

A substantially developed DNCC by 2018

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Smart, clean and green city my dream: Annisul Huq

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Mayor Annisul Huq at The Asian Age office. -File Photo

Annisul Huq is a business icon who is the founder of Mohammadi Group, public speaker and tech-savvy business leader at home and abroad. In a sudden move, he turned from business to public service and was elected the first DNCC mayor. He has earned remarkable popularity among the people of all walks of life.

Recently Daily Asian Age took his exclusive interview and discussed his activities and goals to develop the northern half of the metropolis having a population of about 10 million. He expressed his future plans for Dhaka North City Corporation and the wellbeing of his constituents. Annisul Huq explained his vision to make Dhaka a clean, green, traffic congestion free city for overall focus on good governance for the city dwellers.

In exclusive conversations with Daily Asian Age Annisul Huq highlighted a number of his attractive actions and expressed a number of new plans to keep his commitment as Dhaka north city will be clean, smart and green.

AA: What is your program to reduce traffic jam?

Annisul Huq: You are aware that when I took the charge as DNCC mayor, the roads were narrow and shabby. After nearly two years, the condition has improved much which has helped to ease the vehicular movement. Currently, there are more than 190 private bus operators. They run services on different routes. Those are taking toll on proper service to dwellers. For many bus operators, the city dwellers are being deprived of facilities.

Now, we are trying to bring them under six umbrellas. We have taken an initiative to create six companies, which will run their buses in the city. Anybody can run his bus service but he has to come under a company which is approved by the city corporation. Under the new initiative, more than 3,000 new buses with different six colors will play on the roads within two years. To purchase new vehicles, we will provide support including bank loans. A number of vehicles will have to have air-conditioned facilities.

AA: What is your plan about DNCC?

Annisul Huq: I have a detailed plan about DNCC. I want to create smart city. Dhaka North will be a substantial city in 2018. I have also focused on good governance for DNCC. After two years, everybody will see a clean, green and smart Dhaka which is my dream.

AA: What was your experience as a mayor in last two years?

Annisul Huq: Once upon a time, DNCC was under strong syndicates. A number of powerful syndicates had occupied most places of the city which were barriers to all development works. I have taken initiatives to break the groups. As a result, they are nowhere in the city corporation.

AA: What is your experience to make the city clean?

Annisul Huq: There were thousands of billboards in the Dhaka city which were spoiling beauty of the city. Having been elected as the mayor of DNCC, I have pulled down more than 20,000 illegal billboards and removed from several locations of DNCC as part of the 'Clean Dhaka' program which was not an easy job.

A section of powerful people involved in businesses has created pressure on me to make the task difficult. To make a 'Clean Dhaka, Green Dhaka' I had set up more than 5,000 small bins at roadside across the DNCC. Now the city dwellers are putting garbage in these bins. Previously, a bulk of the garbage was thrown on the streets. For beautification, we are taking a number of initiatives including setting up more than 50,000 street lights, which will be replaced with LED

lights.

AA: What is the initiative to ensure city dwellers' security?

Annisul Huq: At present, DNCC has no security problem. City dwellers will be brought under a security cover by installing more than 1,100 latest technology-based

closed-circuit cameras across my city. Under the new initiative, we have already set up several hundred CCTVs in Gulsan, Baridhara and Banani areas. After setting up of the CCTVs, crimes have come down tremendously in recent time in those areas.

AA: How do you recover illegally occupied city corporation lands?

Annisul Huq: To recover illegally occupied lands, I had to fight with several sections including multimillionaires in the city. A huge portion of city corporation lands was occupied. Much of it was recovered and the rest will be done within a short time.

AA: What type of initiative has been taken to develop roads, footpaths and drains?

Annisul Huq: Water-logging was a massive problem in Dhaka North. Now there is no water-logging problem. To resolve the problem, we have taken a number of initiatives for roads, footpaths and drains' development. Repairing and improvement of roads, drains and footpaths have been going on through projects under annual development program. Most of the development program will be completed by next one year.