

FOUNDATION STONE OF INSTITUTE OF HEALTH SCIENCE HOSPITAL LAID
Deliver more social services
PM urges health organisations

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia hoped that many other organisations would come forward to deliver social services following the bright example set by the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (DAB).

The Prime Minister was launching a new foreign-aided health project marking the golden jubilee of DAB in the city yesterday.

She lauded the role of the Diabetic Association in ensuring people's good health and increasing life expectancy through proper healthcare of people suffering from diabetic diseases that eat into the vitals of life.

"We believe people are actual resources of the country. And the objective of development is to ensure good health and long life of people as well as increase working capacity," Khaleda told a function of the DAB marking the inauguration of the golden jubilee of founding of the association.

She told the function that her government has adopted a long-term health nutrition and population programme for 2003 to 2010 involving Tk 32,450 crore.

The project has been taken in line with poverty reduction strategy paper and millennium development goal targets aiming to control population, increase reproductive health service and further reduce maternal and child mortality rates, she said.

On the occasion of 50th Anniversary of DAB, Khaleda inaugurated a yearlong programme of the association and a Bangladesh-Netherlands joint project titled Health Care Development Project (HCDP) on the DAB premises at Darussalam in Mirpur.

The aim of the healthcare project



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia lays foundation stone of Bangladesh Institute of Health Science Hospital at Darussalam at Mirpur in the city yesterday.

is to empower people to take care of their own health. HCDP envisages forming a countrywide network of general care delivery by using and expanding the DAB facilities and the Ibrahim model.

Appreciating and recalling the extraordinary performance and contribution of late National Professor Dr Mohammad Ibrahim, she urged the physicians and health-service providers to take a lesson from the life of persons like him and adopt that as an ideal of life.

Khaleda noted that he (Prof Ibrahim) had fully engaged his time and energy in human service, particularly for poor people, and elevated his profession to the height

of worship. Health Minister Dr Khandokar Mosharrar Hossain, Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahed, The Netherlands Ambassador in Dhaka Kees Beemsterboer, SA

Khaleque MP, BMA President Prof Dr MA Hadi, Secretary General Dr AZM Zaid Hossain, Bangladesh Diabetic Association President Prof Wahiduddin Ahmed and Secretary General Prof AK Azad Khan also spoke at the function.

Ministers, diplomats, MPs, physicians and distinguished personalities were present at the function. Later, Prime Minister Khaleda laid the foundation stone of

Bangladesh Institute of Health Science Hospital at the site.

The Prime Minister said the activities of Diabetic Association has been a successful model of public-private sharing in health sector following effective coordination of government support and individual initiatives.

"The significant side of this model is decentralisation of health service through active participation and leadership of local people," she said.

Khaleda said the present government has given top priority to health service and as a result of that the number of hospitals, hospital beds, physicians and nurses are increasing every year.

She said private organisations, development partners and friendly countries have come up with their supports for the development of health sector. "Healthcare development project is an example of combined efforts of public-private and development partners."

She said the government has provided funds to diabetic associations of Sylhet, Narsingdi, Bogra, Feni, Faridpur and Jessore districts either by setting up new hospitals or expanding the existing ones.

The government has provided assistance for the expansion and modernisation of Birdem Hospital in Dhaka, she said adding that construction works on 100-bed diabetic hospitals, involving Tk 12 crore, are going on in Rajshahi and Barisal.

Khaleda said late president Ziaur Rahman had generously extended support to Bangladesh Diabetic Association, especially to Birdem project, and "We're also continuing that."

Journo assaulted in Patuakhali over tender scandal

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Officials and staffs of the Department of Patuakhali Roads and Highways (R&H) with the help of ruling party backed contractors assaulted an on-duty journalist when he enquired about a tender scandal yesterday noon.

The assaulted journalist identified as Enayetur Rahman, Patuakhali Correspondent of Channel I, Focus Bangla and the daily Khaborpatra, filed a general diary with Patuakhali Sadar Police Station noting that he went to the local R&H office at about 11:30am and asked the officials about the scandal of Tk one crore tender of Kalapara-Kuakata road development project.

When he was talking with Abdus Salam, executive engineer of Patuakhali R&H, a team of hooligans led by Kamal Krishna, sub-divisional engineer, attacked journalist Enayet and even threatened to kill him if any news is published in this connection. The attackers also damaged the audio-visual equipments of Enayet.

Local press club condemned the attack and demanded punishment to the attackers.

However, Executive Engineer Abdus Salam denied assaulting the journalists saying there was some altercation between the journalist and others.

It was learnt from different sources that Patuakhali R&H department awarded a work worth Tk one crore to their favourite men at a higher costing in exchange of bribe and commission.

2 killed, 50 hurt as villagers clash in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Two people were killed and 50 others injured in a clash over past enmity at Birampur village under sadar upazila of the district yesterday.

The dead were identified as Kasem Ali, 70, and Abu Taher, 72.

According to villagers and police sources, a rivalry has long been prevailing in the village between Kasem group and Taher group.

On Saturday they clashed following a dispute over a pond there.

Taher group headed by Taher attacked the house of Kasem and slaughtered him. At once Kasem group people chopped Taher to death on the spot.

When the news of their deaths spread, both groups equipped with lethal weapons, were locked in a fierce clash leaving 50 people injured. Nine of them were admitted to sadar hospital and two others were sent to Dhaka.

The critically injured are Dana Mia, 42, Jibrail, 22, Saifur, 20, Ismail, 27, Daru, 65, Nurul Islam, 50, Saiful Islam, 22, Aklima, 16 and Ali Hossain, 45.

Police arrested Bashir Mia, 30, on the spot.

Hasina renews call for int'l probe into militancy

UNB, Dhaka

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated her plea for international inquiry into militant acts and interrogation of JMB leaders Shaekh Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai under UN supervision and Interpol to reveal facts behind the militancy.

"If Interpol's cooperation was sought earlier by the government to arrest Shaekh Rahman and Bangla Bhai, why wouldn't they now be engaged in interrogating the kingpins?" she said in support of her contention for an impartial interrogation of the dreaded militant chief and his lieutenant.

Addressing a meeting at the auditorium of Diploma Engineers Institute to commemorate veteran Awami League leader Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Hasina said

bomb and grenade attacks by militants are not the problem of Bangladesh alone, it's an international problem. "So there is a necessity for interrogation by the international agencies," she said.

About the Prime Minister's claim of involvement of external forces into the JMB militancy and the IGP's rejection of it, Hasina wanted to know who is telling lies --- the PM or the IGP?

Referring to the arrest and torture of AL leaders after the Mymensingh cinema blasts and Shaekh Rahman's confession that he had ordered staging the blasts, she asked the government to explain the fact.

Termining once again the capture of JMB militant leaders as drama, Hasina pointed out several inconsistencies and genuineness of the operation by the law enforcers.

"Flaws were seen in staging the

drama of capturing Shaekh Rahman and attempts were made to cover up the flaws in staging another drama during arrest of Bangla Bhai," she said.

Hasina said Shaekh was captured without any wounds and not handcuffed while Bangla Bhai was arrested with injuries and handcuffed.

The discussion organised by Bangladesh Legal and Logistic Assistance for the Distressed was addressed by AL leaders Tofail Ahmed, Abdul Jalil MP, Noor-e-Alam Siddique, Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Montaz Hossain, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, JP leader Sheikh Shahidul Islam, Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud, Prof Dr Abul Mannan, Barrister M Hamidul Islam and Adv Sohrabuddin.



Tapan Chowdhury, chairman of Sheltech, gives away a crest to Film Director Subhash Dutta at the 'Sheltech Award 2006' distribution ceremony at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. Sheltech Managing Director Dr Taufique M Seraj, extreme left, and Playwright Momtaz Uddin Ahmed, second from left, are also seen.

Seven killed, 80 injured in Madaripur road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Madaripur

Seven people were killed, including an unidentified woman, and 80 others injured when two buses collided head-on and fell into a roadside ditch at Rajoir upazila in Madaripur yesterday.

Five of the dead were identified as driver Kamal Hossain, 28, of Madaripur, freedom fighter Md Ainal Shiekh, 50, Somin Khan of Faridpur, Maulana Anaruddin, 50, of Maksudpur and Alifazuddin of Jhalokhathi. Identity of two others,

a women aged about 50 and a man aged about 40, could not be known immediately.

The injured are undergoing treatment at Rajoir Hospital, Madaripur Hospital and Faridpur Hospital. Of the injured, condition of 15 are stated to be critical.

Witnesses and the injured said the accident occurred at around 2.50pm when a Barisal-bound passenger bus of Sakura Paribahan collided head-on with Dhaka-bound passenger bus of Chandra Paribahan and fell into a nearby ditch at Boulgram Macharang killing four passengers on the spot. Three others succumbed to their injuries on the way to the hospital.

BDNEWS from Joypurhat reports: Two potato traders were killed and another injured in a road

accident on Punot-Solagsari Road at Kalai upazila in Joypurhat, police said yesterday.

The deceased identified as Abdur Rashid, 38, and Amzad, 50, hailed from Shikta village.

The injured businessman Saidur Rahman was rushed to Joypurhat Sadar Hospital in a critical condition. UNB from Kishoreganj adds: At least 25 passengers of a Kishoreganj-bound bus from Dhaka were injured when the vehicle fell into a ditch at Monoharpur in Kuliarchar upazila yesterday.

Twelve of the injured were admitted to Bajitpur Zahurul Islam Medical College Hospital while others were given first aid.

The victims said the bus skidded off the road at 5:00pm as the driver lost control over the steering.

Khulna Halt programme today

Khulna out of purview of hartal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna city has been kept out of purview of today's countrywide half-day hartal called by Bangladesh Jubo League.

It was decided at an emergency meeting of Khulna district and city units of Jubo League at the party office on Saturday night to express solidarity with the half an hour Khulna halt programme of Greater Khulna Development Action Committee (GKDAC).

GKDAC called the 'Khulna Halt' programme from 11:00am to 11:30am today to press home its demands including, construction of deep sea port at Akram Point, revitalisation of Mongla Sea Port, construction of an airport, installation of TV centre and reopening of closed jute mills.

Booming RMG cares little for workers' life

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hospital's intensive care unit (ICU) as her condition worsened. The teenager finally died on March 8, last Wednesday.

Two other colleagues—Farzana and Lovely—have also been taken to the ICU. Now Shima and her three attendants—a brother and two cousins—are always on the edge of their nerves, fearing the freezing paw of death to descend anytime on yet another victim.

CASUALTIES AND COMPENSATIONS Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) pays Tk 100,000 as compensation for the death of any garment worker in a workplace accident under an insurance policy from American Life Insurance Company (Alico). It also bears the treatment costs of the injured. Shima is also receiving the treatment money.

"They give us 600 taka a day as food allowance for my sister and the three of us," her brother told The Daily Star. But, Shima does not know whether she will get any compensation for the injury.

Labour law counsel said there are gross violations of safety rules and regulations in the garment sector. But, for a booming sector like it, it is no big deal to offer that compensation to its accident victims. It may even be preferred as a cheaper option to going for a standard safety system.

The goriest-ever garment factory disaster came on April 13 last year. The 9-storey building of Spectrum Sweater and Knitting Factory in Savar collapsed with a resounding thud, crushing 74 workers to death and injuring over a hundred others, including 12 handicapped for life.

"That was not an accident. It was a willful violation of safety laws to increase profit," ruled Kalpona Akter, secretary general and executive director of the Bangladesh Centre for Workers' Solidarity.

Investigations identified certain violations of the building code and illegal expansion of the building as the main reasons for the havoc that derailed a few hundred working-class families, turning a few into

beggars even. Milton Mia, 17, is one of the Spectrum victims. Rescuers dragged him out from under the debris. But one of his kidneys was badly damaged. Two major surgeries have kept him alive to date. But Milton is unable to do any work. He resents the fact that once its breadwinner, he has now become a burden on the family.

"Doctors have forbidden me from doing any hard work. So, I have to while away at home, doing nothing," he lamented. Between 1990 and 2005 the garment sector witnessed 339 workers die and 1,154 others getting wounded in the major accidents like fire, boiler explosion, electrocution and building collapse, tells the data of Kamajibi Nari, an organisation working for working women.

But several other NGOs put the number of deaths above 500. In the first two months alone, the death count this year has reached near 100 and that of injury over 200. The latest mishap, a stampede sparked by a fire panic on March 6 in a Gazipur garment factory, added three more deaths and at least 22 injured persons to the rolls, really fast-fattening.

MONEY MATTERS, LIFE NOT MUCH The garment sector, which accounts for 75 percent of the country's export earnings, soars above any other sector in both frequency and scale of workplace mishaps. Yet, it continues to keep its 2-million-strong women-majority labour force toiling in the so-called factories, most of which are ultra-poor in safety. Whatever they may say in public or in paper, in practice the investors in the sector every day put the bulk of their employees at risk of death and physical harms, knowing well the dangers yet shirking rectification in order to maximise the profit. Well, it definitely smacks of crime, said the outspoken Kalpona.

And, for years now, governments have acted deaf and dumb on this issue. None of them took any serious regulatory measures or law enforcement steps by bringing the owners of unsafe factories to book. However, there might be some changes underway. A report is in circulation that Shahriar is planning to set up a new factory building at the very spot where a bitter-sweet smell of spilled blood still lingers on.

Attack on 14-party procession condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political parties yesterday condemned police attack on 14-party activists on Road No-27 at Dhanmondi in the city that left more than one hundred injured and arrests when they were going to lay siege to the Election Commission (EC) in a procession demanding its reforms.

The 11-party in a statement condemning the attack on the peaceful procession by police-BDR, said the oust government movement cannot be halted through repression.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) Executive President Mainuddin Khan Badal and General Secretary Sayed Jafar Sazzad said attack on Hasanul Haq Inu was pre-planned because a police officer hit his head in presence of several other police officers.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) President Manjurul Ahsan Khan and General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim expressed their resentment at the police attack on Awami League and other parties' processions.

They demanded arrest and exemplary punishment to the attackers.

Workers Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon and General Secretary Bimal Biswas said government's plot for the election without reform in EC will be resisted at any cost.

Jatiya Party (Manju) Chairman Anwar Hossain Manju and Secretary General Sheikh Shahidul Islam urged the government to show tolerance during the opposition party programmes as right to hold rally and bringing out procession are constitutional rights.

Jatiya Samik League President Abdul Matin Master and General Secretary Roy Ramesh Chandra condemned the police attack on 14-party rally and demanded immediate release of the leaders and activists who were arrested from the 14-party procession yesterday.

Bangladesh Awami Jubo League, Bangladesh Jubo Maitree, Bangladesh Muktioddha Sangsad, Bhasani Mancho and other political organisations also condemned the attack.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Sylhet division and the regions of Tangail and Mymensingh in the next 12 hours till 6:00 pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met office said.

Day temperature may rise by 1-3 degree Celsius over the country. Highest temperature 32.7 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 16.1 degree Celsius at Rajshahi.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:07pm today and rises at 6:09am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

55 houses gutted in Bandarban

BDNEWS, Bandarban

At least 55 houses were gutted in a devastating fire at remote village Salchhara under Ruma in Bandarban, Army sources said yesterday.

Local people said the fire originated from a furnace of a house on Saturday night.

The blaze engulfed the entire village as there is no fire brigade station in the area.

Army personnel with the help of local people put the blaze under control following hectic efforts of several hours.

Members of the armed forces Ruma zone distributed 20 maunds of rice, money in cash, medicine and crockery among the victims yesterday.

Eastern University inks MoU with Chinese Institute

Eastern University (EU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Guang Gong Sing Ye Decoration Company and Feng Liang (Intl) Art College, China in order to cooperate in areas of exchange of students, teachers, art and technology between the parties, says a press release.

The MoU was recently signed by EU Vice Chancellor AK Fazlul H Shah and Yu Jinggan, president, International Forum for Decoration and Architecture (IFDA), China in the city.

Prof AKM Saiful Majid, vice chairman of EU Foundation, Prof M A Rab, pro-vice chancellor of the University, Prof Xia Keliang, Prof Fang Xuexiao and Guo Jun were present during the ceremony.

Dr S Murad, vice principal of Feng Liang College, acted as facilitator.

Obituary



Md Abedin, son of late Badiruddin Ahmed, passed away on March 10 at the age of 54, says a press release.

He, also managing director of Eastern Products Pvt Ltd and director of PIN MAN DE PARIS and Hotel Century, left behind his wife and two sons to mourn his death.

Friends, relatives and admirers have to pray for his departed soul and attend.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his residence at Flat-GE, Rd # 28 (Old), "Suvastu Shopin" at Dhanmondi R/A in the city after Asr prayers today.

Akila Khanam Chowdhury



Akila Khanam Chowdhury, mother of Jahed Chowdhury, special correspondent of the daily Amar Desh, passed away due to liver cirrhosis at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) in the city yesterday at the age of 63, says a press release.

Akila, wife of Abdun Noor Chowdhury, former head master of Shayestaganj High School in Habiganj, left behind seven sons and one daughter.

Her body will be taken to Sylhet and buried at Shahjalal (R) Dargah graveyard after a namaz-e-janaza at Dargah mosque after Asr prayers tomorrow.

National Press Club President Riaz Uddin Ahmad and General Secretary Shawkat Mahmud condoled at the death of Akila Khanam.

PM talks India trip

FROM PAGE 1

during the prime minister's visit, said an official adding "The people living in the enclaves are in serious inhuman condition and Bangladesh really wants to resolve the issue on an urgent basis."

PMO sources said that Bangladesh side will point out the situation of enclaves and 6.5 kilometres of unmarked border between the two countries through a power-point presentation during the official talks.

According to official sources some 110 enclaves are situated inside Bangladesh territory and 55 such enclaves are in Indian territory.

Besides, the issues of trade, border security and water sharing are likely to dominate the talks, PMO and foreign ministry sources said.

Dhaka will also focus on the whopping trade deficit between the two countries, estimated to be over \$2 billion, and will press New Delhi for removing tariff and non-tariff barriers to boost the bilateral trade.

"Increasing trade can generate tremendous goodwill among the two countries. Bangladesh is more than willing to do business with India on mutually beneficial terms," said a high

official of the PMO.

Although the visit has a substantial agenda, primarily it will be a "goodwill visit" aimed at bridging the trust deficit and creating the right atmosphere to resolve all contentious issues, said a high official of the foreign ministry.

He said both sides are keen on downplaying the differences in views and want to inject some warmth in the relationship that has suffered due to very few high-level visits by the leaders of the two countries.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh hope that Indo-Bangladesh relations will usher in a new era when they meet on March 21 in New Delhi, he added.

The two leaders last met during the 13th Saarc (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) summit in Dhaka. Khaleda Zia will be given a ceremonial reception at the Rashtrapati Bhawan on March 21 followed by talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who will host a banquet in her honour on that day, official sources said.

She is also expected to touch on regional issues like boosting synergies among Saarc nations through implementation of the Safta (South Asia Free

Trade Area) and ensuring stability in the region during the meeting with her Indian counterpart.

Khaleda Zia will also call on President APJ Abdul Kalam. Congress chief and UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi will call on her and so will some cabinet ministers.

On March 22, Khaleda Zia will address a gathering of leading members of Indian chambers of commerce and industries.

The prime minister's entourage includes a high level delegation, including at least four senior cabinet ministers, and a high-powered business delegation drawn from leading business bodies of the country.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Indian High Commission sources said that Bangladesh is yet to submit the delegation list and summary of the visit. "We are awaiting the delegation list and details of the visit from Bangladesh side," said a senior official of the High Commission.



A MoU was signed by Eastern University Vice Chancellor AK Fazlul H Shah and Yu Jinggan, president, International Forum for Decoration and Architecture (IFDA), China in the city recently.