

### BNP will go to polls, and it's under a neutral govt: Mosharraf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP will participate in the next parliamentary election after "establishing a neutral election-time government with the support of people," said the party's standing committee member Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday.

At a discussion organised at Jaitiya Press Club by Nagarik Dal demanding immediate withdrawal of all cases against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique Rahman, Mosharraf further said BNP after assuming power would ensure justice for all misdeeds of the incumbent government.

The repressive government wants to weaken BNP as it is afraid of the party, he added.

Yesterday, Awami League General Secretary Obaidul

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Dhaka University graduates celebrate during the 50th convocation yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## A blend of joy and sorrow

MAHDI AL MUHTASIM

It was a day full of celebration and students of Dhaka have reached a mile-

The university yesterday while dents wearing gradu-

smiles participated There was an air since the graduat-

preparing to bid farewell to their beloved campus.

"I'll miss my friends and teachers a lot. I have so many fond memories here," said Forrukh Mahmud of history department. "Yes I'm happy, but at the same time I feel sad."

Romel Milky, a graduate of political science, was busy taking pictures with his classmates. "I will cherish the memories forever," he said. Like Romel, 17,875 graduates and postgraduates received their degrees at the 50th convocation of Dhaka University yesterday. President Abdul Hamid, chancellor of the university, inaugurated the event at DU central playground.

Eighty students received gold medals for their outstanding results while 61 researchers were conferred with Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees and 43 got Master of Philosophy (MPhil) degrees.

"It's a joyous moment as I got recognition of my hard



laughter, hugs and above all pride for the University as they stone of their life.

wore a festive look thousands of stu-

dent in their convocation.

of melancholy too, ing students were

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### Mohila Awami League gets new committee after 13 years

Shafia president, Mahmuda GS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mohila Awami League yesterday got a new committee after over 13 years.

Shafia Khatun was elected president while Mahmuda Begum general secretary of the national council of the women's front of the ruling Awami League for three years.

Earlier Shafia was vice president and Mahmuda organising secretary.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also AL president, inaugurated the national council at the Krishibid Institution Bangladesh in Dhaka.

At the second session of the council, AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader

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## RHD felling trees for 'public safety'

ANWAR ALI

The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) has sold 17 large old trees on the dividers of Greater Road in Rajshahi city at a throwaway price without any necessary assessment or approval.

According to the RHD officials, the decision was taken for "public safety" and a beautification project of Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC).

All the trees including a raj karai (chambol), mahogany, three karai, and rain trees on the road dividers from C&B to Gourhanga intersections were sold to one Babul Hossain in an open tender at around Tk 96,000, said Polash Sarker, executive officer of RHD Arboriculture.

But an official of the forest department, seeking anonymity, said trees like raj karai, karai and rain trees should sell at Tk 50,000 to Tk 1 lakh each. He said he visited the area where the trees were being felled on Tuesday as per directives of his seniors and have witnessed felling of at least five trees.

Labourers employed by the buyer has already cut down 13 trees till Saturday and

took away the logs, witnesses said. Some of the fences on the dividers were damaged while traffic movement was badly affected due to the activity, they added.

"Those trees enhanced the beauty of the Greater Road for years. Not to mention, felling of trees leave a bad impact on the environment," said Tanmay Sannyal, a green activist.

The Forest Product Transit (control) rules of 2011 made it mandatory for any government authorities to take permission from the forest department before felling trees, said Imran Ahmed, divisional forest officer of Rajshahi.

Also, they have to get permission for transporting the logs and an assessment of the selling price, he added. "RHD did not bother to take permission. They claimed that they have sole authority over the forest goods on their lands," he said.

But, Polash Sarker, executive officer of RHD Arboriculture, said, "We don't need permission as the department preserves the rights on its trees." Also, the open auction ensured fair price for the trees.

He said RCC requested them to "remove the trees to ensure public safety" after a man

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A large tree on a divider of Greater Road in Rajshahi city being felled yesterday. The Roads and Highways Department recently sold 17 such trees for felling, which according to them, as per request of the city corporation for ensuring public safety.

PHOTO: ANWAR ALI

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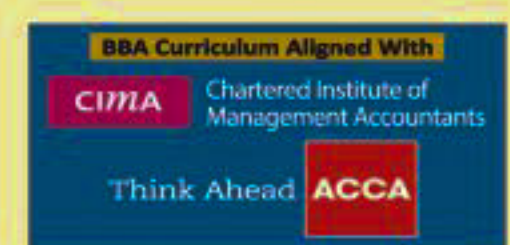
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