

Turn fish cultivation into a social movement: PM

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday called for participation of all concerned in turning fish cultivation into a social movement.

"I believe it is possible to generate employment for the huge population and enhance income through further development and expansion of the sector," she told the inaugural function of the National Fish Fortnight-2005 at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city.

The slogan of this year's fish fortnight is 'Haor-baor-flood plains are gold mines for fish cultivation' (Haor-baor-plabon bhumi, matshya chasher sonarkhoni).

Hoping that the country would be successful in achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in poverty reduction by increasing fish production, she called upon all to be more caring and active for the development and expansion of fish resources, preservation of biodiversity and maintaining balance of aquatic environment.

Khaleda listed a number of steps taken by the government for promotion of fisheries sector and said the rate of fish production per hectare is still much lower compared to that in other countries.

"Therefore, we have to ensure successful application of proper planning, scientific methods and modern technology," she said.

She also suggested diversity in fish cultivation and making proper use of every unused water bodies, creating facilities for breeding of small indigenous fish species and forward and backward linkage industries related to fish cultivation and processing.

Presided over by Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman, the function was also addressed by Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman, Fisheries and Livestock Secretary Abdul Karim and Director General of the Department of Fisheries Nasiruddin Ahmed.

The Prime Minister formally launched the two-week national programme by releasing fish fries in the Crescent Lake in between the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban and Zia Udayan.

She distributed National Fish Fortnight Award-2005 among 23 persons and organisations in 10 categories for their outstanding contributions to the development of fisheries sector.

Of the 23 awardees, 11 got gold medals, seven silver medals and five bronze medals. The recipients of gold medals include Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, M Shamsuzzoha Khan, MP, Rajshahi University Vice-Chancellor Dr M Altaf Hossain and television personality Shaikh Siraj.

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Livelihood of 1.20 crore people depends directly or indirectly on fisheries sector which fetched foreign exchange worth Tk 2.5 crore in 2004-05, she added.

The Prime Minister highlighted some of the government programmes for development of fisheries sector, including production of high quality fries, making hatcheries and fish sanctuaries, formulating new policies for management of water bodies and allocating credits for society-based fish cultivation in paddy fields.

She said production of hilsha fish increased by 56 thousand tons in 2003-04 following government measures to check 'jatka' (hilsha fry) catching. A three-year long programme has been undertaken involving Tk 10 crore in this regard, she added.

The government has taken extensive infrastructure development programmes, including setting up of 20 shrimp landing stations and service centres for promotion of the potential shrimp sector, she added.

Khaleda directed the officials of the fisheries ministry to take measures so that the country can procure fish resources in its vast sea areas.

After hearing both the sides, Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza rejected the bail petition and granted three days' remand.

According to sources, the three collected tolls from different business houses in the city's Shahbagh, Katabon and Hatirpool areas regularly.

The foundation stone of Gulistan Trade Centre, a 12-storey market-commercial complex, was laid down in the city yesterday.

LGRD and Co-operatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan laid the foundation of the building at the place of burnt-down Pura Bazaar Hawkers Market in Gulistan.

Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Sadeque Hossain Khoka, DCC Chief Executive Officer Sifuddin Ahmed, and ward commissioner were present on the occasion.

Mannan Bhuiyan said private sector is now playing a major role in providing jobs.

He assured his all out support to complete the market in due time.

Sadeque Hossain said, "We took the project to rehabilitate the shop owners of Gulistan Pura Bazaar Hawkers Market that burnt in November last year."

Presided over by Sifuddin Ahmed, the function was also addressed by Ward Commissioner Chowdhury Alam.

The project is expected to be completed at a cost of Tk 80 crore within one year.

Some 1680 shops of the centre will be distributed through lottery system.

The market will be equipped with modern facilities like escalator, capsule lift, electric sub-station, stand by generator and one pair of car lift for car parking on the 5th floor.

Today is the 19th death anniversary of Dr Mofizullah Kabir, former pro-vice chancellor of Dhaka University, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his residence on 5/5 Gainjar road at Mohammadpur in the city.

Prof Kabir died on this day in 1986.

Ataul Haque Mallik, the fourth death anniversary of renowned sports journalist Ataul Haque Mallik will be observed today.

He died in a road accident at Airport Road in the city on August 8, 2001.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to pray for his departed soul.

UK envoy meets Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury yesterday called on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina at the latter's residence in the city.

After over half an hour meeting with Hasina, the British envoy, who also holds the European Union's chair in Bangladesh, told reporters that they discussed issues of mutual interests.

"We had a very constructive, positive and meaningful discussion," he said, but declined to elaborate.

Later, Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil told newsmen that the British High Commissioner made a courtesy call on Sheikh Hasina and there was no discussion on the current political situation in Bangladesh.

AL leaders Kazi Zafarullah, Saber Hossain Chowdhury and Syed Abul Hossain were present at the meeting.

Three ex-JCD leaders on 3-day remand

DU CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed three former Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders on a three-day remand for interrogation.

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) nabbed the three -- Mostafizul Islam Mamun, former general secretary of Dhaka University JCD, Harun-ur Rashid Shishir alias 'Dog Shishir', former international affairs secretary of JCD, and Ashraf Hossain -- with a pistol and ammunition from Shahbagh in the city on Saturday.

The Ramna Police yesterday produced them before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court and prayed for a five-day remand.

In the forwarding report, the police said the accused are armed criminals and extortionists and they have more arms in their possession.

On the other hand, the defence lawyers submitted a bail petition, saying that the three are victims of 'dirty politics' although they had immense contribution to the rise of the BNP.

After hearing both the sides, Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza rejected the bail petition and granted three days' remand.

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Indian External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh speaks at a session of 'Indo-Bangladesh Dhaka Dialogue on Trade, Investment and Connectivity' organised by Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), a local think-tank, and India International Centre (IIC). The event was held at the Brac centre in the city yesterday. Sitting from left are CPD Executive Director Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, CPD Chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan, Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan and former Indian high commissioner in Dhaka Deb Mukharji.

Resolve disputes thru' talks Hasina urges govts of India, Bangladesh

STAR REPORT

Visiting Indian External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh yesterday met Awami League (AL) chief Hasina at her Sudha Sadan residence, where she told the Indian minister ties between two neighbouring nations should never be a part of domestic politics.

"Relations with neighbours should never be affected regardless of which party is in power," Hasina's Political Secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury quoting her as saying.

During the 45-minute talks, she also urged the governments of Bangladesh and India to resolve all disputes between the two countries through discussion.

Asked about agenda of the meeting with Hasina, Singh only said, "We did not discuss politics."

"When there is good faith and trust between neighbours, all problems can be resolved amicably as the Ganges Water Treaty, 1997 clearly demonstrates," Saber told The Daily Star after the meeting.

"We don't want to make any comment about the present relations between Bangladesh and India," he added.

"However, it's a positive sign the Indian foreign minister is visiting Bangladesh despite the 'existing state of relations' between the two countries.

"We hope the government will take the opportunity to improve relations with India," he added.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil while briefing journalists said, "It was only a courtesy call."

He said Hasina recalled Indian cooperation for signing the Ganges Water Treaty and Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Accords when the AL was in power.

"The Awami League chief also recalled contributions made by the government and people of India during the Liberation War," Jalil added.

He said the meeting did not discuss the present political situation in Bangladesh.

AL leaders Zillur Rahman, Kazi Zafarullah and Syed Abul Hossain accompanied Hasina and Indian Foreign Secretary Saran and High Commissioner Sikri the visiting minister.

BDNEWS adds: A good number of civil society leaders had a breakfast meeting with Singh at Hotel Sonargaon yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed development and cooperation and different bilateral issues, meeting sources said.

Dr Muhammad Yunus, Barrister Rakanuddin Mahmud, daily Jugantor editor Abed Khan, Prothom Alo editor Matiar Rahman and Hamida Hossain, among others, were present.

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DND EMBANKMENT Permanent solution to waterlogging demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Gonomukti and Jatiya Sampad Rakha Sammitilo Andolon (People's emancipation and concerted movement for protection of national resources) submitted a memorandum to the chairman of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) yesterday demanding permanent solution to waterlogging problem inside the Dhaka-Narayanganj-Demra embankment.

The leaders and activists of the Gonomukti tried to lay a siege to the BWDB office at Motijheel in the city, but the police prevented them.

Later, a delegation of the demonstrators was allowed to enter the office to submit the memorandum.

The other demands included setting up a pump house in the area to drain rainwater out, demolishing all unauthorised structures on the DND canal and implementing the proposed projects to resolve the waterlogging problem.

Earlier, the organisation held a rally at Muktangan where Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal Convenor Khaleduzzaman, General Secretary of Workers Party of Bangladesh Saiful Haq and advocate Mahabur Rahman Ismail spoke.

For the last two years, about 20 lakh residents inside the DND embankment have been suffering from waterlogging in rainy season, thanks to the construction of different business establishments and houses in an unplanned way and encroachment on the land of DND drainage canals.

Recently, the BWDB and the district administration of Dhaka and Narayanganj have jointly started a drive to evict illegal encroachers.

2 killed in city road accidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two people were killed in two separate road accidents in the capital yesterday.

Babul Miah, 28, an helper of Kaliganj Transport, was crossing a road at Abdullahpur at Uttara when a bus rammed him down at noon.

The driver managed to flee the spot with his vehicle.

The victim was rushed to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) where the doctors declared him dead.

In another incident, an unidentified elderly man, aged around 60, was run over by an unknown vehicle near Nayabazar Bridge at Kotwali at 1:00pm.

A pedestrian finding him lying on the road, took the body, clad in check lungi and blue shirt, to the DMCH where the doctors declared him dead.

None came to claim the body at the hospital as of last evening.

Traffic sergeant Sohel gets bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to traffic sergeant Abu Mostafa Sakawat Kabir Sohel in a criminal case filed by his wife for torturing her for dowry.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Mizanur Rahman passed the order when Sohel, posted at Dhanmondi Traffic Zone, appeared before the court for bail.

Rozina Rahman filed the case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court on June 11 saying that her husband Sohel tortured her demanding Tk 70,000 for dowry on May 18 this year. On refusal, Sohel threw her out of his house the same day.

After hearing, the court issued summons upon Sohel to appear before it but he did not obey the court order. Later, the court issued warrant of arrest against him.

Boy sodomised by madrasa student in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A five-year-old boy was sodomised by a madrasa student at Khilkhet in the city on Tuesday.

Victim Mohammad Rony, son of shop-keeper Mostafa Kamal, was admitted to One-Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) Saturday night.

Madrasa student Pallab, 16, took Rony to his house when he was playing in front of his house at Barua under Khilkhet Police Station on August 2 afternoon, Kamal told the journalists.

Pallab allured him promising to give some mangoes and guava, said Kamal quoting his son.



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Breastfeeding can save 2.5 million lives a yr Says survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Connivance of traders with medical practitioners to promote breast milk substitutes (BMS) is a serious impediment to breastfeeding of children, said the speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

They said tricky promotional activities of the BMS traders at child healthcare centres across the country and indulgence of medical practitioners to illegal and unethical efforts hamper natural growth of children.

The roundtable was organised jointly by Bangladesh Breastfeeding Foundation (BBF) and National Nutrition Programme (NNP) to mark the concluding function of the World Breastfeeding Week at the Cirdap auditorium in the city.

Such activities have been found widespread at 24 of 25 hospitals and clinics that were surveyed recently across the country, said Journalist Sarwar Zahan, chairman of a sub-committee on BMS Code.

"Exclusive breastfeeding for six months followed by a natural regimen of homemade complement can prevent almost 2.5 million child deaths annually," he said while making his keynote presentation.

The BMS promoters manipulate nurses, ayahs and paramedics offering a deal of Tk 20 as commission for the sale of each tin of BMS to promote their products, he said quoting the findings of the survey.

Pediatricians have been found prescribing BMS for the newborns on a separate small chit at different medical centres, said a number of journalists who took part in the survey.

The BMS traders often deliberately avoid mentioning of warning in required visible manner that there is nothing better than breast milk for the babies and manipulate inadequacies of the existing Breast Milk Substitutes (Regulation of Marketing) Ordinance, said Zahan.

It has to be updated to encompass the role of BMS companies, physicians, parents and the government, he said.

"We will take initiatives to make the law up to date," said Additional Health Secretary Md Mizanur Rahman Mazumder.

"The existing law is not properly enforced to regulate marketing and promotion of BMS products," Mazumder said, adding that breastfeeding should continue till first two years of a child.

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WEATHER TODAY Thundershowers likely UNB, Dhaka. Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over the country till 6:00pm today. Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also expected at places over Rajshahi, Chittagong and Barisal divisions during the period, Met Office said. It said day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country. Highest temperature 33.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chuadanga and lowest 25.0 degree Celsius at Hatiya. The sun sets in the capital at 6:37pm today and rises at 5:31am tomorrow. Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were: City/Town Temperature in Celsius Humidity in percentage Morning Evening Dhaka Max 32.5 Min 26.5 86 79 Chittagong 30.0 25.6 91 93 Rajshahi 31.6 26.4 88 88 Khulna 31.8 27.0 86 80 Barisal 32.4 26.0 92 97 Sylhet 29.2 25.7 97 96 Cox's Bazar 31.7 26.5 87 --

DHAKA TODAY BDB discussion: Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh will hold a discussion titled 'Implementation of proposals for reforms in electoral and caretaker government system' with party President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury and Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain as chief guests. Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity Auditorium. Time: 3:30pm. Golden Jubilee: The golden jubilee celebration of Little Jewels Nursery Infant and Junior School will be held. Venue: National Museum, Shahbagh. Time: 4:30pm. Token hunger strike: Bangladesh Muktiyuddho Projona will observe a token hunger strike demanding quick implementation of the verdict of Bangabandhu Murder Case. Venue: Muktangan, Ramna. Time: 11:00am. Seminar: Bangladesh Centre for Advance Studies in collaboration with the fisheries department organises a seminar titled 'Development and management of fish resources in open water bodies for poverty alleviation' with Health Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain as chief guest. Venue: Biam Auditorium, New Eskaton. Time: 10:00am. Banglalink seminar: Banglalink organises a seminar titled 'Quality of education in Bangladesh: Challenges' with Education Minister Dr M Osman Faruk as chief guest. Venue: Basundhara Expo Centre, Basundhara City. Time: 11:00am. Discussion: Nazrul Institute organises a discussion titled 'National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam and Syed Ismail Hossain Siraj' with Justice Mohammad Abdur Rouf as chief guest. Venue: Seminar room of the institute, House-330/B, Road-28, Dhanmondi. Time: 11:00am. Reception: Centre for Bangladesh Culture will accord a reception to noted Indian short filmmaker Dilip Basu. A film titled 'Arts of Satyajit Ray' will be screened on this occasion. Venue: VIP Lounge of the National Press Club. Time: 5:00pm. Film show: Academy Film Society will screen two films titled 'Always' and 'Immoral Tales'. Venue: Academy Auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 6:30pm and 8:30pm. Training course: The opening ceremony of a training course on 'Hotel and Restaurant Management', organised by International University of Business, Agriculture and Technology, will be held. Venue: University seminar hall, Uttara. Lawyers meeting: A meeting of the preparatory committee of Democratic Lawyers Association of Bangladesh will be held. Venue: Supreme Court Bar Association Building. Time: 4:15pm.