

Topple govt to save country, environment: Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday called on the people to topple the government in order to save the country as well as the environment.

"The BNP-Jamaat alliance government is the enemy of not only the countrymen, but also the trees and the environment," she said while inaugurating a three-month tree plantation programme of the Bangladesh Krishak League in front of the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi in the city.

She also called on all to plant at least three types of trees — medicinal, fruit and wood — during the current rainy season.

Hasina, also the Awami League president, alleged that the four-party alliance government, after coming to power, has been destroying crores of trees planted by the previous AL government across the country.

"Thousands of trees in Chandrima Udyan were also felled in the name of beautification of Zia's Mazar," she said.

Even the original design of parliament was also spoiled by destruction of trees at Chandrima Udyan, she added.

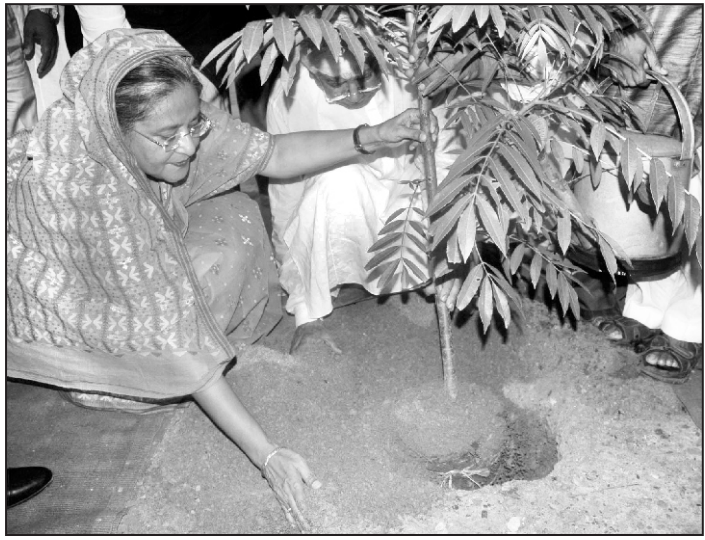
"The prime minister always speaks of enhancing country's image, but is it good for the country's image when a huge amount of money of the prime minister's family

was seized abroad?" Hasina said.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil said if the present government remains in power for one more day, the country would go backward for a year.

He called on every section of people to come forward to make the tree plantation program a success.

The main philosophy of the present government is to kill people



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina plants a tree in front of the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi yesterday while inaugurating a tree plantation programme.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

'Manipulation of legal process a major obstacle to justice'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday said manipulations at different levels of the legal process of the cases relating to violence against women and children are a major obstacle to justice.

Starting from investigation and medical check-up to trial sessions, the police administration, doctors and lawyers are subjected to manipulation for financial, political and security reasons, they said.

Women leaders, doctors, lawyers and police officials took part in the 'Roundtable to identify the problems of medico-legal affairs and cases to resist women repression', organised by the Legal Aid Sub-Committee of the Bangladesh Mahila Parishad at Cirdap Auditorium in the city.

"There is no provision in the laws for punishment of those who manipulate the investigation process or medical reports," said Obaidul Haque, officer-in-charge of Cantonment Police Station.

He also felt that such a law should be enacted to punish the manipulators.

The OC also criticised the doctors for their non-cooperation in treatment of the women victims. "There were many incidents that when we took the victims to the hospitals, especially those whom we cannot identify immediately, we have to wait for hours in the queue."

Finding out witnesses in rape and torture cases is also a big problem, he pointed out. It is also almost impossible to take the rape victims to hospital within 24 hours of the incident, as they do not come to the police stations in time, he added.

Dr Samanta Lal Sen, chief consultant of Burn Unit of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital, said it is a long and complex process to be present in the courts and give accounts as a witness. "Waiting in the court for hours is humiliating for the doctors or any other witnesses," he added.

Advocate Masuda Rehana Begum noted that 3,000 cases have



The winners of 'Fair & Lovely-Prothom Alo Abaro Swapnapuran Competition' pose with the guests at the prize giving ceremony at Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday. Motiur Rahman, editor of the Prothom Alo, second from left in the second row, attended the ceremony as chief guest.

New law makes land registration mandatory

Separate land court on the cards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A new law comes into effect on July 1, which will make registration mandatory for any kind of land ownership, transfer or mortgage, said Law Minister Moudud Ahmed at a press briefing yesterday.

The government is also working on drafting laws to set up a separate court to settle land disputes, he added.

The Registration (Amendment) Act, 2004 makes registration mandatory for transfer of all kinds of immovable property irrespective of value, declaration of Heba (gift), mortgage deed, distribution deed of inherited property and contract for sale (Baina).

"The amendment to The Registration Act, 1908 is intended to bring discipline in land management and simplify the process of transfer of land ownership, not to generate revenue," said the minister.

A salient feature of the new law is that it prescribes a simply formatted form for writing deeds with photographs of both the persons — who transfers the land and who receives it.

While land disputes constitute 70 to 75 percent of the civil and criminal cases, mandatory registration of deeds on Heba, Baina (contract for sale) and distribution of inherited

property will significantly reduce disputes over land ownership, Moudud said.

The registration fee for a Heba deed has been fixed at a nominal Tk 100 to uphold the spirit of the practice according to the Muslim personal law, he said.

Any deed, contract or declaration will have to be registered within three months under the new law, in place of existing four months. The old deeds can be registered within six months from the date the law comes into effect, the minister said.

State Minister Muhammad Shahjahan Omar said that the new law will simplify land management and bring down the rate of civil litigation.

Explaining the distribution of inherited property, he said the inheritors, if they wish, may amicably enjoy the property after the death of the original owner. But one will require registration of distribution of inherited land in case he or she wishes to transfer ownership or mortgage.

Amendments have been made to The Transfer of Property Act, 1882, The Specific Relief Act, 1877 and The Limitation Act, 1908 in order to make the new law effective.

The law secretary Md Alaiddin Sarder was also present at the press briefing held at the Secretariat.



Outgoing Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury and new Chief of Army Staff Major General Moeen U Ahmed shake hands after signing Command handing-taking over Document at AHQ yesterday.

No headway 4yrs into AL office blast at N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'GANJ

While the family members of the victims are yet to recover themselves from the losses of their dear ones, the "mystery" of the bomb attack at the Awami League (AL) office at Chashara on this date in 2001 is yet to be solved.

Four years into the incident, the AL and ruling BNP have blamed and filed cases against each other for the attack during their tenures but the mystery still remains foggy.

The bomb blasted when the then AL lawmaker Shamim Osman was running his weekly mass contact programme at around 8:45pm, leaving 20 killed and about 100 injured.

After the incident, district AL Secretary Advocate Khokon filed a case with the Narayanganj Police Station accusing 27 BNP leaders and activists including Taimur Alam Khandoker.

Additional Superintendent of Police (SP) Atiqur Rahman investigated the case before handing it over to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

The CID's Additional SP Aminul Islam after investigating the case for 19 months submitted the final report to the court after the four-party alliance came to power, but he did not accuse anyone.

Meanwhile, Kalam, son of one of the victims, Halima Begum, filed a case in June 2002 with the same police station accusing 57 AL and Jatiya Party (Ershad) leaders, including Advocate Khokon and Shamim Osman.

The high court later stayed the proceedings of the case.

The district committee of the ruling four-party alliance will organise a public gathering at the Shahid Minar, adjacent to the spot of the bomb blast, this afternoon, where

Gen Moeen takes over as army chief

The new Chief of Army Staff, Major General Moeen U Ahmed, yesterday took over command of Bangladesh Army from outgoing army chief Lt. General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury, says an ISPR press release.

On the occasion, a formal command handing-taking over ceremony was held at the Chief of Army Staff's Secretariat at Army Headquarters (AHQ). Senior army officers of Armed Forces Division and Army Headquarters were present.

As per army tradition, the new army chief and the senior officers of the AHQ formally saw off the outgoing army chief Lt. General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury.

Earlier, in the morning, outgoing army chief General Hasan Mashhud visited the Shikha Anirban (the eternal flame) and placed a wreath at the memorial to pay homage to the members of the armed forces martyred during the War of Liberation in 1971.

A smartly attired army contingent presented guard of honour to the outgoing Army Chief at Senakunja. He took salute and inspected the guard.

Prior to his appointment as Chief of Army Staff (CAS) he was Chief of General Staff (CGS) of Bangladesh Army.

Chief of the Naval Staff Rear Admiral M Hasan Ali Khan and Chief of the Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Fakhru Azam are expected to ceremonially adorn the new Chief of Army Staff with badges of rank of Lieutenant General today in presence of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at the Armed Forces Division at Dhaka Cantonment.

Ward commissioner goes on rampage at judge's chamber

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'GANJ

A ward commissioner of Narayanganj municipality yesterday went on the rampage at a judge's chamber in the town.

Maqsood Alam Khandaker alias Khorsheed, brother of BRTC Chairman and district BNP General Secretary Taimur Alam Khandaker, along with a group went to the Money Loan Court for a pay-order.

The court official refused to hand over the pay-order submitted by Jharna Haider in connection with the auction of a piece of land mortgaged with the Rupali Bank's Fatullah branch.

Angered, Khorsheed attacked the official, Sheikh Mosharrif, and ransacked the files and documents on his table.

As Mosharrif took shelter at Joint District Judge Abu Mohsin's chamber, Khorsheed followed him and tore important documents apart.

Directed by the judge, court employees held Khorsheed, confined him into a toilet and informed police.

But Taimur along with up to 20 lawyers loyal to BNP turned up and rescued his brother.

Contacted, Khorsheed said, "It's all set up against me. I went to the judge to inform him about irregularities with the auction, but he lost his temper."

Taimur denied his involvement in the incident. "I don't know anything about it. I went to the court to attend a meeting on the district lawyers' association's upcoming election," he said.

Institute for herbal plants to be set up

UNB, Dhaka

Environment and Forests Minister Tariqul Islam yesterday said the government has taken the initiative to set up Bangladesh Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants at a cost of Tk 81 crore.

"For the first time in the country, such an institute will be set up for preserving, developing and expanding herbal plants to make these easily available for public welfare," he told a workshop titled 'Importance and contribution of herbal plants in healthcare and poverty alleviation'.

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9 robbers get life for killing one

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced nine robbers to life in jail for killing Titu, a resident of the city's Shyampur area in May, 2003.

Judge AR Masud of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 gave the verdict in presence of the convicts at a jam-packed courtroom.

The convicts are Shahjahan, Sattar alias Kana Sattar, Abul kalam Azad, Uzzal Biswas, Mohammad Alam, Alam Mollah, Ansar, Abu Sayed and Masum.

The court also acquitted Jahangir, Babul, Mamun and Renu Begum as the charges brought against them were not proved.

After cross-examination of 22 prosecution witnesses, the court handed down the verdict.

In the case filed with Shyampur Police Station, it has been alleged that a group of robbers led by Shahjahan entered breaking open the door of the house of Abdul Wadud at 424 Nurpur, Matuail at about 3:00am on May 22, 2003.

The robbers then entered the room of the victim Titu and made attempts to snatch Tk 3 lakh in cash and 50 tolas of gold ornaments.

But chased by Titu the robbers shot him. Titu rushed to a city clinic where he died after fighting with life for 13 days.

Later, police arrested the gang and pressed charges against

them on April 25, 2004.

Special Public Prosecutor Aminul Islam appeared for the state while advocates Delwar Hossain and Aman Ullah defended the accused.

DHAKA TODAY

Design exhibition
A design exhibition titled 'Dwelling in the Delta' will begin. The exhibition, organised by the German embassy in association with ScanCement, Saif UI Haque Sthapati and Gallery Chitrak, will remain open from 10:00am to 8:00pm daily till June 25. Venue: Gallery Chitrak, House # 21, Road # 4, Dhanmondi.

Film show
Bishwa Sahitya Kendra will screen a film titled 'Air Force One' by Wolfgang Peterson as part of its regular film session. Venue: Kendra premises. Time: 6:00pm.


Seminar
An international seminar on the 'Development of Eastern Medicine during the 20th Century' will be held, with President Iajuddin Ahmed as chief guest. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre, Sher-Bangla Nagar. Time: 10:30am.

Memorial meeting
The Sylhet Division Development Parishad will hold a meeting in memory of Awami League leader Abdus Samad Azad, the first foreign minister of the country. Law Minister Moudud Ahmed will attend the meeting as chief guest. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

Workshop
A workshop on 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers: The Parliamentarians Perspective' will be held. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 11:00am.

Academy Film Society
Academy Film Society will screen two films titled 'Munna Bhai MBBS' and 'I am Sam'. Venue: Academy Auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 3:30pm and 6:30pm.

Publication



Qulqhwani
Qulqhwani of Sultana Begum, wife of Shaheed Captain Sikandar Ally, will be held at her residence at 27/12 Sher Shah Shuri Road, Mohammadpur in the city after Asr prayers tomorrow, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will also be held at her residence.

Sultana passed away at the Combined Military Hospital, Dhaka due to old age complications on June 14 at the age of 77.

She was buried at the Banani Army Graveyard after namaz-e-janaza at Mohammadpur Eidgha Mosque.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the qulqhwani.

Abed Uddin Ahmed
Qulqhwani of Abed Uddin Ahmed, additional chief engineer of the Department of Roads and Highways, will be held at his residence at Ganderia after Juma prayers tomorrow, says a press release.

He died due to cardiac arrest on June 14 at the age of 56.

He left his wife, three sons and a daughter to mourn his death.

Relatives and friends are requested to attend the qulqhwani and pray for the departed soul.

New UK visa fees from July 1


BDNEWS, Dhaka

As the British government is going to change UK visa fees from July 1 following approval by its Privy Council, a visa official at the British High Commission (HC) here said it has been simplified than the past.

The changes represent an average increase of 21 per cent for all visa categories, with some going up, some going down and settlement visas remain the same, according to official statement from the UK.

"The changes to visa fees follow a wide-ranging review of our cost base. The new fees have been set to ensure that UK visas fee continues to meet the full cost of the worldwide visa operation, which receives no subsidy from the UK taxpayers," said Visa Operations Manager and First Secretary (Immigration) of British HC Jonathan Verney at an informal talk with a group of journalists in the city yesterday.

Full details of all new visa fees are available on the UK visas website: www.ukvisas.gov.uk/news.



WEATHER TODAY

Moderate heavy falls likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty to squally wind is likely at many places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Barisal divisions till 6:00pm today.

Moderate heavy falls are expected at places during the period, Met Office said predicting nearly unchanged day temperature.

Highest temperature 36.7 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 23.5 degree Celsius at Satkhira.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:48pm today and rises at 5:11am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.0	24.5	86	80
Chittagong	34.6	27.2	74	69
Rajshahi	35.8	25.0	88	78
Khulna	35.5	26.6	83	73
Barisal	34.6	27.5	84	80
Sylhet	29.5	25.8	96	86
Cox's Bazar	33.8	26.5	80	76

Death anniversary

Today is the 27 th death anniversary of Nawab Khajia Ahsan Ullah, son of Nawab Sir Salimullah, says a press release.

On this occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at 4:00pm and wreath will be placed at his grave at Begumbazar in the city.

Dr Jagadish Chandra Sarker
BSS, Mymensingh

Dr Jagadish Chandra Sarker, former assistant professor of Pharmacology Department of Mymensingh Medical College, passed away due to cardiac arrest in Mymensingh Medical College and Hospital yesterday at the age of 69.

He left behind his wife, two sons, one daughter to mourn his death.