

520 win Jheelmil plots thru' lottery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) allotted 520 Jheelmil plots in the capital's outskirts Keraniganj to candidates who won the lottery yesterday.

The plots will be handed over in three years. Against the 405 three-katha and 115 five-katha plots, there were 19,358 qualified applicants, according to sources at Rajuk.

The candidates on whom fortune did not smile will get refund of their deposit money within a week, said Rajuk Chairman Md Nurul Huda.

Rajuk will allot the remaining 570 plots of the 1090-plot Jheelmil residential area through lottery and partially on the basis of negotiation later, he said.

The 520 plots were allotted in nine categories yesterday. Among the plots, 100 have been allotted to remittance earners, 120 to businessmen and industrialists, 100 to private job holders, 20 to private teachers, 20 to other private job holders, 20 to personalities of art or literature and sports, 10 to families with the title of freedom fighter, 10 to the families of martyred freedom fighters, 10 to injured freedom fighters, 20 to freedom fighters' families, 50 to government officials and 40 to the employees of autonomous bodies.

These plots apart, Rajuk distributed 385 plots in Jheelmil a decade back, said the Rajuk chief.

The 381-acre Jheelmil residential area, located by Dhaka-Mawa highway in Keraniganj, is two kilometres off China-Bangladesh Friendship Bridge.

Applicants for the remaining plots include lawyers, agriculturists, engineers, physicians, judges, parliament members, journalists, and first class officers of government and autonomous bodies.

While judges and parliament members will get allotment directly, plots for journalist category will be finalised in consultation with the leaders of journalists' unions later, the Rajuk chief said.

Abdul Mannan Khan, state minister for housing and public works, was present along with the ministry's secretary Khondker Showkat Hossain at the lottery session held at Osmani Memorial Hall between 10:30am and 2:00pm. A team of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) provided technical assistance in holding the lottery.

The minister said there was no other better way out for allotment of 1,090 plots among a total of 35,000 qualified applicants. Rajuk initiated the application procedure for the plot allotment last June and accepted submissions till October.

Among the Jheelmil project victims, each landowner with more than 10 kathas of land will get a plot while others will get flats.

Rajuk has so far allotted 26,000 plots in its Purbachal New Town and 6,000 in Uttara extension (third phase), said the housing and public works secretary.

As land is scarce, Rajuk is to build a total of 50,000 apartments in Uttara, Purbachal and Jheelmil to meet housing demand, he said. Rajuk has already embarked on building 20,000 flats in Uttara model town, he added.



Maasranga, a private TV channel, organised a human chain programme in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday demanding the arrest of and exemplary punishment to the killers of Sagar Sarowar, a news editor of the channel, and his wife Meherun Runi, a senior reporter of another channel ATN Bangla. Two months have passed into their killing and police are yet to arrest the killers.

PHOTO: STAR

Order on Destiny's writ on Apr 17

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday fixed April 17 for passing order on a writ petition filed by Destiny Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd challenging the Bangladesh Bank report that raises allegations against the company of doing illegal banking.

The HC bench of Justice Farid Ahmed and Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif set the date after concluding hearing on the petition yesterday afternoon.

Md Rafiqul Amin, chairman of the cooperative and of Destiny Group, filed the writ petition on April 8 seeking a stay order from the HC on the central bank report and also a rule upon the government and the BB to explain the legality of the report.

The BB report, revealed last month, said the cooperative had seen an astronomical rise in its capital, shareholders, profit and investment since 2009.

Following the report, which was sent to the finance ministry last month, various newspapers ran reports on numerous irregularities of the company.

Advocate AF Hassan Arif appeared for the petitioner, while Attorney General Mahbubey Alam represented the government.

State must end discrimination

HR commission boss tells seminar on Dalits' rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The state itself should be responsible in ending all forms of discrimination against the Dalits and excluded communities, said National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Chairman Mizanur Rahman yesterday.

Any form of discrimination is a violation of human rights and it is the state's duty to protect human rights of all citizens irrespective of caste or community, he said.

Mizanur was addressing a seminar, "Protection of rights, dignity and uniqueness of Dalit communities in Bangladesh through formulation of a law to eliminate racial discrimination" at Cirdap auditorium in the capital.

Research and Development Collection (RDC) and Antoj Forum, supported by ActionAid Bangladesh, organised the seminar marking International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, observed on March 21.

"Bangladesh is a rich-friendly and anti-poor country. That is why powerless people here are continuously being repressed and tortured," he said.

He urged the Dalit community to enlighten themselves through education to enhance their competency.

Speaking as the chief guest, Deputy Speaker of Parliament Col (ret'd) Shawkat Ali urged all to work together in ending discrimination

against the Dalit and marginalised communities.

"Although I am expressing solidarity with the demands of Dalit communities, as the deputy speaker, I have little ability to do something significant for you (the Dalits)," said Shawkat.

A paper jointly prepared by Prof Mesbah Kamal of the history department of Dhaka University and RDC General Secretary Zannat-a-Ferdous was presented in the seminar.

The paper claimed that some 55 lakh members of the Dalit and Harijan communities present in the country were excluded from the mainstream population.

Deprived of the basic rights like education, sanitation and accom-

modation, they were leading inhumane lives, it said.

Bangladesh Harijan Oikya Parishad Convener Nirmol Chandra Das placed a 10-point demand.

It includes formulation of a law for the elimination of racial discrimination, special quota for these communities in educational institutions and the job sector, their inclusion in safety net programmes, allocation of Khas land for their accommodation and formation of a "Dalit Commission".

Prof Dr HK Arefin of the anthropology department of Dhaka University chaired the seminar, moderated by ActionAid Bangladesh Country Director Farah Kabir. Representatives from different communities also spoke at the programme.

3-month Gagarin Science Fest begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday said the country cannot move forward without more knowledge and development in the sphere of science.

Crafting more scientific minds through creating more interest in science subjects is vital for this progress, they added.

The press conference was held to announce the three-month-long Gagarin Science Fest to be held at the Russian Centre of Science and Culture (RCSC) in Dhaka, starting today.

Bangladesh Astronomical Association and RCSC, who are jointly organising the programme in association with the Theoretical Physics Department of Dhaka University and The Daily Star, called the press briefing at the centre yesterday.

The festival will include workshops on subjects ranging from the solar system to the black holes to the future of the universe, a drawing competition for children, a photography exhibition and a sky observation camp.

It will also include a School Astro Olympiad, the winners of which will get to participate in the International Asia Pacific Astronomy Olympiad to



(From left) Alexander P Demin, director of Russian Centre of Science and Culture (RCSC), Moshhurul Amin, general secretary of Bangladesh Astronomical Association, and Saumen Hazra, chairman of the National Committee of the Astronomy and Astrophysics Olympiad, address a press conference at RCSC in the capital yesterday to announce the three-month-long Gagarin Science Fest that starts in the centre today.

PHOTO: STAR

be held in Cox's Bazar this November.

The programme will set off today with a workshop on the theory of the creation of the universe conducted by Dr Ali Asgar, president of Bangladesh Physical Society.

"The festival aims to develop interests in science and astronomy among children," said Moshhurul Amin, general secretary of Bangladesh Astronomical Association, at the press conference.

The festival marks the 51st anniversary of Yuri Alekseyevich Gagarin's visit to the outer space.

The Soviet pilot and cosmonaut was the first human to journey into the outer space, when his Vostok spacecraft completed an orbit of the Earth on 12 April, 1961.

Alexander P Demin, director of RCSC, said the day is celebrated across the globe with much fanfare and the centre is proud to be a part of such celebration in the country.

Saumen Hazra, chairman of the National Committee of the Astronomy and Astrophysics Olympiad, also addressed the conference.

Appointment of 15 judges regularised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Zillur Rahman yesterday regularised the appointment of 15 additional judges to the High Court Division of the Supreme Court.

The judges are Md Faruque, Md Shawkat Hossain, FRM Nazmul Ahasan, Krishna Debnath, ANM Bashirullah, Abdur Rob, Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque, Md Abu Zafar Siddique, AKM Zahurul Hoque, Jahangir Hossain, Sheikh Md Zakir Hossain, Md Habibul Gani, Gobinda Chandra Tagore, Sheikh Hassan Arif and JBM Hassan.

They were appointed as additional judges of the HC on April 11, 2010 for a period of two years and were sworn in on April 17 the same year.

The president yesterday confirmed their appointment as regular judges. The law ministry issued a gazette notification in this regard.

Their confirmation will come into effect from the date of their oath taking as regular HC judges, said a law ministry press release.

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Photo Exhibition on the achievements of AB Bank Limited on the eve of its 30th Anniversary



AB Bank Limited has organized a unique photo exhibition on the occasion of 30th anniversary of the Bank in its training academy on April 11, 2012. The exhibition named "AB in Frame". Chief Guest of the Exhibition was Mrs. Nasreen Khan, Vice Chairman, Pacific Bangladesh Telecom Limited and Director, Pacific Group. Special guest of the exhibition was Mr. Anwar Hossain Monju, Editor of Daily Ittefaq and Mrs. Tasmina Hossain, Executive Director, Daily Ittefaq and Editor of a fortnight magazine Anyanna.

Mr. M. Morshed Khan, the Founder Chairman of the AB Bank Limited was the guest of honor of the exhibition.

The Chairman of AB Bank Mr. M. Wahidul Haque along with Mr. M. Fazlur Rahman, President & Managing Director of AB Bank and other high officials and executives of the Bank were also present at the exhibition. Two hundred and fifty one photographs have been exhibited at the exhibition. AB Bank's achievements of 30 years have been portrayed in those photographs. This exhibition will be open for all till April 14, 2012.