



President Abdul Hamid handing over the Krishibid Institution of Bangladesh (KIB) Award to a winner yesterday. Nine people received the honour for their outstanding contributions towards agriculture in Bangladesh. The ceremony was held at KIB in the capital.

PHOTO: PID

Discover green way of cropping

President urges agriculturists

BSS, Dhaka

President Abdul Hamid yesterday asked the agriculturists and researchers of the country to invent sustainable and stress-tolerant cropping methods.

"Climate change has adversely affected biodiversity worldwide and this situation will further deteriorate if environmental pollution is not stopped. . . the agriculturists and researchers will have to find out ways to overcome this situation," the president said while addressing the "Krishibid Institution Bangladesh (KIB) Award Giving Ceremony" in Farmgate's KIB auditorium in the capital.

Noting that the risk and cost of agricultural production have increased, President Hamid urged all concerned to pay special attention to inventing and expanding technology-based sustainable and environment friendly agricultural production method.

Hamid also stressed the need for inventing varieties of less time-consuming paddy for haor region and finding out alternative way to produce food grains.

"There is no alternative to increasing production of food grains to ensure food security. For this, we have to take short, medium and long-term effective and sustainable plans and programmes," the president added.

Referring to the traditional use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides in crop cultivation, Hamid said the country's fertile agricultural land is gradually losing its productivity due to the extensive use of these chemicals. Therefore, farmers should be encouraged to increase the use of organic fertilisers and organic pesticides.

Saying that he was born and brought up in a farmer family, Hamid said, "If agricultural production increases, a farmer's income will increase. Their lifestyle will develop. Country's socio-economic growth will increase too."

The president urged all concerned, including different institutions linked with agricultural production, to help build a "Sonar Bangla".

Fisheries and Livestock Minister Narayan Chandra Chanda, KIB Secretary General agriculturist Mohammad Khairul Alam Prince and KIB Jury Board Member Prof Dr Shahidur Rashid Bhuiyan spoke among others while KIB President agriculturist AMM Saleh presided over the function.

Four people and one institution were given the KIB award for 2018, while five persons and one institution for 2017 for their outstanding contribution to agriculture.

FIRST YEAR OF ELECTION COMMISSION

Not bad, still a lot to prove

Say election experts

UNB, Dhaka

Evaluating its first year's performance, election experts have said the current Election Commission needs to gain public confidence by making its neutral role more visible ahead of the next general election as its neutrality and capacity are still not above question.

The KM Nurul Huda-led commission, which is going to fulfill the first year of its five-year tenure today, held two major local body elections -- the elections to Comilla City Corporation and Rangpur City Corporation.

The Commission also "successfully" completed its dialogues with different stakeholders, including political parties, civil society members, media persons, election experts and woman leaders from July 31 to October 24 in 2017. All the

40 registered political parties joined the EC's talks and placed their respective proposals before the Commission.

In July 2017, the EC unveiled its roadmap for the 11th national election incorporating seven agendas, including electoral law reform, making the electoral process a time-befitting one and delimitation of constituencies.

It also held several parliamentary by-elections and some local government elections in the last one year.

About the EC's performance, former Election Commissioner Sohul Hussain told the news agency that this commission has so far been on the right track but it needs to show its sincerity to gain more public confidence.

Sohul Hussain said the EC will have to make its activities visible as people have little trust in it.

With a view to making the next parliamentary polls inclusive, the commission can take an initiative to pursue all the political parties to join the election. "They may fail but people will see their sincerity," he said.

Hailing the CEC's recent remark that the election will not be participatory without the participation of BNP, the former commissioner said the EC should follow its words in action.

Noting that the EC successfully completed the dialogues with different stakeholders in the last year, Sohul said they now should publish a report of the dialogues stating which proposals they are actually accepting.

Election expert Dr Tofail Ahmed said evaluation is not a matter of one year. "The real evaluation will be whether they can arrange the

national election in a fair and credible manner."

He said the Commission is slow in its preparation and cannot go forward with its timeframes mentioned in its roadmap. "The EC is yet to complete the amendments to the Representation of the People Order (RPO) and the Delimitation of Constituency Ordinance and redrawing the parliamentary constituencies."

Though it was supposed to publish a report on the proposals received in the dialogues earlier, but it has yet to do so.

About the by-polls to Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) and Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), which were recently postponed following a High Court stay order, he questioned why the Commission announced the elec

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BSMMU pro-VC Prof ASM Zakaria Swapan passes away

BSS, Dhaka

Prof ASM Zakaria Swapan, pro-vice chancellor (academic) of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) passed away yesterday. He was 55.

He was suffering from liver cancer for a long time, said his family. Dr Zakaria left behind his wife, a son, a daughter and a host of relatives, colleagues, students and well-wishers to mourn his death.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader expressed deep shock at the death of Prof Zakaria in his condolence message to the bereaved family.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Mohammad Nasim also expressed sympathy to the family.

NEWSIN brief

Tarique sentenced to 17yrs in jail: Law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tarique Rahman, BNP acting chairman and elder son of Khaleda Zia, is sentenced to 17 years' jail and fined Tk 22 crore in two cases, while proceedings in seven cases are going on against him, Law Minister Anisul Huq told parliament yesterday.

The minister said Tarique was convicted in Zia Orphanage Trust graft case and Money Laundering Act case, lodged by the Cantonment Police Station.

Gender sensitive teachers' training curriculum stressed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The curriculum of teachers' training should be reformed so that they become gender sensitive and skilled to teach students about sexual and reproductive health properly, said social activists at a discussion yesterday.

UBR Bangladesh Alliance organised it at a Dhaka hotel, said a press release. Syeda Tahmina Akhter of Dhaka University; Aminul Islam, a joint secretary of youth and sports ministry; and Prof Kaniz Syeda Binte Sabah, principal of Govt Teachers' Training College in Dhaka, spoke.

Rampal just one of many

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existence. Our heritage and culture will be destroyed if the forest is damaged," he said.

The projects harmful to the forest should be shut down and the people involved in harming it should be punished, Maksud demanded. "We, the environmentalists, are not against development. We want development keeping the Sundarbans safe."

Green activists in Bagerhat, Khulna and Satkhira organised a number of separate discussions, rallies and human chains on the occasion of the Sundarbans Day. High officials of the districts were also present at the programmes.

Lakehead owner granted bail

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produced before it.

Two other accused are: Motaleb Hossain, personal official of Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, and Nasir Uddin, upper division assistant of the ministry.

Court sources said the Anti-Corruption Commission was yet to appoint any investigation officer to probe the allegations brought against them.

A DB team arrested the two ministry staff and the Lakehead owner in the capital's Gulshan and Basila areas on January 22 and a case was filed against them with Banani Police Station.

According to the prosecution, it was alleged that Nasiruddin was detained in Gulshan with Tk 1.3 lakh in his possession. Detectives later arrested Motaleb at Basila following information gleaned from Nasiruddin. Matin was held from Gulshan in another drive.

On November 7 last year, the district administration of Dhaka sealed off Dhanmondi and Gulshan branches of the school, closing all its activities on allegations of patronising militancy, inspiring extremist views and helping militant outfits.

The Supreme Court later ordered reopening the school with a new board of directors including military officials and the Dhaka divisional commissioner in the chair.

On January 13, the school reopened.

Sources said its owner made a deal of around Tk 5 lakh with Motaleb and Nasir to expedite the process of its reopening following the court order.



Under the banner of "Uddome Uttarone Shotokoti", activists hold a rally at Shahbagh in the capital yesterday, demanding justice for women victims of violence. The event was organised by One Billion Rising: Revolution Bangladesh.

PHOTO: STAR

Bring order to edu, banking

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he said, adding that the bank has now turned into a "family affair". The lawmaker alleged that instead of importing goods through a letter of credit, the whole amount had been laundered abroad. He said the Farmers Bank's former chairman had appointed most of the employees from his area. "If the appointment is given through nepotism, then how that bank will work against loan irregularities."

He also said, "We are not getting uninterrupted electricity. Power outage still persists, though the state minister [for power] does not acknowledge it."

Names of four main accused

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story in their defence as they dropped the names of the accused. Asked, Ikramul Kabir, president of Sylhet Press Club, said he knows nothing regarding the charge sheet.

Al-Azad, president of the Electronic Media Journalists Association (IMJA) in Sylhet, said, "As far as we know, the police spoke to Nirananda, but they did not take his signature as a proof of his consent." But the IO said it was not necessary.

Coast guard to recruit own

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of the coast guard. A total of 40 officers received badges in recognition of their professional excellence and courageous roles they played during anti-crime operations last year.

The awards include Bangladesh Coast Guard Medal, Bangladesh Coast Guard Medal (Service), President's Coast Guard Medal and President's Coast Guard Medal (Service).

Mostafa Kamal Uddin, secretary to the security service division of the home ministry spoke on the occasion as a special guest and the coast guard Director General Rear Admiral Aurangzeb Chowdhury gave the welcome speech.

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