



JOY NOT UNBOUNDED

Clockwise from top left, An aerial view of The Mongol Shobhajatra -- the centrepiece of Pehala Baishakh celebration -- at Shahbagh intersection in the capital on Friday. The festivity drew a sea of people, irrespective of caste, creed or religion, on to the streets to take part in the colourful procession, heavily guarded by law enforcers. Armed police personnel on alert on the Dhaka University campus. The celebration of the Bangla New Year 1424 was somewhat marred by heightened security measures as many had to leave their handbags, umbrellas and water bottles before entering the campus. A group of revellers at the procession. A child in colourful attire in all smiles enjoys the celebrations on the campus.

PHOTOS: PRABIR DAS, PALASH KHAN, ANURUP KANTI DAS

MPs will lose NAM flats for misuse: PM

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the lawmakers to remain careful about the use of NAM flats and warned that the allocation of a flat would be cancelled if any MP misuses it.

"The name of those MPs, who have taken allocations but aren't staying in their NAM flats, would be deleted... Instead of staying in the flats themselves, they would keep personal staff, drivers or domestic helps -- it isn't right," she said.

The prime minister issued the warning while inaugurating new residential buildings for officials and employees of the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the capital.

Sheikh Hasina said those who took allocation of the NAM flats must stay there, otherwise they will have to live in Nakhhalpara MP Hostel.

She said if the MPs lived in the NAM flats, the proper maintenance of the flats would be ensured.

Asking the Jatiya Sangsad chief whip to take actions against flat related irregularities, the premier said in case of this failure, actions would be taken against him. "I also seek opinion of the honourable speaker to this end," she said.

Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury was present as a special guest, while Housing and Public Works Minister Mosharraf Hossain presided over the function.

Jatiya Sangsad Chief Whip ASM Feroz, Senior Secretary of the Parliament Secretariat Dr Abdur Rab Hawlader and Secretary of Housing and Public Works Ministry Shahidullah Khandakar spoke on the occasion.

High economic growth likely in 10 years

As large young population entering workforce, says Prof Jamilur Reza Chy at UIU convocation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a large percentage of youth entering their productive years, Bangladesh will have a window of opportunity to achieve a "very high economic growth in about 10 years", said Prof Jamilur Reza Chy at UIU convocation.

However, "In order to reap the maximum benefits from this window of opportunity, a prerequisite is to have [an] educated and skilled workforce," he said this while speaking as a convocation speaker at the fourth convocation of United International University (UIU) on its permanent campus in the capital's Satarkul.

A total of 1,610 graduates received degrees at the ceremony while six students received gold medals for their outstanding performance.

In the past, most university graduates used to be able to continue their professions with the knowledge they had acquired at their universities, but the scenario now is changed, Prof Jamilur said.

"The generation of new knowledge in all fields -- particularly in science, engineering

and technology -- has reached a level which is unprecedented in human history. Keeping pace with this new knowledge has become essential if one has to survive, let alone succeed in profession."

In attaining this knowledge, "try to take advantage of the gateway to new knowledge opened up by ICT in acquiring new knowledge in your field," he advised.

He also said acquiring language skills is a must since communication among nations has become very important due to globalisation.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid conferred on degrees to the graduates on behalf of President Abdul Hamid, who is chancellor of all universities in the country.

Nahid in his speech said skills in technology will play an important role in taking the country to a digital phase.

The students need to stay updated by taking advantage of information and technology to become a resource for the country, he said.

Nahid urged all to be vigilant on the students' behalf so the anti-state elements cannot

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JS Bhaban to undergo repair

Poor maintenance irks Hasina

BSS, Dhaka

The prime minister yesterday expressed her dissatisfaction over the poor maintenance of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban and directed the officials concerned to protect it from damage.

She pointed out that the JS Bhaban designed by Louis Kahn is a unique architectural work which has importance worldwide.

The premier said these while inaugurating new residential buildings for officials and employees of the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the capital.

The JS Bhaban was constructed with concrete slabs, and white marble stones were used at the place jointing the slabs so that the places of jointing were not damaged by water, she said.

"But it's unfortunate that marble stones have been damaged at several places due to falling of water...I have also seen water between the place of my chamber and the House," she mentioned.

"There are budget, manpower...everything. But I think this situation has been created because of negligence...I hope it will not happen in future," she said.

The prime minister said the government has approved a project involving Tk 120 crore to ensure proper maintenance of the Sangsad Bhaban. "But wood at rooftop and other places has already been damaged...It will have to be looked after and protected," she said.

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Moscow wants Dhaka on its side in fighting terrorism

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Terming Bangladesh a reliable partner in South Asia, Moscow wants Dhaka to be with Russian initiatives to fight against international terrorism.

"We share a common view about the lack of an alternative to harmonising the efforts of all countries in fighting international terrorism," said Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, according to a press release available on Russian Foreign Ministry website.

"As you are aware, at one time President Putin advanced a relevant initiative to form a broad anti-terrorism front. Since then, its relevance has only increased. We look forward to it gaining more and more supporters. Bangladesh, of course, is one such country," he said at a joint press conference in Moscow following talks with Bangladesh Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali on Thursday.

Ambedkar a crusader against injustice

Says Barrister Amir-Ul Islam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The contribution of Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar to Indian justice system was unparalleled, speakers at a commemorative programme said yesterday.

They said Ambedkar fought for eliminating caste system from the society throughout his life.

High Commission of India in Dhaka in association with Bangladesh-India Friendship Society arranged the programme in Cirdap auditorium to celebrate BR Ambedkar's 126th birth anniversary.

Speaking at the programme, barrister Amir-Ul Islam said Ambedkar's lifelong struggle to establish justice was second to none. "He was a crusader against social injustice," he said.

Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, president of

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The water of Kornopara canal beside Genda Government Primary School in Savar has turned black, thanks to untreated toxic fluids released by nearby garment factories. The toxicity and foul smell emitted from the canal pose a health threat to around 500 students of the school. The authorities concerned have been informed about the situation time and again, but no action has been taken so far to stop the pollution. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH

Nine killed in road accidents

CITY DESK

Nine people were killed and 13 others injured in road accidents in six districts yesterday and on Friday.

In Dinajpur, a couple was killed and two people, including their daughter, were injured as a bus hit a van carrying them in Birampur upazila yesterday.

The deceased were Putla Murmu, 45, and his wife Ramani Hembram, 35, of Daudpur village in the district.

In Chapainawabganj, two motorcycle riders were killed and another was injured in a head-on collision between the motorcycles in Chhatrajitpur area of Shibganj upazila on Friday afternoon.

The deceased were Mohammad Raju, 28, of Jalmachhari and Mohammad Dollar, 25, of Selimabad under the upazila.

In Bogra, a man was killed as a truck hit an auto-rickshaw carrying him on Dhunat-Goshaibari road in Sadarpara area of Dhunat upazila yesterday.

The deceased was Kartik Chandra Das, 22, of Dhunat municipality area.

In another accident in the district, a person was killed and 10 others were injured as a truck collided head-on with a bus after one of the tyres of the truck punctured on Bogra-Dhaka highway in Noymail area of Shajahanpur upazila on Friday night.

The deceased was Jafor ali, 35, of Noagaon. He was the helper of the bus.

The injured were rushed to Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital in the district.

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