

6 PERMANENT GPS STATIONS BY MAY NEXT YEAR

Digitalised map by 2016

Say survey officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is going to set up six permanent Global Positioning System (GPS) stations in six districts by May next year, said officials of Survey of Bangladesh (SOB), the national surveying and mapping agency, at a seminar yesterday.

Using the technology, all maps in the country would be converted into a digital format with creation of a geo-database by 2016 under a program in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), they said.

Talking to The Daily Star after the seminar, Project Officer of SOB Major Nurul Amin Chowdhury said the SOB has invited tenders for permanent GPS stations and hoped that the stations would be installed by May next year.

The GPS uses a global network of satellites to provide accurate navigational information for surveyors, sailors, hill trekkers, and even motorists.

The stations would function as GPS receivers that would track all satellites in their range and collect data of the satellite signals, said Nurul Amin Chowdhury, adding that this data would be used to collect geographical information to create a comprehensive geo-database.

This would, in turn, help SOB produce precise, highly detailed multi-

dimensional maps that would be helpful for everyone from research and development organisations and government agencies to citizens, said Colonel Mahmudun Nabi of SOB in his keynote speech.

"The technology can be used for tracking criminals, studying water bodies, planning infrastructure development work the possibilities are limitless," he said.

Discussions at the seminar explained the use and advantages of using digital maps and geo-spatial data over conventional mapping systems. They said digital maps are more reliable and precise and it can be instantly updated and used for countless activities.

They can be used in the field of infrastructure development, enforcement of law and order, defence, engineering and many other things, said Defence Secretary Khondaker M Asaduzzaman.

He called upon all private and public organisations to approach SOB for topographic or geographic data required to plan and implement their projects, rather than spending time and money on doing the same things.

"This would save a lot of resources for many," he said.

Speaking as the chief guest, defence advisor to the Prime Minister Major

General (Retd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique urged the private and public agencies to maintain communication with the SOB to be updated with new information and contemporary mapping technologies.

"Moving from analogue to digital is a challenge. But we Bangladeshis love challenges," he said, "if we face this challenge in the correct way, it would bring only good things for the country."

SOB Surveyor General of Bangladesh Mobinul Haque chaired the programme. Assistant Surveyor General Md Zulfikar Haider, Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Tamotsu Shinotsuka, JICA Chief Representative Takao Toda and Geographical Survey Institute (GSI) Director Hidenori Yoshikane, among others, spoke at the programme.

The SOB launched the Improvement of Digital Mapping System (IDMS) project in 2009 to produce medium and large-scale digital topographical maps and digital geo-database for Bangladesh.

The agency would produce 1:25,000 scale digital topographic maps and geo-database for the whole country, and 1:5,000 scale maps for the divisional cities.

JICA have initiated a project titled Bangladesh Digital Mapping Assistance Project (BDMAP) to give technical and logistic support to SOB to implement digitalised mapping system.



A mobile court yesterday, during a drive against warehouses of combustible chemicals in the city's residential areas, fined this warehouse of Abdul Gaffar Company at Hosne Dalan. Used for storing plastic, for not keeping fire extinguishers there. (Story on Page 1)

35 BNP notices for JS discussion rejected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As many as 35 notices submitted by BNP lawmakers for holding discussions in parliament on various national issues were rejected yesterday.

BNP lawmaker Zafrul Islam Chowdhury and AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon submitted the notices to the parliament secretariat for holding discussions, adjourning the scheduled business of the House.

The two lawmakers submitted the notices although they are boycotting the current session of parliament in line with their party's decision.

A member of the panel chairmen, Ali Ashraf, who was presiding over the meeting during disposal of the opposition lawmak-

ers' notices, rejected their demands.

In defence, Ashraf said content of some notices are not clear, some are based on assumption and it is possible to get remedy about the issues raised in some other notices under the existing laws.

"Therefore, it is not possible to accept any of the notices for holding discussion in parliament," he added.

The two BNP lawmakers in their notices demanded, among others, for discussions on unrest in educational institutions, anomalies in recruitment in the government services, price spiral of different essential items, unbridled extortion and killing of Bangladeshi citizens in border area by India's Border Security Force (BSF).

CJ unhappy over absence of some dist judges at offices

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque yesterday expressed annoyance over absence of some district judges at their offices during the office time.

Supreme Court (SC) registrar's office sources said the chief justice telephoned at least 10 district judges between 9:00am and 9:15am yesterday, but got response from only two of them.

He asked the registrar's office to issue notice to eight district judges to show cause why they were not present at their offices in the morning.

The chief justice also directed the registrar's office to issue a circular asking all the judges and staffs of the subordinate courts to make maximum use of the office times so that more cases are disposed of quickly at those courts.

SC Registrar Ashrafur Islam told The Daily Star that his office will take steps as per the chief justice's directions.

Safayet gets bail in acid throwing case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to Safayet Ahmed Chowdhury, son of a High Court Judge Salma Masud Chowdhury, in connection with an acid throwing case.

First Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate AHM Habibur Rahman Bhuiyan passed the order upon a bond of Tk 1 lakh with two guarantors after Safayet's lawyer Abdul Matin Khasru submitted a petition seeking bail.

On September 29, Gulshan police arrested Safayet, 25, after his car driver Shaheen and Zahid Hasan, a hired goon, arrested earlier made a confessional statement that they had thrown acid on Sabri-E-Zaman, 24, executive (IT) of Ericksson Bangladesh, on Safayet's instruction.

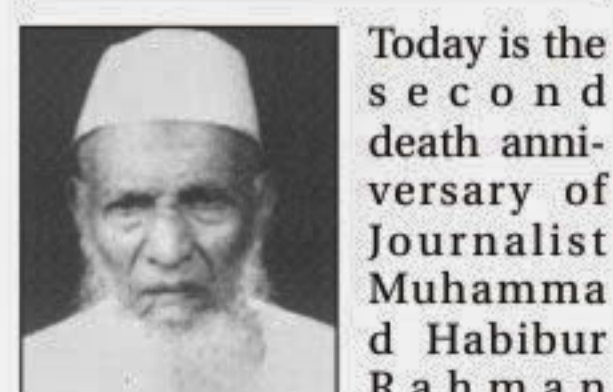
Safayet was produced before a Dhaka court that placed him on remand for a day. Later, he was sent to jail.

Police said Shaheen and Zahid threw acid on Sabri on August 5 at around 2:00pm when Sabri was coming out of his Gulshan office.

Sabri's father Asaduzzaman, a retired wing commander, filed a case with Gulshan Police Station in this regard the same day.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



This is the second death anniversary of Journalist Muhammad Habibur Rahman. Bhuiyan, a senior sub-editor of the daily Inquilab, says a press release.

Habibur Rahman died on this day in 2008 in Dhaka at the age of 86. On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his house at New Circular Road of North Kamalapur in the city.

War crimes trial to remove stigma: Priyabhasini

BSS, Dhaka

With a fervent call for speedy trial of war criminals, liberation war veteran Ferdousi Priyabhasini said millions of women and martyrs' families, who faced brutal torture during the 1971 war, would have peace in their hearts if the perpetrators of the crimes against humanity were punished.

And only then the stigma of failure to punish the human rights violators would be removed, she said.

"We cannot call ourselves a really independent country unless we complete the trial of those who unleashed torture and atrocities on the freedom-loving people of this country," Ferdousi said.

Her heart still bleeds recalling the horrifying memories of the Pakistani army torturing her.

In a voice choked with emotion, she said, "I still remember that I was not even allowed to take shelter in a temporary refugee camp in Khulna after I managed to flee from indescribable oppression in the hands of the Pakistani army."

She was in tears when she said even Bangalees at the refugee camp avoided her as she was considered by the society as "characterless".

Tears rolled down her cheeks, as she talked of the atrocities in an exclusive interview with the news agency.

In April 1971, Priyabhasini was trapped inside her office following a conspiracy of Pakistani officers at Crescent Jute Mills Quarter of Khalishpur in Khulna. After her confinement, the Pakistani army officers started torturing her.

Priyabhasini said it was very difficult,

on her part, to get rid of the horrific memories even for a moment.

She had to delve deep into playing music or concentrating on her favorite writing. She often concentrates deeply on creating sculptures, bringing out her natural talents of creativity.

She said from April to December of 1971 she passed every moment in tears and mental suffering.



Ferdousi Priyabhasini

Priyabhasini said, "I was always under mental pressure thinking of what would be their new fake reason for unleashing torture on me. One day, I came to know that I was linked with the killing of a Razakar professor in the first week of November."

"I was taken to Jessore cantonment for

quizzing relating to the murder case. They tortured me for 28 hours there. But I did not tell the name of any freedom fighter," she said.

"They forced me to confess that I am a member of Nakshal as many army officers, who tortured me earlier, were being killed," she said.

Priyabhasini said she was sent to a concentration camp. The torture was more severe there. Whoever went there could not return without permanent injury.

"I was taken back to Khulna after I gave an undertaking," she said.

"The Pakistani army used to talk with Golam Azam and Nizami from the office room where I was confined. But they always threatened me not to tell anybody about their conversations," said Priyabhasini.

Ferdousi said, "On December 7, I fled after I received a phone call from freedom fighter Ahsanullah Ahmed telling me that the army was going to kill me."

"When I was about to get out of the quarter, one of my colleagues, Anwar, was shot dead when he was entering the quarter. In fact, they wanted to shoot and kill me," she said.

Priyabhasini married freedom fighter Ahsanullah Ahmed.

After a long struggle with pains of her horrific memories, Priyabhasini became a sculptor.

She called for opening a department on War of Liberation in every university to preserve and project the real history of the freedom struggle through research.

It is needed to make posterity know the real history of the war of liberation, she said.

Security measures taken for Durga Puja

UNB, Dhaka

Home Minister Sahara Khatun yesterday said all security preparations are in place to ensure peaceful observation of Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Hindu Community.

"No unpleasant incident will take place. All kinds of preparations have been taken," she told reporters after an inter-ministerial meeting at her ministry on security arrangements for Durga Puja.

Responding to BNP leader SQ Chowdhury's apprehension about disruption of harmony

during the Durga Puja, Sahara said whatever apprehension he makes would not come true.

In the past 21 months under the present government, all religious festivals-Eid, Puja, Buddha Purnima and Christmas were observed peacefully, she said, adding that Durga Puja this year will also be celebrated peacefully.

Sahara said three control rooms will be opened at the home ministry, police headquarters and Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) headquarters to monitor the situation and instantly tackle any unpleasant incident, if such take place.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Md Aminul Alam, Brac governing body member and executive director of Brac International, passed away due to a cardiac arrest on Saturday night at the age of 61, she left behind his wife and two sons.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at the Gausul Azam mosque at Mohakhali in the city after Zohr prayers on Tuesday.

His qulhwani will be held at Brac Centre on October 8 and doa mahfil will be held at Brac offices throughout the country and abroad on October 9.

Brac Chairperson Sir Fazle Hasan Abed condoled his death.

He led the expansion of Brac's programmes across Bangladesh and subsequently into ten countries in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean.

WEATHER TODAY. Dry weather likely. Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Sylhet, Rajshahi, Barisal and Chittagong divisions in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Touchstone statue recovered from ex-minister's house

A CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday recovered an 87-kg statue of Lord Vishnu made of touchstone from a house in Sukhbashpur area of the district and arrested two people in this connection.

Former information minister and also member of BNP Standing Committee M Shamsul Islam is owner of the house.

The arrestees are Jahangir Alam, 42, and Monjur Alam, 55, caretakers of the house.

Munshiganj Rab camp commander Milton said a detective member of Rab, in the guise of an antique buyer, contacted the caretakers and fixed the statue's price at Tk 20 crore. Later, Rab members went to the house in the guise of buyers and arrested them with the statue.

Action on their confessions, Rab recovered another touchstone statue from the house of Monir Hossain of the same area at about 6:45pm.

But Monir managed to flee the spot.

DHAKA TODAY. Roundtable: Forum Brigade will organise a roundtable. Seminar: Department of Real Estate of Daffodil International University, United Nations Information Centre and Rupantar will jointly organise a seminar on the occasion of World Habitat Day.