

Rajuk recovers land to build walkway near Gulshan Lake

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) yesterday demolished around 20 illegal structures and recovered a piece of land stretching from Shahjadpur to Mariam Tower near Gulshan Lake.

A walkway will be constructed on the recovered land (around 700-foot long and 50-foot wide) adjoining the bank of the Gulshan Lake by the next three months, said Housing and Public Works Minister Mosharraf Hossain, while talking to reporters during the drive.

There were many water bodies in Gulshan when it was built as a residential area; to protect the water bodies and environment in Gulshan, a lake was dug there at that time, he said.

But at different times, different governments allotted plots to their own party men and relatives filling the lake partially, the minister said, adding that Awami League government in 1996 had taken initiatives to recover the lake.

The minister said they are now investigating whether Mariam Tower, which was built on a land allotted by the BNP government during its tenure in 1991-1996, has occupied any additional land illegally. Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Anisul Huq, lawmaker AKM Rahmat Ullah, and Rajuk Chairman M Bazlul Karim Chowdhury were present, among others.

Meanwhile, Rajuk in another drive removed 37 shops which were constructed at the place of a parking lot, and also demolished four columns of two buildings for constructing without any plan at South Prierbagh in Mirpur.

The drive led by executive magistrate Khandokar Aliur Rahman also demolished 16 ramps in the area to create scope of smooth vehicular movement.



An aerial view of the capital amid heavy smog yesterday. Smoke emitted from factories, vehicles and brick kilns, and dust from construction sites continue to contaminate Dhaka air. Exposure to smog can lead to different types of health problems but little has been done to reduce air pollution. According to the World Health Organization and the UN, air pollution is now a "public health emergency", and around 3.3 million people around the world die prematurely due to the effects of air pollution every year.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Nine Khulna men shown arrested in war crimes case

Arrest warrant issued against two others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday showed arrested nine people from Khulna in a case filed for allegedly committing crimes during the 1971 Liberation War.

The tribunal also issued arrest warrants against two other Khulna men over the same allegations following petitions moved by Prosecutor Syed Haider Ali.

Moving the two separate petitions, Prosecutor Syed Haider Ali told the tribunal that investigation of the case started on January 1 and the investigation officer of the case already found evidence against the 11 persons from Dumuria upazila of the district.

Among the 11, nine are now in jail. The arrestees need to be shown arrested in the war crimes case, otherwise they may flee after getting bail in those cases, he said.

The other two need to be arrested and kept in jail for the sake of investigation, he added.

The tribunal accepted the prayer and asked the jail authorities to produce the nine arrestees before it on July 11.

The arrestees are Abdul Rahman Sheikh, 68, Shamsur Rahman Gazi alias Maiza Dai, 82, Janan Ali Biswas, 67, Nazer Ali Fakir, 67, Shahjahan Sarder, 67, Abdul Karim Sheikh alias Abdul Member, 65, Abu Bakkar Sarder, 67, Rawshan Gazi, 72, and Shohrab Hossain Sarder, 62.

Helal Uddin, the investigation officer of the case, told The Daily Star that the 11 were involved with Razakar Bahini during the Liberation War and he has found evidence over their "involvement" in murders and other crimes committed in 1971.

High time to focus on quality of education

Academics tell BIDS seminar urging higher investments

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The lack of quality education remains a major concern for the country, academics said yesterday, urging the authorities concerned to invest more for improving the quality.

They said while Bangladesh has achieved nearly cent percent enrolment and gender equality in primary schools, it is high time that the government now concentrates on its quality.

"Only 25 percent students who completed class V achieve standard reading quality of English and Bangla," said Prof Emeritus Dr Manzoor Ahmed of Brac University,

citing an assessment report of 2013-15 by the Directorate of Primary Education.

Besides, some 20 percent students are dropping out of primary schools, he said while addressing a discussion titled "Improving Quality of Education" organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS).

BIDS organised the two-day programme -- BIDS Critical Conversations 2017 -- at a hotel in the capital.

Learning time for primary school students in the developed countries is 1,000 hours per year, but it is less than

500 hours in Bangladesh. Again, a teacher deals with 50 to 60 students in a classroom in the country -- the number is almost double compared to the developed countries, said Prof Manzoor.

He said currently there are 45,000 posts of teachers lying vacant, while 15,000 schools do not have headteachers.

Annual public spending for a primary school student in Bangladesh is \$100, which is around one third in comparison to other South Asian countries.

Dhaka University Economics Prof MM Akash said different streams of

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Govt to weigh need for ex-prisoner rehabilitation law

Says minister Anisul Huq

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will examine the necessity of formulating a specific law to rehabilitate people released after languishing in custody for long periods due to delays in trial proceedings, Law Minister Anisul Huq said yesterday.

"At this moment, the government has no plan to formulate a law for rehabilitating people who get released from custody after languishing in jail for a long time. But we will look into the need for formulating such a law," he said.

The minister said this while talking to The Daily Star in response to a comment made by the Supreme Court Legal Aid Committee (SCLAC) Chairman Justice M Enayetur Rahim about the rehabilitation of such people.

The High Court has so far granted bail to 18 people who have been languishing in jail for more than 10 years and issued directives for the 40 others after the SCLAC has placed their issues before the court.

The SCLAC is working on the issues of 404 others who

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Pragatishil Chhatra Jote brings out a procession on the Dhaka University campus yesterday demanding proper investigation into the death of Romel Chakma, 20, an HSC examinee of Naniarchar College in Rangamati and general secretary of Pahari Chhatra Parishad's Rangamati unit.

PHOTO: STAR

Don't run after question papers before exams

Nahid urges students, guardians at BSK programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday urged the students and their guardians not to look for question papers before the exams for the sake of their own future.

"A section of teachers is involved in question leaks, and those, who do it, are stigma for all teachers," he said, adding that some guardians also get themselves involved in it. "If the teachers and guardians do so, I will have no way to go. I am requesting the students and their parents not to run after the question papers which may ruin their [students] future," the minister said.

He made the remarks while inaugurating an award giving ceremony of Developing the Reading Habit programme, a joint venture of the education ministry and Unesco, implemented by Bishwo Shahitto Kendro (BSK), held at the BSK office in Dhaka.



World Book and Copyright Day, while it distributed more than 10 lakh books among 6,52,000 students of 11,744 educational institutions across the country.

About the reading programme, Nahid said students have to read different types of books beyond the text ones to earn more

knowledge.

The programme will help them develop reading habit, he said.

The programme will also help the new generation become good people with knowledge and virtues, he added.

Bangla Academy Director General Shamsuzzaman Khan said the book reading habit will enlighten the young souls and help them avoid terrorism and wrong path.

Sohorab Hossain, secretary of the education ministry; Md Alamgir, acting secretary

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Survey all rivers to prevent bank erosion

Parliamentary committee asks shipping ministry

UNB, Dhaka

The Parliamentary Committee on Government Assurances yesterday recommended that the shipping ministry take effective measures to prevent riverbank erosion by conducting surveys and dredging all of the country's rivers.

It also asked the ministry to engage deputy commissioners and upazila nirbahi officers (UNOs) concerned to receive recommendations from local MPs and other public representatives, and place those before the district and upazila-level committees formed by the National River Protection Commission.

The parliamentary committee came up with the

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