances shared their personal experiences at the event.

Enforced disappearance survivor Brig Gen (retd) Abdullahe Amaan Azmi and AB Party General Secretary Barrister Asaduzzaman Fuad also spoke at the event, among others.

M Maroof Zaman, a former Bangladesh ambassador to Vietnam and a victim of enforced disappearance himself, is the chief coordinator of the newly formed platform.

3,382 buildings being built

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Urban planners Mohammad Fazle Reza Suman and Nurul Islam, Rajuk Chief Engineer Md Nurullah, and environmental expert Prof Dr Mohammad Kamaruzzaman spoke at the event.

Fazle Reza said bureaucratic complexities and arbitrary decisions by professionals are major reasons behind the capital's worsening condition.

Prof Kamaruzzaman

said, "Dhaka was planned for five to six million people. It now houses nearly 25 to 30 million. No expert can solve this city's problems unless decentralisation takes place."

On the sidelines of the event, guests unveiled a book titled "Dhaka's Canals on Their Dying Breath: An In-Depth Look at How the Capital's Waterways Are Being Choked," written by The Daily Star senior reporter

Heleml Alam.

The book sheds light on the lost and surviving canals in the city.

Referring to his book, Heleml identified five major causes for the destruction of the canals: construction of box culverts, flood protection embankments, bank lining, U-channels, and unplanned urbanisation – along with the failure of authorities to protect them.

Clash erupts

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Drivers' Association, said around 8,000 battery rickshaws operate in the area. "This morning, pedal rickshaw pullers and locals attacked battery-run rickshaw drivers. In response, the drivers launched a protest on Banani-II," Jalil claimed.

Al Amin Hossain, additional deputy commissioner (Gulshan Zone) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said the battery-run rickshaw drivers had alleged that they were intercepted and assaulted by people from Gulshan Society in the morning near Gulshan area.

The drivers then regrouped and swooped on the people from the society near Banani-II, and also attacked pedal rickshaw pullers and individuals who attempted to take photos or videos of the incident there, he said.

Army personnel later removed them from Banani-II after 2:00pm, he added.

The ban on battery-run rickshaws came into effect on Saturday morning, jointly enforced by the Gulshan and Banani societies, DMP, and Dhaka North City Corporation.

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