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Hasina, Khaleda invited to attend Manila confce

Ruling Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina and BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia were invited to attend the first international conference of Asian political parties being held in Manila September 17-19, reports UNB.

Former speaker of the House of Representatives of the Philippines Jose C de Venecia conveyed the invitation when he called on them separately at their offices in the city yesterday.

The objective of the conference is to establish links among the Asian political parties for fostering a culture of partnership in areas of common concern and articulating a common strategy for Asia for the next 25 years.

About 60 political parties are expected to join the meet.

131 opposition MPs blast PM for remarks

By Staff Correspondent

A total of 131 opposition lawmakers including Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia have termed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent remarks on the judiciary and some other issues as "egotism of an autocrat, threat to rule of law and naked anarchy."

In a joint statement yesterday, they said even after holding the highest office of power in the country, Hasina has failed to behave responsibly. "Her political asset is her pride, vindictive attitude and ruthlessness."

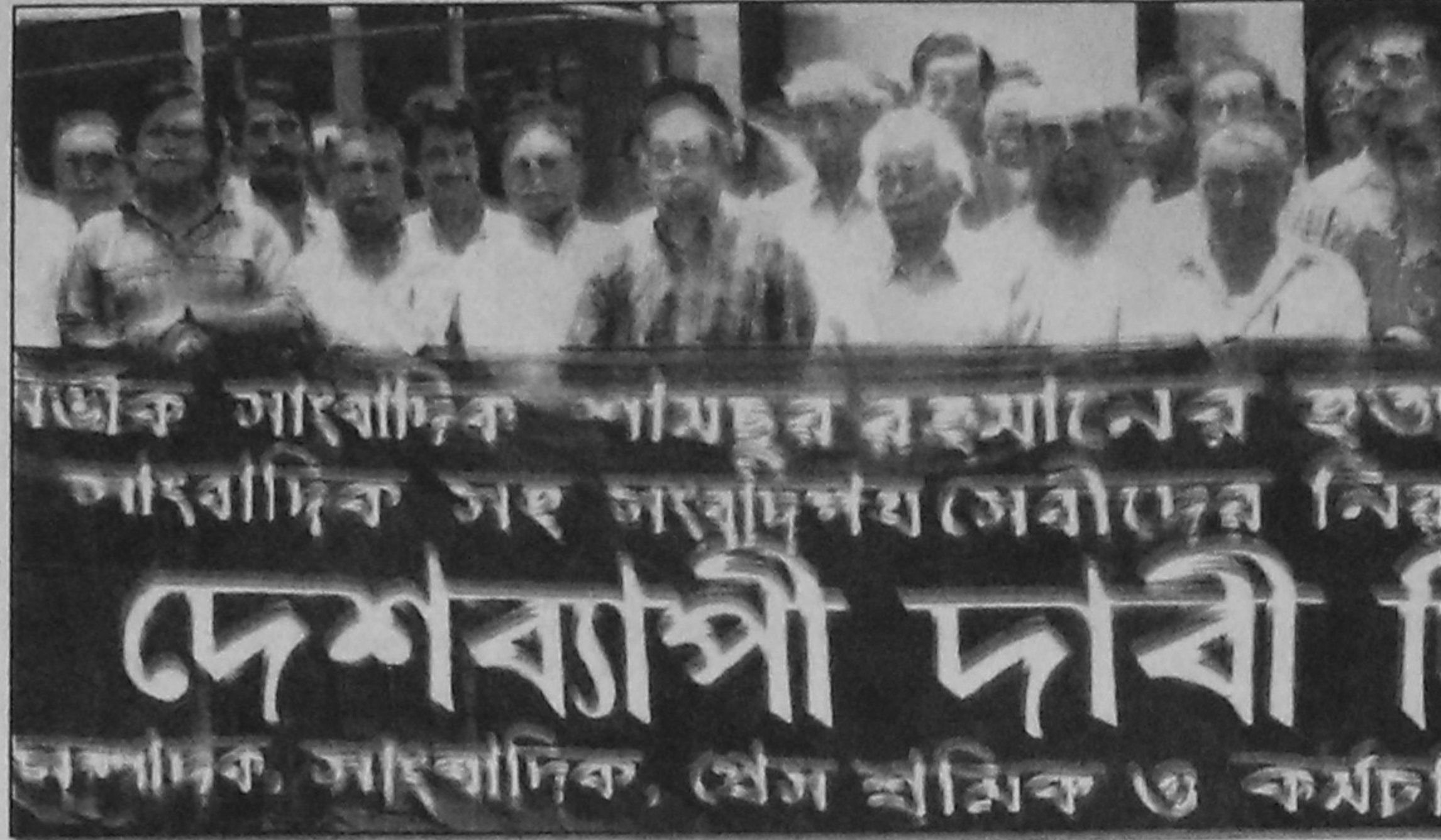
The MPs were reacting to the Prime Minister's remarks in an interview with the BBC and at a rally in Chittagong.

They alleged that "indecent" speeches of the PM totally destroyed environment in the parliament. Her naked politicisation efforts have damaged acceptability of the Election Commission and credibility of various government institutions.

The police administration has been divided into groups due to her (Hasina) irresponsible statements, the MPs said. Even she delivers "one-sided" speeches in various functions of the army, they added.

The lower courts have become means of fulfilling wishes of the ruling Awami League, its MPs and leaders while thanas have been virtually turned into local AL offices," they said.

The PM is now out to destroy the higher judiciary, the legislators alleged.



Journalists, employees and press workers of different dailies and news agencies brought out a silent procession in the city yesterday demanding trial of the killers of journalist Shamsur Rahman — Star photo

Newspapermen observe Demand Day

By Staff Correspondent

Journalists, employees and press workers of newspapers and news agencies yesterday observed Demand Day across the country demanding arrest of the killers of journalist Shamsur Rahman and security of the newspapermen.

They brought out a silent procession before reading out a declaration at a protest rally at the National Press Club. BFUJ leader GM Yakub read out the declaration.

They also demanded arrest of the killers of six journalists including the Runner Editor Saiful Alam Mukul.

Editors of the national dailies and news agencies, leaders of BFUJ, DUJ, Employees Union and Press Sramik Federation and senior journalists joined the rally and silent procession.

28 Shibir activists arrested from IU

From IU Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Aug 7: Twenty-eight Shibir activists were arrested from Islamic University campus last night.

Police raided three messes and arrested the Shibir activists for their alleged involvement in a gunfight on the campus on Sunday.

The gunfight between the activists of BCL and Shibir left at least 22, including two policemen injured.

Five more die: Two lakh marooned in 5 dists

Five more deaths were reported yesterday as overall flood situation deteriorated in Sirajganj, Jamalpur, Kushtia, Bogra and Sherpur districts, reports UNB.

Two people drowned in Sirajganj while three in Jamalpur district.

Some two lakh people in 16 upazilas of the five districts — five in Sirajganj, four in Jamalpur, three each in Kushtia and Bogra and one in Sherpur — were reported marooned.

As erosion by mighty Padma and Jamuna has taken a "serious turn," some 1,000 houses and other establishments have been devoured.

The flood situation in Sirajganj district aggravated further today as the river Jamuna marked a further rise.

The two children who were reported drowned in the flood-water in Sadar and Kazipur upazilas could not be identified immediately.

The flood-protection embankment at Arora in Shahjadpur upazila was washed away by the Jamuna yesterday, flooding vast areas.

Over one lakh people of the char areas in Sadar, Chouhali, Shahjadpur, Belkuchi and Kazipur upazilas were reported marooned while crops of about 2,000 hectare of land went under water.

In Jamalpur, three people were washed away after the Jamalpur Flood Protection Embankment at Harinduhara in Islampur collapsed yesterday.

Flood Control Room sources confirmed the deaths but could not immediately give identity of the victims.

The sources said Chokabari, Chinatuli and Bahadurabad in Dewanganj, Kulkandi, Belgachha, Sapdhari, Chinatuli and Noarpura in Islampur and different places in Madarganj and Sariabari upazilas have been flooded.

With the rise of water levels in both Padma and Goral, fresh areas of Daulatpur, Bheramara and Kumarkhali upazilas in Kushtia district have been submerged, leaving over 10,000 people marooned.

Three unions of Bheramara and eight unions of Daulatpur upazilas have been affected. The worst affected unions are Bahadurpur, Juniadaha and Mokarimpur of Bheramara, Chilmari, Adabaria, Arip, Pragur, Boalia, Ramkrishnari, Phikipnagar and Maridia union of Daulatpur upazila.

In Bogra, some 19 villages of Sariakandi, Dhunat and Sonatala upazilas have been inundated by flood water.

9 new planets outside our solar system

MANCHESTER, Aug 7: Astronomers said today they have found nine new planets circling stars outside our solar system — evidence that the Earth and its neighbours may not be as special as we like to think, reports AP.

Three teams of researchers from Switzerland and the United States told a meeting of the International Astronomical Union about the discovery of the so-called exoplanets.

They include a Jupiter-sized planet orbiting the star Epsilon Eridani, 10.5 light years from Earth, found by astronomers based at the University of Texas at Austin's McDonald Observatory.

The discovery of a new planet so close to Earth, and orbiting a star similar in size to our sun, is "like finding a planet in our own backyard," said University of Texas astronomer Dr William D Cochran.

A team from Switzerland's Geneva Observatory told the meeting in the northern English city of Manchester about the discovery of five new planets, alongside evidence of a second planet orbiting a star — known as HD 83443 — slightly smaller than our sun.

It is only the second time astronomers have found more than one planet orbiting a star outside our own solar system.

Scientists from the University of California at Berkeley also found evidence that five stars known to have one orbiting planet may in fact be orbited by more — indication that multi-planet systems such as our own may be common.

"This is the first time anyone has noticed that such a high percentage of stars with one known planet show evidence of a second companion," said Deborah A. Fischer, a postdoctoral fellow at Berkeley, which also announced the discovery of three new exoplanets.

"The findings suggest that it's quite common to have planets around other stars, so our solar system is not as unique as we might think," said International Astronomical Union spokesman Jim O'Donnell. "That makes the possibility of life in the universe more likely."

"And the star in the University of Texas case is quite like our sun, which is exciting," he added.

Scientists have now found 50 exoplanets, 41 of them in the last five years. Increasingly sensitive equipment capable of detecting how a circling planet can make a star wobble has produced the spate of new discoveries.

Farooq can't be tried twice for same offence: Defence

Col Farooq's death sentence is a second punishment for a single offence as his counsel pointed out that he was earlier punished by a Martial Law Court for the same offence, reports UNB.

"Army Act bars bringing any of the army personnel for trial for a second time, specially in a civil court, if that person has already been tried in a Martial Law Court for any of his offences," the lawyer told a High Court bench yesterday.

Defence Counsel Khan Saifur Rahman put up the plea submitting his arguments at the sixth day yesterday at the appeal hearing of the Bangabandhu Murder Case.

He claimed that Col (Dismissed) Syed Farooq Rahman was punished by a Martial Law Court, and may be for his presence in the place of occurrence (Bangabandhu's residence), in whatever form it may be.

The counsel said the service book of Farooq was not produced before the court; otherwise, it would have been clear why the army officer was dismissed from his services.

As per the Army Act, dismissal from job by a Martial Law Court is a punishment, and Farooq cannot be tried twice for the same offence, Khan Saifur argued.

He said that his client gave the confessional statement following physical torture.

"The so-called confessional statement was obtained while he (Farooq) was in confinement under CID custody by the order of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The confessional statement was not given voluntarily," he told the court and said such statement is not cognizable.

He said Farooq was remanded for 32 days in three cases and that his first remand was not following court orders, rather at the Home Ministry's directive.

So, the confessional statement he gave while under CID custody should not be accepted, the defence counsel said, adding that "it was an illegal confinement."

Farooq lied in his confessional statement to save himself from torture, Khan Saifur maintained.

He further said the magistrate who recorded the statement did not sign all the eight pages of the statement, so it can be presumed that the statement could have been even designed later by the authorities in their own way.

The court of Justice Mohammad Ruhul Amin and Justice ABM Khairul Haque is likely to resume today at 2 pm, as opposition has called a half-day hartal on the day.

Election: JP (M-M) keeps both options open

By Rezaul Karim

Like BNP and other opposition parties, Jatiya Party (M-M) is also preparing for the next parliamentary polls keeping both options of facing the election alone or with an electoral alliance open.

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and Anwar Hossain Manju, the communications minister in Sheikh Hasina's "consensus government" head the 101-member JP central committee, with 21 Presidium members.

The party insiders informed that the party has almost completed the formation of its front organisations and committees at district level since its formal split with former president HM Ershad-led Jatiya Party on April 24 last year. So far, it has formed seven of its wings and committees in 54 out of 72 political districts.

A top party leader told The Daily Star yesterday that it has decided to examine the possibility of joining in any electoral combine only after having selected its own candidates for all the 300 parliamentary constituencies.

He, however, said the party will definitely join any electoral alliance provided it's formed by pro-liberation forces.

The leader said the party has already selected candidates for 80 seats and will begin interviewing leaders from August 16 to 20 to select the candidates for the remaining constituencies.

Another party leader said the party also decided to give nominations to those aspirants of Awami League, BNP, JP (Ershad) who will not be selected by their respective parties.

He said the party wants to contest in the next election alone with the objective of strengthening its organisational structure and network across the country.

"We have the capability to win in at least fifteen seats even if we contest alone," the leader said and hoped that the JP (M-M) will do better than the JP (Ershad). The leader said the party currently has the strength of 12 MPs in the Jatiya Sangsad.

Party sources said the hierarchy has instructed leaders and activists at all levels to gear up organisational activities side by side with preparing for the next general election. But the party has no plan to go for any anti-government agitation.

An influential leader of the JP said party Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury will contest from Chandpur, Secretary-General Anwar Hossain Manju from four constituencies at Barguna, Jhalokathi, Pirojpur and Bagerhat, additional secretary general Monirul Haq Chowdhury from Comilla, joint secretary general Sadeq Siddique from Tangail, Sharfuddin Ahmed Jhantu and Nur Mohammad Mandal from Rangpur, Tajul Islam Chowdhury and Mostafizur Rahman from Kurigram, Golam Faruque Ovee from Barisal, Hafizur Rahman Pramanik and Advocate Fazle Rabbi from Gaibandha, and Tasmina Hossain from Pirojpur.

Joint secretary-general Sadeq Siddique said yesterday the district committees have been asked to send name of possible party candidates and popular personalities in the locality.

Replying to a question, he said the JP will definitely form an electoral alliance with the Awami League and other pro-liberation forces if the ultra-rightist alliance of BNP, JP (Ershad), Jannaat and Islami Oikya Jote contest the polls in the form of a combine.

However, another party leader said the leadership has already had informal talks with some top leaders of main opposition BNP. The party will finalise its strategy once the caretaker government takes over power.

Dengue: 20 new cases in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 7: Twenty more dengue patients were admitted to the hospitals and private clinics in the city today, according to BMA information cell here.

General secretary of Chittagong unit BMA, Dr Khurshid Jamil said so far eight dengue patients died in the city.

Twenty cases were reported positive in different labs in the city today.

Chittagong unit BMA has set up a cell for monitoring the dengue cases.

Meanwhile, Chittagong City Corporation started publicity by megaphones in the city to create mass awareness.

BNP MP Sarwar attacked with dengue fever

BARISAL, Aug 7: BNP lawmaker from Barisal-5 Majbar Rahman Sarwar did not appear in the court today in a murder case as he was reportedly attacked with dengue fever, reports UNB.

Sarwar's lawyers submitted a medical certificate in the court in which the physician advised him to take seven-day complete rest to recover from dengue fever, sources said.

8 get life-term under PSA in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Aug 7: The Judge of Tribunal Court, SKM Anisur Rahman, today sentenced eight people to life term on charges of extortion, kidnapping and robbery.

The convicted persons include Mozam Gazl, a notorious dacoit of the Sundarbans. Life term is the highest punishment so far given under PSA in the country, said a Tribunal source.

The other accused given life term are Musa Sarder, Saeed Sarder, Salam Sana, Fazar Ali, Rafizul, Jibon Bepari and Meera Fakir.

They are members of an inter-district gang of dacoits having stronghold in the Sundarbans.

Jatka sale goes unabated



Although there is a government ban on catching and selling of jatka (hilsa fry), the fish is being sold in different kitchen markets. The foolish unlawful act that has been going on for years has made the once-abundant fish disappear in many areas in the country, sources said. They also said neither the Fisheries Department nor the law enforcing agencies took any action against the offenders.

According to market sources, a mound of jatka sells between Tk 900 and Tk 1200 in wholesale market while a quartet sells at Tk 50 to 60 in retail market. And a hilsa is being sold between at Tk 300 and 400 in the city market.

— Star photo by AKM Mohsin

Land acquisition for KEPZ moving at a snail's pace

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 7: Bureaucratic bottleneck in land acquisition process has delayed infrastructure development for the 200 million US dollar Korean Export Processing Zone (KEPZ), sources said.

An official concerned, preferring anonymity, said, "Land acquisition process at the site of KEPZ on the bank of the river Karnaphuly is moving at a snail's pace, delaying in the process infrastructure development which was supposed to begin this year."

"Some important portions of the 2,492 acres earmarked for the KEPZ are yet to be acquired while eviction of houses on the designated land lies pending due to dilly-dallying of the administration," he said. "In spite of all these we hope the infrastructure development works to begin during the next dry season."

"But we are seeking a thrust from the government for implementation of this private EPZ," he added.

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PROFESSOR SYED ALI ASHRAF MEMORIAL LECTURE
8 AUGUST 2000, 3 P.M.
HOTEL SUNDERBAN, DHAKA

EMINENT SCHOLARS FROM BANGLADESH AND ABROAD WILL PRESENT THEIR LEARNED PAPERS. SCHOLARS FROM ABROAD INCLUDE:

DR. SHAIKH ABDUL MABUD
ISLAMIC ACADEMY, CAMBRIDGE, U.K.

DR. GHULAM NABI SAQEB
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY, MALAYSIA

DR. ALEEM MOHAMMED-TRINIDAD & TOBAGO, WEST INDIES

PROF. DR. H. JURNALIS UDDIN-JAKARTA, INDONESIA

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This is for kind information of the valued ISD Telephone subscribers that some misguided people along with some dishonest T&T employees are engaged in misusing ISD and NWD lines for which few subscribers have lodged complaints of excess bill.

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ডেসুজুরের চিকিৎসা ও প্রতিরোধের জন্য যা করণীয়

ডেসুজুরে আক্রান্ত হলে আমাদের প্রধান করণীয় হচ্ছে হাসপাতালে চিকিৎসকের সাহায্য নেয়া এবং প্রতিরোধের ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা।

প্রতিরোধ:

- * এডিস মশা ডেসুজুরের বাহক। তাই বাহক মশার দমনই হচ্ছে ডেসুজুর প্রতিরোধের প্রধান উপায়।
- * ঘরের বাইরে অব্যবহৃত পাত্র, কৌটা, নারিকেলের মালা, ভাবের খোলা, তাম্বা কলস ইত্যাদিতে পানি জমতে দেয়া যাবে না। এসব জিনিস মাটিতে পুতে ফেলা বাহনীয়।
- * অনুরূপভাবে বাসগৃহ, শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান, অফিস-আদালত, রেস্টোরাঁ ও দোকানে ফুলের টব, কৌটা, ড্রাম, গাড়ির টায়ার ইত্যাদিতেও জমে থাকা পানিতে এডিস মশা ডিম পাড়ে। এডিস মশা দমনে পানি জমার এসব স্থান স্বাস্থ্য কর্তে হবে।
- * বাড়ির, শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান, অফিস আদালত, দোকান-পাট ও তার আশপাশ পরিষ্কার-পরিচ্ছন্ন রাখতে হবে।
- * ঘরে কয়েকদিনের জমে থাকা পানিতেও এডিস মশা বংশ বিস্তার করতে পারে। তাই ঘরে জমে থাকা পানি নিয়মিত পরিষ্কার রাখতে হবে। ঘরে ও বাইরে হোট-বুর্ কোন পাতেই পানি জমতে দেয়া যাবে না।
- * মশারি ব্যবহার করে এডিস মশার কামড় থেকে রক্ষা পাওয়া যায়। এডিস মশা সাধারণতঃ দিনের বেলায় কামড়ায়। তাই দিনের বেলায় ঘুমোয়ার সময়ও মশারি ব্যবহার করতে হবে।

সৌজন্যে:
দি ডেইলী স্টার, বাংলাদেশ কাউন্সিল ও রোন-পুল্যাংক

আগামীকালের পত্রিকা দেখুন

BRITISH AMERICAN TOBACCO BANGLADESH

NOTICE

Due to unavoidable circumstances, the inauguration of British American Tobacco Bangladesh's free sapling distribution programme from Bonsai Nursery, Dhaka has been rescheduled. Instead of 8th August, it will be inaugurated on Saturday 12th August at 9:15 am. The venue remains unchanged.