

Celebrating the 20th anniversary of The Daily Star



PHOTO: STAR

Ministers, academics, business leaders, politicians, cultural activists, media personnel, members of the diplomatic corps and well-wishers attend The Daily Star's 20th anniversary celebrations at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Felicity Shows Her Hair to Students.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

A Special Haircut

MILLIONS cut their hair every day. It is a mundane activity. But today I am watching an unusual haircut at the International School, Dhaka.

This hair long and full, a reddish shade of brown - belongs to Felicity Aris, 12, a pretty, demure seventh-grader whose hobbies include playing basketball and reading. In front of a crowd of fellow students, Felicity will cut her beautiful hair today.

Why? She wanted to do something for children with cancer who lose their hair due to chemotherapy.

So, a month ago, Felicity announced at her school's assembly that she was going to cut her hair for cancer patients. She asked fellow students to sponsor her by pledging money to Dhaka-based Ashic Foundation, payable if she kept her word and indeed cut her hair.

Ashic Foundation is dedicated to Bangladeshi children suffering from cancer. It was started by a family whose three year old son, Ashiq, died of cancer in 1993. Annually, an estimated 7000-9000 children get cancer in Bangladesh.

So here I am, watching Felicity sitting on a chair in the school's open portico, waiting for a haircut. I cannot guess what she is feeling, so I ask. "It is scary, but I want to do it," she says, green eyes exuding a quiet confidence. I try to think how important hair must be for a girl her age. To sacrifice it for others is a brave gesture.

Felicity's mother Totty Aris, Deputy Head of ISD's Secondary School, is combing her daughter's mane into a braid. About three dozen children have

gathered around her. The girls look at Felicity, eyes wide with awe and suspense. They fuss and touch her hair. The boys look less certain, probably wondering what the excitement is about.

Several kids walk around with clipboards securing last-minute pledges. Some children drop cash into a donation box for Ashic.

After the hair is braided, the cutting lady arrives with the scissors which look small but ominous. A hush falls over the crowd.

She starts, gently cutting away at the base of the braid. The hair is unexpectedly thick, and it takes a few minutes. Finally the braid comes off. Felicity holds it up for the children to see. Several eager hands reach out and touch it. Afterwards, Felicity puts it in a plastic bag. She looks just as pretty, but more like a basketball player than a bookworm.

"What will happen to that hair?" I ask. It will go to Little Princess Trust in the UK which makes wigs for children who lost hair to chemotherapy. Wig made from this hair beautiful though the colour is - would serve far better there than here.

When the occasion is over, teachers shoo their students back to class. Felicity sits alone for a few minutes, collecting her thoughts. Then she, too, returns to her lessons. I leave admiring her generous act, with which she raises over Tk 50,000 in donations for children suffering from cancer.

ihishamkabir@yahoo.com

Raise voice against river grabbing

Speakers urge all

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It is not possible to save rivers from pollution and encroachment unless people become aware and raise their voice, said speakers at a discussion yesterday.

Dhaka city was built on the bank of Buriganga River due to its immense importance to the region. But now the river is at the verge of extinction, putting a negative impact on the city, they said, emphasising on the need for saving the city's surrounding rivers, canals and water bodies.

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolan (Bapa) and Buriganga Riverkeeper jointly organised the discussion titled "Citizens' duty to save Buriganga" at Jatiya Press Club in the city.

Speaking at the programme, eminent educationist Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed said, "We have to save Buriganga River for the sake of saving Dhaka."

He said questions were raised on who is the protector or guardian of the rivers as authorities concerned seemed to be unaware about the duties.

He also said apart from free flow of the rivers, strict monitoring would have to be ensured to stop dumping of liquid waste into the rivers.

Bapa President Prof Muzaffer Ahmad urged people to come forward to save the rivers saying, "We have to save our own right and for that unity is a must."

He also said it is a matter of grave concern that the water bodies surrounding the city are either being encroached on or polluted by influential quarters or being filled up in the

name of unapproved housing projects.

Stressing on the need for recovering 13 out of 42 canals of the city, he said some 13 bridges, which are too low, were constructed on the rivers beside the city, disrupting movement on waterways.

"There should be a policy on constructing bridges on the rivers," he said, laying emphasis on making the river commission more effective.

Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan said the government took several initiatives to save rivers. They would soon build boundary walls and walkways surrounding the rivers and concrete ghats where vendors can sell their products, he added.

It has been reported that waste, extracted from the rivers during dredging to increase navigability and clean the riverbeds, were being dumped back to the rivers for no other available option. People do not want waste to be dumped on their lands, he said. He also said the government already formed a committee for waste management which would soon submit its report.

"We have some administrative weaknesses but we do not lack in our attempts to save the rivers," Shahjahan said, urging all to cooperate with the government.

Bapa Joint Secretary Iqbal Habib moderated the discussion while columnist Syed Abul Maksud and Bapa General Secretary Dr Abdul Matin also spoke.

Later, Buriganga Riverkeeping Programme, an initiative of different socio-environmental organisation, was launched.

NEWS IN brief

Punishment to attackers of bauls demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lalon Research Institute (LRI) yesterday expressed concern over the assault on baul (mystic singers) in Rajbari on April 6 and demanded exemplary punishment to the perpetrators.

In a press release, LRI General Secretary Shahed Mantaj said bauls spread secular ideologies, the idea of equality of all human being and the message of humanity. An assault on them is totally against the spirit of War of Liberation, he said.

Meanwhile, Bangladesher Kabi, Lekhok, Shilpi Goshty, a platform of poets, writers and artists, formed a human chain and burnt effigies of the perpetrators in front of National Museum yesterday.

Peacekeepers train 30 Liberians

METRO DESK

The Bong County-based Bangladeshi contingent of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has certified 30 young Liberians, following completion of a two-month intensive capacity enhancement training in engineering, specifically in heavy duty earth moving equipment.

Of the participants, six are females. The graduation exercise marking the end of the training was recently held in Gbarnga.

Green environment awareness programme launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a view to present a green environment for the future generation through awareness, a programme titled "Holcim Green Heart City" was inaugurated at Chandrima Uddayan in the city yesterday.

A good number of engineers, architects, planners, media partners and people from all strata of life joined and became members of the programme, says a press release. Later, a colourful rally was brought out.

Holcim (Bangladesh) Ltd, a Switzerland based cement company, organised the programme to welcome Bangla new year. The company's Managing Director Rajnish Kapur and Vice President Jashim Uddin Khandaker were also present.

Glaxose WEATHER TODAY
100% GLUCOSE

Change in temperature unlikely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Khulna, Barisal, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Mat Office said.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:20pm and rises tomorrow at 5:37am.

Country's highest temperature 35.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Patuakhali and lowest 18.0 degrees at Sayedpur.

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	33.1	20.7	64	58
Chittagong	30.9	25.0	77	76
Rajshahi	33.8	19.7	71	60
Rangpur	30.4	18.5	76	58
Khulna	35.2	23.0	76	54
Barisal	34.0	22.5	78	69
Sylhet	33.9	20.0	71	52
Cox's Bazar	33.5	25.0	71	73

Instant energy, Instant recharge

www.bluecity.com.bd

নতুন বছর উপলক্ষে
এই সুযোগ ১৫ মে, ২০১১ পর্যন্ত

80% মূল্য ছাড়

‘পূর্বাচল নিউ টাউন’
এর ২ এবং ৩ নং
সেক্টর সংযুক্ত

প্রগতি সরণি-পূর্বাচল
৩০০ ফুট
রাস্তার নিকটে

শুক্রবারেও অফিস খোলা থাকবে

Blue City
সবুজ গ্রামে আধুনিক নগর সাজানো

উচ্চ জমিতে ৩ কাঠা, ৫ কাঠা, ৬ কাঠা ও ১০ কাঠা এর প্লট

সী শেল প্রপার্টিজ্ লি:

সী শেল গ্রুপ (ISO 9001:2008 Certified) | কর্পোরেট অফিস: প্লট- ১১৩/বি ও সি, সেক্টর- ০৪ (মেইন রোড), উত্তরা মডেল টাউন, ঢাকা-১২৩০১
ফোন: ৪৯৫৪৭৭৩, ৪৯৫৪৩২৪, ০১৬৭১৪৩৩৩৩৩, ০১৬৭১৫৩৩৩৩৩, ০১৬৭১৬৩৩৩৩৩, ০১৬৭১৮৩৩৩৩৩