

Take actions against air polluters

High Court directs Department of Environment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday ordered the director general (DG) of Department of Environment (DoE) to take steps to conduct mobile court twice a week against those responsible for air pollution in Dhaka.

In response to a writ petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB), the court also asked the DG of DoE to submit a report in four weeks.

The court directed the authorities concerned to act within 15 days so that on-going development and repair works at construction sites in Dhaka do not further pollute the air.

It also directed the authorities concerned to spray water twice a day at the dust affected areas in the capital city.

The mayors of the two city corporations and their chief executive officers have been directed to submit a report after complying with this order in two weeks, petitioner's lawyer Advocate Manzill Morshed told The Daily Star.

The HC bench of Justice FRM Nazmul Ahasan and KM Kamrul Kader delivered the order.

The court also issued a rule asking the government why the inaction of the administration to curb air pollution in Dhaka city should not be declared illegal.

In the rule, the court asked the government to show cause as to why it should not be directed to take effective steps to stop air pollution in Dhaka.

Last year, Dhaka's air was ranked as third most polluted in the world according to an air quality data compiled by the World Health Organization for megacities with a population of 14 million or more.



In recent years, air pollution has become acute in the capital, especially during the dry months of winter.

FILE PHOTO

DUCSU ELECTION

All eyes on DU syndicate meeting

DU CORRESPONDENT

All eyes will be on the meeting of Dhaka University (DU) syndicate, to be held today, to approve the amendments to existing constitution and formulate electoral code of conduct for the upcoming Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) election.

Members of the syndicate, the highest governing body of the university, will bring necessary changes after scrutinising the recommendations by a DU committee.

On January 6, the DU authorities formed a five-member committee headed by Prof Mizanur Rahman to bring necessary amendments to the existing charter of Ducusu.

The authorities also held a meeting with all the active student organisations and asked for their recommendations in writing.

In their recommendations, leaders of several student organisations including Chhatra League general secretary Golam Rabbani sought changes to candidacy requirements for the election, allowing participation of students from MPhil, PhD and evening courses.

Some others, however, demanded continuation of the existing provision that permits only "regular students" to be candidates or voters.

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DSCC was the loser in city corporation split

Says Mayor Sayeed Khokon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sayeed Khokon yesterday said DSCC became the loser during the split of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), as the boundaries of two city corporations were not determined proportionately.

Speaking at a programme at Siddique Bazar in Old Dhaka, the mayor said most of the income-generating areas of the then DCC went to Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) due to the improper division.

The areas which have been brought under DSCC have less revenue sources, though its expenditure is higher than that of DNCC.

"Sixty percent of total revenue income capacities of undivided DCC went to the DNCC whereas DSCC got only 40 percent," he said.

DSCC was in massive debt till April 2015 when he took office, the mayor said, adding that electricity connections of the DSCC offices were about to be cut off as they failed to pay bills. "But we overcame the situation taking block allocation from the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina," the mayor said.

Seeking special help from the Local Government Division to increase their income-generating sources, the mayor said an organisation cannot run like this.

"There are many hospitals and educational institutions under DSCC management; we have to spend a good

amount of money to purchase medicine for the hospitals. We also have to struggle to pay salaries of staff due to lack of revenue," he said.

Mayor Khokon laid the foundation stone of the Mayor Mohammad Hanif Multi-Purpose Complex at Siddique Bazar, which will be constructed on one bigha land.

The mayor said they will modernise the rundown community centres under DSCC, keeping different kinds of facilities including healthcare, libraries and indoor games for citizens.

The complex in Siddique Bazar, with community centre hall, healthcare centre, councillor office, library, separate gyms for men and women,

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TAKING MONEY ILLEGALLY Headmistress of Motijheel school suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Primary and Mass Education Ministry yesterday suspended the headmistress of Motijheel Government Primary School for taking money from guardians of admission-seekers illegally.

According to relevant laws, admission to government primary schools is free of cost.

A drive by Anti-Corruption Commission officials -- led by Assistant Director Nargis Sultana and Deputy Assistant Director Md Sabuj Hasan -- at the school found that headmistress Nurjahan Hamida was taking Tk 1,000-1,500 from each admission-seeker.

The headmistress collected a total of Tk 5.77 lakh from the students in the name

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LDA calls countrywide protest tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a views-exchange meeting yesterday called for strengthening pro-people actions of the country's left-leaning political parties with the aim to emerge as a strong political force.

Meanwhile, Left Democratic Alliance (LDA) -- that includes eight left-leaning political parties -- called for a mass protest across the country tomorrow (Wednesday), denouncing irregularities and "vote robbery" during the national polls won by Awami League-led grand alliance. In the capital, LDA members along with like-minded professionals and people from different walks of life will gather in front of the Jatiya Press Club at 4pm, said LDA sources.

"We will stand with black flags in hands and declare further programme," LDA Coordinator

Mohammad Shah Alam told the views-exchange meeting at the Jatiya Press Club.

LDA, which rejected the election results terming it "farical", arranged the meeting to share its findings on polls irregularities with civil society members and to set its next course of actions.

At a daylong mass hearing at Jatiya Press Club on January 11, at least 82 of 147 LDA candidates shared their accounts of the polls.

They claimed irregularities of different dimensions, including biased role of the administration and law enforcement agencies, ballot stuffing, threats and harassments by alleged ruling party men, and inefficient role of the Election Commission.

Speaking at yesterday's meeting, economist Prof Anu Muhammad

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Green experts seek review of Delta Plan 2100

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Without further amendment, Bangladesh Delta Plan (BDP) 2100 will not succeed as with many flood control, drainage, and irrigation projects, said green organisations in their proposal at a press conference yesterday.

On January 11-12, experts from 13 universities, 41 organisations and foreign countries accepted a 40-point proposal during "Conference on Delta Plan 2100 and Sustainable Development" held in Dhaka.

To publish the proposal, Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Bangladesh Poribesh Network (BEN) held the press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity.

Dr Abdul Matin, general secretary of Bapa, read out the proposal.

Although the conference welcomed the BBDDP initiative, it said there are some major weaknesses in it.

The proposal stated that it is surprising to select 80 projects out of 123 for implementation in 2018-2030, as they were selected by

"a group of implementing agencies".

At the press conference, Dr Abdul Matin said they do not disagree with the government's plan, rather would like the incompleteness, flaws and limitations of the BDP addressed.

"If the authorities accept the list of projects from the implementing agencies, questions will be raised about the objective of BDP," the proposal added.

At the press conference, Bapa Vice President Khandaker Bazlul Haque urged the government to scrutinise the delta plan further.

Sharif Jamil, joint secretary of Bapa, said, "There was a need to collect and scrutinise more data in adopting the delta plan... I think review of the project is very much needed."

Prof M Firoz Ahmed, co-chairperson of Bapa, said, "The geographies of the Netherlands and Bangladesh are not the same. So, it will not be viable to adopt delta plan based on their recommendations."

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President Md Abdul Hamid launches the book "1971 Protirodh Sangram Bijoy" written by Military Secretary to the president, Maj Gen Md Sarwar Hossain at Bangabhaban yesterday.

PHOTO: PID



Although the Cruelty to Animals Act of 1920 considers it an offence to bind, keep or carry any animal in such a manner or position that subjects the animal to unnecessary pain or suffering, sellers regularly bind birds' legs, and carry them upside-down. The photo was taken from the capital's Farmgate area yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

INNOVATION CITIES INDEX 2018 Dhaka 103rd among 108 Asian cities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka ranked 103rd among 108 cities in the Asia region, with Tokyo being on top of Innovation Cities Index 2018.

The list is prepared by Melbourne-based data innovation agency 2thinknow.

Out of a total of 500 cities classified and ranked globally, Dhaka city ranked 447th.

In the global ranking, Chattogram ranked 431st, Kolkata 383rd, Karachi 379th, Colombo 327th, Hyderabad 316th and Lahore 432nd.

London ranked 2nd while Kinshasa 500th on the index.

Part of the world's largest global city ranking, the 11th Innovation Cities Index with 500 standard cities were classified and ranked globally featuring 108 cities from Asia region this year.

The city ranking includes benchmarks such as technology smartness, startups and other aspects of a good city to live and working, based on economic opportunity for innovators.

The Innovation Cities Index has been measuring innovation potential of each city since 2007.

The ranking is based on 162 standard indicators and some underlying data points from 2thinknow's city benchmarking data.

Four win Bangla Academy Sahitya Purashkar

CITY DESK

Bangla Academy Director General Habibullah Sirazi announced the names of four awardees yesterday at a press conference in Shaheed Munier Choudhury conference room in the academy.

The recipients for Bangla Academy Sahitya Purashkar 2018 are: Quazi Rosy for poetry, Mohit Kamal for fiction, Syed Mohammad

many years. His writing often explores the themes of psychiatry.

Syed Mohammad Shahed is a professor of Bangla at University of Dhaka. His research work is focused on language and literature.

Afsan Chowdhury is a renowned journalist and researcher. He was part of the "Muktijuddher Dolilpatra Project" led by Hasan Hafizur Rahman from 1978 to 1986 which



Quazi Rosy

Mohit Kamal

Syed Shahed

Afsan Chowdhury

Shahed for research and essay, and Afsan Chowdhury for literature on Liberation War, says a press release from the academy.

Quazi Rosy has published multiple compilations of her poetry.

Mohit Kamal, a renowned psychiatrist, has been writing fiction for

produced 15 volumes of documents on the history of 1971.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will officially present the awards at the inaugural programme of Amar Ekushe Book Fair on February 1. Each awardee will also receive a cheque worth Tk 2 lakhs.