

Ensure healthcare services for the poor

President urges physicians

BSS, Sylhet

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday called upon physicians and investors not to make the medical services a profit-making business only, but also ensure healthcare services for the poor.

"You have to bring about positive changes in your mindset considering the greater interest and welfare of larger section of the people," he said while laying the foundation stone of the National Heart Foundation Hospital, Sylhet.

The president said healthcare facility is a basic expectation of a nation. But in many cases people are not getting the desired services from a number of public and private hospitals, he said.

The government hospitals lack doctors and nurses side by side with financial and infrastructure constraints despite increase of population and emergence of new

diseases, he said.

Expressing his satisfaction over huge private investment in the health sector, the president said business should not be the only consideration of such investments. Everyone concerned should make it sure that poor people get services from the private hospitals, he said.

Health Adviser Maj Gen (ret'd) Dr ASM Matiur Rahman, Social Welfare Adviser Geetara Safiya Chowdhury and Secretary General of National Heart Foundation of Bangladesh Brig Gen (ret'd) Dr Abdul Malik attended the function as special guests.

General Secretary of National Heart Foundation-Sylhet Dr M Aminur Rahman Laskar and President of its advisory committee Hafiz Majir Uddin Ahmed addressed on the occasion while President of National Heart Foundation-Sylhet Prof M Enayet Ulla chaired the programme.

Urging the doctors to change their urban attitude, Prof Iajuddin said their contribution and vision are very important to ensure healthcare services for all.

"We have to keep in mind that medical service is not merely a profession but the best way to serve humanity," he said hoping that being imbued with the spirit, the doctors community would continue to serve the people with devotion, sincerity and responsibility.

Describing the heart disease as one of the main health problems in Bangladesh, the president said in the absence of effective and timely measures the disease might take a serious turn.

The president hailed the role of National Heart Foundation in cardiac treatment and hoped the new branch of the foundation in Sylhet would earn the trust of people by rendering modern treatment.

ACC probing graft charges against ex-whip Hasnat, wife

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A four-member anti-corruption taskforce reached Barisal and started investigating graft charges against Abul Hasnat Abdullah, former chief whip and cousin of Sheikh Hasina.

The taskforce led by Major Sabir included Rahela Begum, assistant director of central Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and two representatives from the National Board of Revenue (NBR) and the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police. Local officials from the ACC and CID are also assisting the taskforce that arrived in Barisal on Sunday, the sources said.

After the team made a few visits in and around Barisal, it has discovered huge discrepancies on the asset statements of Hasnat and his wife Shahanara Abdullah. The statements were turned in to the ACC by Shahanara Abdullah, added the sources.

The task force is also investigating how Shahanara Abdullah became exceptionally rich. During the term of Awami League government, it is alleged that she and Hasnat's brother Kazi Kamal made huge amount of money through arranging appointments, transfers, promotions, tenders and various types of development work for the government.

Till filing of this report, the team visited and took measurements of Hasnat's houses in Barisal and at Agoljehara. It also visited other assets owned by him - different landed properties, bank accounts and items kept in lockers at banks.

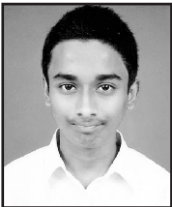
The sources said the team collected documents from the land and income tax offices to verify land ownership and taxes paid by Hasnat and his family members.

At the Barisal Corporate Branch of Sonali Bank, the taskforce yesterday found Tk 44 lakh in fixed deposit under Hasnat's name. While checking his locker maintained with the same branch, the team recovered foreign currencies, check books from foreign banks, gold ornaments, valuable gift items and a number of documents.

The task force made a list of items recovered from the locker while Aman Semiat, a cousin of Hasnat, was present as a witness, sources added.

Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Farhan Khaled, a student of class ten at Dhaka Residential Model School and College, has been suffering from Guillain-Barre Syndrome, a rare disease of the peripheral nervous system, which can lead to total paralysis, says a press release.

He is now undergoing treatment at the Intensive Care Unit of Square Hospital in the city.

According to doctors, his treatment would cost about Tk 30 lakh, which his family cannot afford.

His parents have appealed to generous people to extend a helping hand to save the life of their son.

Contributions can be sent to A J S M K h a l e d , A / C N o . 1510200470775001, Swift Code - BRABDDDH, BRAC Bank, Uttara Branch, Dhaka or to the principal of Dhaka Residential Model School and College.

Boy missing



Sam Bin Mohammad Arnob, son of Dr Mohammad Ali, has been missing since Tuesday, says a press release.

The 17-year-old boy did not return home after he went out of his residence at 227/A, Malibagh in the city at 5:15pm without telling any of his family members.

His complexion is not fair and his height is 5'3. He was wearing a check shirt and full pant and carrying a college bag on his back on that day.

A general dairy has been lodged with Motijheel Police Station on May 8.

Anybody knowing his whereabouts is requested to inform the nearest police station or dial the following numbers: 01716214466 and 01711196830.

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar
Siemens Bangladesh Limited will organise a seminar on 'Solutions for Bangladesh's intelligent buildings'. Venue: Radisson Water Garden Hotel. Time: 10:00am.

View exchange meeting
Bangladesh Heritage Foundation organises a roundtable titled 'The role of Bangladesh Army in upholding democracy and democratic system'. Venue: Bilal auditorium. Time: 10:00am.



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League leader Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir being taken to the Special Court set up at the MP Hostel at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city yesterday.

Power sector runs with wrong data and statistics

Says energy adviser

UNB, Dhaka

Worried at the mismanagement and inefficiency in the power sector, Power and Energy Adviser Tapan Chowdhury yesterday said the power sector is running with wrong data and statistics.

"We're running with wrong information and data. All the information provided by the Power Development Board on power generation, demand, supply, load-shedding and system loss are incorrect... This is not acceptable," he told reporters at his ministry office.

The Power Adviser's harsh remarks came at a time when the country is experiencing a severe power crisis. The country faces about 1,500 MW of power shortage against the demand for about 5,000 MW.

An on-again off-again situation has become a common phenomenon in both rural and urban areas adding to the woes of the people during hot and humid weather.

Tapan Chowdhury, however, could not give any assurance whether the situation would improve in the near future.

He said the power ministry would take actions against those responsible for providing such wrong data and information.

Referring to his recent experience, the adviser said all the time the accurate information are either suppressed or disseminated improperly.

"Suppose, if you want daily generation statistics, they would always provide you with exaggerated figures... If the real generation is 3,500 MW, they would tell you 3,650 MW," Tapan said. "What's the benefit of providing these wrong information? I think the real picture in the power sector is even worse."

The adviser said the government is considering preparing a seven-day

advanced load-shedding schedule to let the people know about the possible blackout.

He said the caretaker government is working to find out all possible options to have enough electricity through all possible ways, including importing from neighbouring countries like India and Myanmar.

Tapan said the government would initiate a move to import hydropower from Myanmar.

The Power Division will put forward a proposal to the Chief Adviser's Office to send PDB and

PGCB officials to Myanmar to assess the feasibility of the hydropower import.

Similarly, the government will pursue India to set up a nuclear power plant with its help to resolve the power crisis, he added.

Replying to a question on Barapukuria coal mine and power plant project, the adviser said the government's agreements with its Chinese contracts were not fair.

"But both the mine and power plant have to be kept functioning at this critical moment," he said.

Form anti-corruption bodies at local level

Says ACC chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Lt Gen (ret'd) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury yesterday stressed the need to form anti-corruption committees with neutral persons at the local level.

The ACC is going to adopt a new action plan to intensify the ongoing anti-corruption drive and the local committees would play a vital role in this regard, he said at a view exchange meeting at Bogra Zila School during his campaign against corruption in the northern region.

He also suggested forming anti-corruption committees in cooperation with the deputy commissioners and with the participation of professionals.

Terming the present environment conducive to anti-corruption drive, the ACC chairman urged all to

forge a social movement against corruption. "There might not be the opportunity to raise voice against corruption after two years," he added.

He also said local people can take a strong stand against corrupt people through non-violent means and can raise mass awareness about it.

Chaired by Deputy Commissioner Abdul Ghani Mia, the meeting was also addressed by SP Jamil Ahmed, President of Bogra Chamber of Commerce and Industry Fazlur Rahman Paiker, Prof Mozammel Haq and Dhunat Pourasava Chairman Alimuddin.

At the meeting, the local people expressed their keen interest to be involved in the anti-corruption drive.

Later, the ACC chairman also visited Joypurhat, Noagaon and Sirajganj.

BEN concerned at Titas gas field situation

Bangladesh Environment Network (BEN), a global network of pro-environment Bangladeshis, has expressed grave concern at the recent news reports on possible disaster at Titas gas field, which might lead to significant loss of life and property and cause serious environmental damage, says a press release.

BEN asked its Energy Panel to briefly review the situation. While the panel welcomed the most recent steps the government have taken to bring in relevant experts and technology to defuse the crisis, they expressed the hope that these steps are not too little, too late.

BEN Energy Panel Chairperson Dr Ahmed Badruzzaman, an expert on down-hole nuclear techniques used for monitoring oil/gas reservoirs, noted that the latest steps to deal with the Titas crisis are in the right direction. "It is a difficult problem that requires sophisticated technologies and specialised expertise, and time is of the essence."

He expressed the need to evaluate every well in Titas, not just a few, in view of the dynamic nature of the problem, to clearly understand what the source of the gas in each well is, and how it was accumulating and traversing underground. In the long run, he hoped Bangladesh would implement modern reservoir management practices to prevent such a crisis in the future.

BEN observes that the present crisis has arisen over a long time due to neglect by entities that manage the Bangladesh gas sector and operate the Titas gas field, and their inability or unwillingness to recognise the gravity of the situation.

BEN urged the government to undertake a thorough investigation to establish causes and responsibility for the possible disaster, and recommended steps to prevent such a crisis in the future.

BEN Energy Panel recommends that all old wells in the country must be evaluated to determine their condition to take remedial steps and prevent a similar crisis in other fields.

BEN also urged the government to develop a comprehensive energy strategy for the country. It offers to partner with the government and others to help address the country's energy issues.

Saadat takes oath as PSC chairman

UNB, Dhaka

Former cabinet secretary Dr Saadat Hussain yesterday took oath as chairman of Bangladesh Public Service Commission (PSC).

Chief Justice M Ruhul Amin administered the oath of office to the new PSC chief at a ceremony at his Supreme Court Chamber. Members of the PSC and other officials were present.

President Iajuddin Ahmed appointed Dr Saadat, who served as cabinet secretary of the immediate-past alliance government, chairman of the PSC on May 7.

Obituary

UNB, Dhaka

Abdus Sattar Bhuiyan, acting president of Dhanmondi unit of Awami League, died of a cardiac arrest at a city hospital yesterday at the age of 57.

Sattar, also a social worker, left behind his mother, wife, three daughters, one son and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death.

He was a former commissioner of 48 Ward of Dhaka City Corporation.

His body was taken to the party central office at 3:30pm where leaders and activists of AL and its front organisations paid their last respects to the late politician.

AL President Sheikh Hasina, in a condolence message, expressed deep shock at his death.

Khondaker Abdul Malik

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Khondaker Abdul Malik, a former lawmaker and advisory committee member of BNP, passed away due to old age ailments yesterday at the age of 80.

He left behind his four sons, two daughters, a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held on the Hajrat Shahjalal (RA) shrine premises after Zohr prayers today.

Malik, also founder president of Sylhet Chamber of Commerce and Industries, was elected lawmaker in 1979, 1991 and 1996 from the Sylhet-1 constituency (Sylhet Sadar and Companiganj upazilas) with Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) tickets.

Fahmida Siddiq Pomi



Fahmida Siddiq Pomi, wife of Zahir Sadeque, passed away at Siquare Hospital in the city on May 7 at the age of 38, says a press release.

She left behind her two sons. Her Qulqhanwni will be held at 927 Shahidbag after Asar prayers tomorrow.

Dhaka won't allow anti-Indian activities

Pranab says at parliament

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Bangladesh has assured that its territory would not be allowed to be used for activities directed against India, Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee said yesterday.

"Assurances have been given that Bangladesh territory will not be allowed to be used for activities inimical to India. We have emphasised to them that there is need for concrete and sustained action towards fulfilling this assurance," he said in parliament during question hour.

He also said some insurgent groups were indulging in anti-Indian activities and New Delhi had taken up the issue with Dhaka at the highest level.

Mukherjee said India had given a list of Indian insurgents and criminals to Bangladesh. "We hope the Bangladesh government will take appropriate steps," he added.

He said the caretaker government in Bangladesh has been informed about the assurances given by the previous government.

Mukherjee also said, "Illegal infiltration is taking place. We have taken up the matter with the Bangladesh government besides initiating measures, including strengthening the Border Security Force and construction of border fencing, to curb illegal influx into the country."

One gets 31yrs' RI for trying to smuggle currencies

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced a man to 31 years rigorous imprisonment for trying to smuggle foreign currencies worth Tk 2.2 crore on June 10 last year.

Judge Mohammad Aman Ullah of the Fourth Additional Sessions Judge's Court handed down the verdict in presence of the accused, Nazrul Islam.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence had completed their arguments.

According to the prosecution, customs officials at the Zia International Airport arrested Nazrul Islam of Majidpur village under Daudkandi Police Station of Comilla district when he was about to fly to Singapore with a bag containing the foreign currencies at about 11:10pm on June 10 last year.

Censor certificate of 'Ziddi Driver' suspended

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Film Censor Board has suspended the censor certificate of Bangla film 'Ziddi Driver' for screening uncensored and objectionable scenes.

The film was seized by Thakurgaon district administration while it was being screened at Naz Cinema Hall in Sadar upazila, an official handout said yesterday.

WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely
UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Sylhet, Chittagong, Barisal and Khulna divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may fall slightly over the southern part of the country and remain nearly unchanged elsewhere over the country during the period, Met Office said in a forecast.

Highest temperature 35.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chuadanga and lowest 22.4 degree Celsius at Sayedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 6.32pm today and rises at 5:18am 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	33.0	26.2	55	73
Chittagong	33.0	27.0	66	74
Rajshahi	34.5	24.3	75	86
Khulna	33.8	25.7	63	63
Barisal	33.2	25.0	92	74
Sylhet	35.0	24.0	63	64
Cox's Bazar	33.0	24.4	75	73