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Preserving memories of the disappeared

Photo exhibition honours enforced disappearance victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A year after the July uprising that ousted the Awami League government, the families of enforced disappearance victims in Bangladesh are still searching for the truth, said Sanjida Islam, one of the organisers of Mayer Daak, a platform of victims' families.

She made the remarks at an open-air photography exhibition yesterday. The event, held in remembrance of the victims of the enforced disappearance and in honour of their families, is underway in front of the Jatiya Sangsad in Dhaka.

Titled, "Memories of Disappearance", the exhibition began on August 22 and will continue until August 31, featuring more than 130 photographs of victims and their families.

The photographs were taken by documentary photographer Mosfiqur Rahman Johan.

Sanjida Islam said a similar exhibition was held last year, but this year some photographs of "Aynaghar", or



CALL-READY

once the sound of history, now silent

DIPAN NANDY

Remember whenever you saw someone speaking through a microphone – be it at a rally, a meeting, or a grand procession – there was one thing in common. In front of the mic, a small sign read: "Call-Ready".

From Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's historic March 7, 1971 speech to countless assemblies that shaped the nation, those words became inseparable from Bangladesh's political journey. Every photograph of that moment shows the microphones bearing this name, silent witnesses to history.

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This used to be the store of Call-Ready, which now has no proper display and the shutters had stayed down for over a year. The authorities said they are closing the store due to a lack of business.

PHOTO: COURTESY, RAKIB MADBER

Pursue justice for Rohingya genocide

Fortify Rights, 57 other groups urge UN member states



UNB, Dhaka

Fortify Rights and 57 other groups in a joint statement yesterday said the United Nations member states must pursue accountability for genocide and other atrocities committed against ethnic Rohingya civilians in Myanmar's Rakhine State.

"Eight years on from the start of the Myanmar military's genocidal attacks against Rohingya, not a single person has been held criminally responsible. This is a deep stain on the world's conscience," said Patrick Phongsathorn, senior advocate at Fortify Rights.

"It's not too late to address this injustice. The UN Security Council should immediately refer the situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court, and all UN member states should explore every possible avenue to pursue justice for the Rohingya," he added.

August 25 is observed as Rohingya Genocide Remembrance Day, marking the Myanmar military's

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Halt the DAP amendment process

Demand urban planners, fear changes will put Dhaka's liveability at risk

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The recently proposed amendments to the Detailed Area Plan (DAP), which aim to increase the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in most areas of Dhaka by 20 to 80 percent, would fuel the construction of more high-rises in an already overcrowded city, urban planners warned yesterday.

At a press conference at the Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP), its leaders demanded that the government immediately halt the amendment process of the DAP and building regulations, saying the revisions mainly serve business interests.

They urged the authorities to instead review previously submitted proposals on FAR and incorporate recommendations from social, environmental, professional, and civic groups to improve Dhaka's liveability.

Dhaka's population density is already far higher than global planning standards, and the city suffers from severe traffic



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review previously submitted proposals on FAR
- Introduce maximum building height limits
- Ban high-rise construction on narrow streets
- Ensure mandatory fire safety measures for buildings above 6 stories
- Drop the plan of allocating FAR along proposed roads
- Formulate strategies under the National Spatial Plan

congestion, chronic waterlogging, and shortages in civic services, the planners said.

Increasing FAR would worsen these problems, putting more pressure on utilities while reducing access to natural light and ventilation, they added.

Presenting the keynote, BIP President Adil Mohammed Khan said the draft amendment proposes raising FAR in Khilkhet from 2 to 4.4; Mirpur DOHS from 2.5 to 4.8; Badda from 2 to 3.3; Faridabad from 2 to 3.1; Rampura from 2 to 3.5; Mirpur from 2.8 to 3.4; and Basabo-Khilgaon from 2 to 3.3.

In contrast, FAR in affluent areas like Gulshan-Banani and Dhanmondi has been slightly reduced – from 5.7 to 5.5 and 5.1 to 5.0, respectively – despite planners' calls for bigger cuts.

This inequality, Adil said, would give plot owners in those neighbourhoods unearned financial benefits.

He, however, welcomed the

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Dhaka to bring all buses under unified system

CA announces on his verified Facebook page



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has announced that all buses in Dhaka will now operate under a single, unified system to bring order to the capital's chaotic transport network.

"All buses will now be regulated under a single, unified system. Companies will be required to operate only on prescribed routes and make stops at designated points," the chief adviser said on his verified Facebook page yesterday.

"The unregulated bus system has long plagued the city with traffic congestion, frequent accidents, fare manipulation, and unsafe travel conditions. Commuters, especially women, children, and the elderly, have struggled in this disorder, while the city reportedly loses around Tk 370 billion

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Specially built engine-driven boats remove water hyacinth from canals in Dumuria upazila of Khulna. Locals said restoring water flow will ease navigation and benefit agriculture and fishing. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

TK 4CR GRAFT Kalimullah placed on 5-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Prof Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah, former vice-chancellor of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur (BRUR) on a five-day remand in a case filed on charges of embezzling Tk 4 crore from a development project.

Judge (in charge) Mohammad Ibrahim Miah of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after ACC Assistant Director Minhaj Bin Islam, who is the investigation officer, produced him before it.

Kalimullah told the court that he had acted as per direction from the former education minister Dr Dipu Moni.

No lawyers stood at the court to defend him, ACC Public Prosecutor Tariqul Islam confirmed it to The Daily Star.

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SADA PATHOR LOOTING

‘We’re focusing on identifying those involved’

Committee ends field visit, holds public hearing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The high-level ministerial probe committee formed by the Cabinet Division has completed its field-level investigation into the large-scale looting of stones from Sada Pathor, a major tourist site in Sylhet's Companiganj upazila.

After visiting the affected areas on Tuesday, the five-member interministerial body held a public hearing at Sylhet Circuit House yesterday, where people from different walks of life gave their statements.

Zaheda Parveen, convener of the probe body and secretary (coordination and reforms) of the Cabinet Division, told reporters, "We are focusing on two key aspects – identifying those involved and determining their responsibilities, and formulating recommendations to prevent such incidents in the future."

She said the team spent two days in Sylhet, gathering evidence and views from stakeholders, and would prepare



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