



Though BIWTA is dredging the river Buriganga to restore its navigability, this photo, taken yesterday, shows that waste materials have been piled up under Kamrangirchar Bridge due to lack of awareness among people.

PHOTO: STAR

ELECTION TO UN SECURITY COUNCIL

Diplomatic efforts on to obtain support

Dipu tells parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh keeps continuing to pursue diplomatic efforts to obtain the support of UN member countries in order to be elected a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2016-17 and to the executive boards of the International Telecommunication Union and UNDP.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni said this in parliament while replying to queries from lawmakers yesterday.

She also spoke about the government's mid-term and long-term branding strategy to build a positive image of Bangladesh abroad.

Dipu Moni said Bangladesh was recently elected to the UN Human Rights Council, Unesco executive board, International Sea Bed Authority, Asian Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions, Economic and Social Council and International Maritime Organisation.

The foreign ministry has been implementing branding initiatives in various

fields, including political and diplomatic arena, economic and investment sector, national heritage and culture, export, tourism, and socio-economic fields, she added.

Since the takeover by the present government on January 6, 2009, the foreign ministry through its 59 diplomatic missions abroad have actively been engaged in promoting the positive image of the country and portraying it as a responsible and active state, Dipu said.

The government succeeded in establishing a positive image of the country abroad through strategic diplomacy after erasing the negative image the country had earned due to rise of militancy and communal activities, she added.

Dipu said the foreign ministry and Bangladesh missions have also been trying to brand the country as Asia's 'next best destination' for foreign investments.

She also said the government is encouraging non-resident Bangladeshis to help promote the country's positive image abroad.

Replying to another query, she said

that of the 42 high commissioners and ambassadors, 26 were appointed from BCS (foreign affairs) cadre, three from the armed forces on deputation and the remaining 13 were appointed on contract basis.

FUGITIVE KILLERS OF BANGABANDHU

The foreign minister also said the government has been pursuing legal and diplomatic efforts to bring the fugitive killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman back to the country.

She, however, declined to disclose information about whereabouts of the convicted fugitive killers.

"Right now, it will not be wise to disclose whereabouts of the fugitive killers for the sake of ensuring that they are brought back to the country. The government has taken all effective measures to this end," Dipu said.

On March 15, Home Minister Sahara Khatun in response to lawmakers' queries disclosed possible whereabouts of eight fugitive convicted killers of Bangabandhu.

Defamation case against HT Imam, three others dismissed

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday dismissed the defamation case hours after a lawyer filed it against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Adviser HT Imam and three others for hurting religious sentiment of the Muslims.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mustafa Shahriar Khan dismissed the case saying, "The case was dismissed as there were no elements of defamation or hurting religious sentiment of the Muslims."

The three other defendants are Editor of the daily Naya Diganta Alamgir Mohiuddin, its Publisher Shamsul Huda and a reporter (unnamed) of Focus Bangla, a news agency.

Earlier in the morning, Advocate Mridha Mohammad Rashed Sarwar Palash filed the case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka against HT Imam and three others.

In his complaint, Palash mentioned that HT Imam, while addressing a conference titled 'Islamist Dristitey Juddhaparadhider Bihar' organised by Awami Ulema League as the chief guest at Diploma Engineers' Institution auditorium in the city on April 2, said Islam had been protected in Bangladesh by Awami League and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was its initiator.

The daily Naya Diganta published the report released by the Focus Bangla, a news agency, the following day.

The report had hurt the religious sentiment of Muslims in the country, the complainant said.

The complainant appealed to the court for issuance of arrest warrants against the defendants.

Implement 30pc FFs' quota

PM asks PSC

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has directed Public Service Commission (PSC) and other authorities concerned to properly implement the 30 percent quota facilities for freedom fighters' sons and daughters in government jobs.

The PM gave the order when an 11-member delegation of Bangladesh National Awarded, National Awarded Disabled Freedom Fighters and Shaheed Family Welfare Parishad met her at her office in the city yesterday.

During the meeting, the war-maimed freedom fighters, led by the Parishad Chairman Hemayet Uddin Bir Bikram and Secretary General MA Majed, informed her about various problems faced by them and their family members.

Hasina gave them a patient hearing and assured them of ensuring the best care of the freedom fighters of the country, said Press Secretary to the PM Abul Kalam Azad.

The PM said it is the duty of the government to ensure all necessary facilities

for the freedom fighters' families as they are among the greatest sons of the soil.

The government will take effective measures to ensure safe and comfortable housing facilities for war wounded freedom fighters in their respective localities.

Hasina called on the freedom fighters, their family members and the countrymen to build Bangladesh with the spirit of the 1971 liberation war.

She said 39 years have passed since the nation achieved independence under the leadership of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, but the long-cherished economic emancipation of its people has not been attained yet.

"Let us work hand in hand and build a modern developed Bangladesh by 2021, the golden jubilee year of the country's independence," the PM said.

State Minister for Liberation War Affairs ABM Tajul Islam, Principal Secretary to the PM MA Karim and Prime Minister's Office Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman were also present.

Give due recognition to women's contribution

Speakers tell Ananya award giving ceremony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women should be given due opportunity to go forward and the recognition for their deeds has a positive impact on social progress as well as advancement.

The speakers said this at the prize giving ceremony of Ananya Top Ten Awards 2009 at Poet Sufia Kamal Auditorium of the National Museum in the city yesterday.

Ananya, a fortnightly magazine, awarded top 10 women for their outstanding contribution to their respective organisations.

Speaking as the chief guest, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni called on the men and women to work together for welfare of the society.

"Women are repressed and oppressed in many cases, yet they are coming out of the home doing no less than their male counterparts," she said, adding that such awards can honour those women who have great contribution to society.

Lauding the initiative taken by Ananya, the minister said women's contribution remains untold, the stories of their sufferings too; such recognition can multiply the effort of the women in their respective fields and make shining examples.

Noted economist Prof Abul Barakat highlighted the contribution of women in the society and pointed out some of his thoughts on the issue of their development and empowerment in the country.

The award recipients are: Rawshan Ara Bachchu for state language movement in 1952, Shila Momen for her contribution to education, Rinat Fauzia for classical instrumental music, Mauluda Begum in handicrafts, Shabnam Ferdousi for documentaries, Dr Fahmida Khatun for economics, Monira Rahman for social welfare, Tahniat Ahmed Karim for banking, Hosne Ara Begum for administration and Salma Haq for the welfare of children with disabilities.

Rawshan Ara said such an award is not meant for a single woman, rather it is the recognition to all the women for their deeds in different spheres of the society.

Tasmima Hossain, editor of Ananya, and Khondaker Ibrahim Khaled, former governor of Bangladesh Bank, also spoke.

Later, the award handover ceremony was followed by a colourful cultural programme.

Ananya has been giving awards to different accomplished women for 16 years in different fields.

Narayanganj restaurants fined Tk 70000

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

A mobile court yesterday fined some restaurants in the town Tk 70000 for serving unhygienic and adulterated food.

Executive Magistrate of the district administration Samsuzzoha led the mobile court in presence of a huge number of policemen.

Anondo Restaurant was fined Tk 50,000 while The mobile court fined Palanno Restaurant, Monir Restaurant, Fair Ali Pace and CabWay were fined Tk 5,000 each.

HIGH COMMISSIONER MEETS MINISTER

India renews commitment to help dredge rivers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India has renewed its commitment to assisting Bangladesh in dredging the rivers of the country by giving nine dredgers.

The commitment was made during a meeting between Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan and Indian High Commissioner Rajet Mitter at the shipping ministry yesterday.

The minister told The Daily Star that India showed its interest in giving nine dredgers but the process of giving the dredgers is yet to be finalised.

During the prime minister's recent visit to India, her Indian counterpart agreed to support implementation of the strategy of the Bangladesh government to dredge rivers for flood control, navigation and access to ports.

In this context, India agreed to provide, inter alia, dredgers to Bangladesh on an urgent basis. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina stressed the need for nine dredgers during her visit.

The minister said, "We have talked about many issues, especially the ones which were discussed during the prime minister's visit."

They have also talked about using Chittagong, Mangla and Ashuganj ports. Shahjahan said they have requested India to develop its land ports on their parts and Indian high commissioner assured them that they will talk with their authorities concerned in this regard.

The meeting sources said the issues of dredging Kolkata to Ashuganj river route and setting up of new landing stations and container jetties were also discussed.



Members of the Christian community gather at a special prayer service at the South Plaza of Jatiya Sangsad in the city yesterday to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday.

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