

Bangladesh steps into 4th yr as a polio-free country today

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh steps into the fourth year today as a polio-free country and hopes to keep up the status by continuing its polio vaccination programme until the neighbouring India is declared free from the virus.

"Though Bangladesh is now a polio-free country, but we are not yet free from the danger as there are polio victims in our neighbouring country," Health and Family Welfare Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain said yesterday.

He was addressing a news conference organised on the occasion at the PID conference room.

State Minister for Health Mizanur Rahman Sinha, Health Secretary Fazlur Rahman, DG of Health Mizanur Rahman and concerned officials were present.

The health minister said the government has set a target to give polio vaccines to 2.25 crore under-five children in the 12th National Immunization Days (NIDs), beginning January 18 next to keep up polio-free status.

He said the government has introduced various steps across the country to ensure primary healthcare for all.

As 4-5 per cent people of the country are carrying Hepatitis-B

virus, the government has introduced its vaccine for children below one year of age in six divisions and Rajshahi City Corporation. The vaccine is provided free of cost.

"This is for the first time that the government is providing Hepatitis-B vaccine free of cost after seeing positive results in the field of polio, and it could not be done in previous years because of its high cost," he said.

The government is planning to set up 'auto-disable' syringe in the country, he said. "We have talked to the donors' about it."

"If we can use auto-disable syringe. It will help us a lot as it's one of the main causes that spreads the

virus," the minister said adding that they have also set up 90 blood transmission and screening centres across the country while 20 more are going to be set up to ensure pure blood transmission.

"Only 20 per cent people are now donating blood voluntarily while 80 per cent blood donors are professional. So, we can say that the blood transmission centres are playing a vital role in getting pure blood," Mosharraf said.

Seeking cooperation of all in implementing the government programmes, the minister said no effort could succeed without people's awareness.

Huda asks engr to set up bus, truck terminals on highways

UNB, Dhaka

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda has directed the engineers of the Roads and Highways Division to construct bus and truck terminals on each highway and a separate lane for slow moving vehicles for safety on the road.

The minister gave the directive while addressing a meeting of project directors and engineers at his ministry yesterday.

The meeting was let to know that development work on 225 km Dhaka-Sylhet Highway was progressing fast and that Dhaka Bypass Highway will be opened to traffic in the middle of next year to ease traffic jam in the city.

Ties with Norway to be strengthened, hopes president

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed expressed hope that the friendly relations between Bangladesh and Norway would be strengthened in the years to come.

The president said this during a meeting with outgoing Norwegian ambassador Gerd Wahlstrom, who called on him at Bangabhaban here yesterday.

He appreciated the outgoing envoy for successfully discharging diplomatic duty during his tenure. He emphasized the need for enhancing investment and contact in education especially with teachers and students at university level between the two countries.

The envoy thanked the president and people of Bangladesh for extending cooperation during his tenure and expressed his optimism that Bangladesh's bid to boost

economic and commercial ties with EU countries would be successful.

Secretary to the President Anisul Haque Chowdhury, Foreign

Secretary Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury and military secretary to the president, Major General Abdul Matin were present on the occasion.



Outgoing Norwegian Ambassador Gerd Wahlstrom called on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday.

PHOTO: PID



PHOTO: PID

Health Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain speaks at a press briefing on the occasion of three years of polio-free Bangladesh at the PID conference room yesterday.

Punishment to JCD cadres demanded

PSA, JUSJ form human chain at JU

JU CORRESPONDENT

The Progressive Students' Alliance (PSA) and Jahangirnagar University Sangkritik Jote (JUSJ) yesterday formed a human chain jointly on the campus to press for their two-point demand.

The demands included punishment to Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists involved in the attack on general students, and the naming of the auditorium.

A few hundred general students including PSA and JUSJ activists formed the human chain at the foot of Amar Ekushey at around 12.00 noon.

Later, a rally was held there. Addressing the rally, the student leaders asked the university authorities to ensure security of every student on the campus.

They also announced a two-day programme to realise their demands.

The programmes include a demonstration on the campus today and a torch procession tomorrow.

Meanwhile, the JCD activists ransacked the room of Mobinur Rahman, a student of Bangla department and a worker of Jahangirnagar Theatre on Wednesday night.

Led by Babu, Jaber, Javed and Kamal, the JCD cadres swooped on Mobin's room at Al-Beruni Hall at round 1.00am and ordered him not to attend any PSA-JUSJ procession.

Another JCD group led by Jasim beat Maruf, a general student of Archaeology department and resident of AB Hall on Wednesday.

The JCD cadres have mounted their repression on PSA-JUSJ activists as they want to name the auditorium after Zahir Raihan while the JCD wants it to be named after Ziaur Rahman.

'Relations with US have reached new heights'

BSS, Dhaka

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Reaz Rahman yesterday expressed the hope that the new US ambassador would continue the sincere work of his predecessors to further the existing bond of relations between the two countries.

He was talking to newly appointed US ambassador Harry Keels Thomas Jr. who paid a courtesy call on him at his office here in the morning.

Termining the existing relationship between Bangladesh and the USA as excellent, Reaz Rahman said it has reached new heights in almost all areas of cooperation in the recent times.

He said the government

attached its priorities to attaining socio-economic emancipation of the people and in that context support of the USA would play a very important role.

Ambassador Thomas expressed the hope that the momentum created in the bilateral relations would continue. He described Bangladesh as an example of tolerant democracy with a majority Muslim population with liberal views towards their faith.

The ambassador was appreciative of the economic achievements of Bangladesh under the present government.

The state minister and the US envoy also discussed various bilateral, regional and international issues of common concern.



PHOTO: PID

Newly appointed US Ambassador Harry K Thomas Jr. paid a courtesy call on State Minister for Foreign Affairs Reaz Rahman at his office yesterday.

DU Library to remain open on Fridays

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) authorities have decided to keep its Central Library open on Fridays from 3.00pm to 8.00pm with effect from August 29.

"The decision has been taken considering the convenience of teachers and students of the university", said DU Vice-Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz.

While visiting the library recently, he said the authorities have also decided to upgrade its research and IT facilities.

Talking to this correspondent a number of students expressed their satisfaction over the decision.

"We are happy as the DU library will be kept open for seven days. It will be very helpful for us," said

Mominul Haque Azad, a fourth year student of history department.

"The university authorities will have to increase furniture and electricity facilities in the library. Momin said adding "Frequent power disruption hampers our study as well as the activities of the library".

Death anniversary

The 15th death anniversary of Khwaja Selima Khatun, a noted journalist, educationist and social worker, will be observed today, says a press release.

Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at Baitul Aman Mosque, Dhanmondi after Juma prayers.