



This young kite takes refuge at Ramna Park in the city yesterday after being attacked by crows. The number of birds, including this species, is dwindling in the city mainly due to loss of habitat.

PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

# Bangladesh global peace efforts lauded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Assistant United Nations (UN) Secretary General for Peacekeeping Support Judy Cheng-Hopkins yesterday said Bangladesh is unparalleled in global peacekeeping with decades of experience.

"It takes time to get acquainted with how the UN functions and what to expect in other countries during peacekeeping missions," she said adding that Bangladesh also has a comparative advantage on community development activities, creating employment and agricultural activities.

"Bangladesh has a unique comparative advantage [in peacekeeping], and we should sit down and come up with strategic plans on how the country can play a larger role in peacekeeping and peace building activities in the future," she said.

The UN assistant secretary general was addressing a seminar on "Bangladesh for Global Peace, Democracy and Development".

The foreign affairs ministry organ-

ised the seminar at the Ruposhi Bangla Hotel in the city marking the 'International Day of UN Peace Keeper 2011' observed on May 29.

Speakers at the seminar said Bangladesh is the top country when it comes to contributing to peacekeeping activities around the world.

Now Bangladesh has over 8,000 officers participating in 11 missions in 10 countries, said Lt General Abdul Wadud, principal staff officer of Armed Forces Division, in his presentation.

The country also has the highest number of police officers deployed for peacekeeping missions, said Hasan Mahmud Khandoker, inspector general of police, adding that 7.5 percent of the officers are women.

Other speakers at the programme said the definition of peace has changed and now it has a multidimensional meaning.

Now peacekeeping involves going a few steps further and ensure that peace, development, democracy and progress of the host country is sus-

tained, they said.

"Peacekeeping and peace building has become the UN's most visible activities, and Bangladesh takes pride in being a part of it," said Foreign Minister Dipu Moni in her keynote address.

"More than 12 percent of the UN's peacekeeping troops are from Bangladesh, and its activities have earned the country the credential of being reliable and credible in its peacekeeping activities," she said.

Foreign Secretary Mijarul Quayes chaired the programme while Security Adviser to the Prime Minister Maj Gen (Retd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique and International Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister Dr Gowher Rizvi, among others, spoke.

Senior armed forces and police officials, including the chief of army staff, chief of naval staff and acting air chief, members of the diplomatic community and UN agency heads as well as members of the civil society also attended the seminar.

# Increase tax on tobacco products

Demand speakers  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a human chain yesterday demanded increasing of tax on tobacco and tobacco products.

Criticising some public representatives' recommendation of reducing tax on those products, the speakers said they are working in favour of tobacco industries' owners.

Save the Rural Development Association (Sarda), a social organisation, organised the human chain in front of the Aparajeyo Bangla on Dhaka University campus in the city, says a press release.

They said people are spending double for the treatment of tobacco-related diseases compared to tax the government earned from those products.

Sarda Executive Director Murad Bhuiya and Vice-president Shahjahan Sha spoke at the programme.

# World tour on wheelchair

PALASH RAHMAN

Mohoram Ali can't even cross a street without his wheelchair. But this 24-year-old young man, his left leg paralysed from childhood polio, is embarking on a world tour on wheelchair to raise awareness about rights of the people with disability.

"I want to prove that the people with disability like me are not really useless. I want to show that nothing is impossible for them," said Mohoram during a visit to The Daily Star office yesterday.

Mohoram has already overcome his disability to travel on his wheelchair to India in 2007 and Russia and South Korea in 2010.

He travelled 3,400-kilometer from Bangladesh to India.

His wheelchair has also taken him to an 18,700-kilometer ride through 15 districts of Bangladesh.

These trips have only whetted his appetite for achieving something bigger. This time he has set his mind on a world tour that will take him on his wheelchair through three sub-continent and 16 countries.

The countries he plans to visit include the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Poland, Germany, Russia, UK, Ireland, China, India and Nepal.

He plans to take his wheelchair on board buses, trains and ships, he said adding "I want to avoid planes because that may make my journey comfortable."

"I want to endure hardship to get more attention to the cause of the world's people with disability."

Born in a humble family in Pabna district Mohoram was infected with polio at the age of one year and a half and he blames his condition on wrong treatment by village quacks.

He has been working with Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) in Savar since 2003.

About his planned world tour Mohoram said he is seeking support to create a World Disability Fund.

"The mission is also to inspire the disabled people and show what can be achieved by a strong will and determination," he said.

During his travel he will use a modern wheel chair which was made in Russia, a travel bag and a video camera with him.

There is, however, one problem: he needs at least Tk. 20 lakh for the trip.

He said he needs to contribute at least Tk. 5 lakh and the remaining amount is expected to be raised by a Russia-based website, which is also the official partner of his world tour, www.bezgrainz.ru.

"My concern is now how to raise Tk five lakh as my contribution. I'm appealing for donations especially from the big companies and the wealthy people of Bangladesh", Mohoram said.

He said he has already obtained UK and Russian visas. "It will help my mission more if I get the US visa and can travel there," he said.

Asked about his source of spirit, he said "I trust my own ability."

Mohoram can be reached at mohoramswheels@gmail.com or on 01714245908



Mohoram Ali



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina offers prayers after inaugurating Mugda branch of Ideal School and College and laying the foundation stone of its new academic building in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

# Probe Rab shooting Rahima

Demands ASK

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) yesterday demanded of a fair investigation into the incident of Rahima who got shot allegedly by a stray bullet in a drive of Rab in Bhairab of Kishoreganj on June 3.

The NGO also urged the government to take action against the Rab men involved in the incident, says a ASK press release.

ASK also urged the government to ensure treatment of Rahima.

# POPULATION, HEALTH, NUTRITION

# Integrated efforts stressed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Since the dynamics of population, health and nutrition are composite in nature, an integrated approach to address the issues is necessary, said speakers at a discussion yesterday.

They also said autonomy, independence and strategies should be fixed to an integrated approach to population, health and nutrition.

The discussion titled "Sixth Five Year Plan: Health, Population and Nutrition" was jointly organised by Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad and Oxfam International at Cirdap auditorium in the city.

The speakers highlighted the

achievements in these fields, challenges ahead and placed recommendations in this regard.

While presenting the keynote paper, Prof KM Nurun Nabi of population sciences department of Dhaka University said approaches, through a programme and for a social and institutional transformation, could be adopted simultaneously to address the integration of population, health and nutrition.

Though total fertility rate and maternal and child mortality rate reduced significantly over the last few decades, challenges still remain in terms of too many operational plans

and diluting and duplicating programme priorities and activities, said the speakers.

They recommended increased coordination and collaboration with other ministries to improve health and nutrition status and population control.

Prof Dr Shamsul Alam, member of Planning Commission, was present as the chief guest.

Economist Qazi Kholiquzzaman; Abu Jamil Faysel, country representative of Engender Health; M A Jalil, chairman of Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad; and Dr Nilufer Banu, executive director of Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad; also spoke.

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