

# 'Leaving it to city dwellers to evaluate my performance'

Sayeded Khokon says on 4th anniversary of his mayorship

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lack of coordination among service providers is the biggest issue affecting city management, Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Mohammad Sayeed Khokon said yesterday.

"Had there been effective coordination among the city service providers, it would've been possible to provide planned, apt and organised services," he remarked.

To justify his observation, Khokon said, "People face a lot of difficulties when road development works are underway. After repairs are done, service providers seek permission to dig the same roads again... If development work could be carried out in a coordinated way, there would not be any need to dig up a road within 5-7 years."

DSCC organised a press conference at a city hotel to mark fourth anniversary of Khokon's mayorship.

Responding to a question, Khokon claimed that he is discharging his duties with only 34 percent manpower.

"Though the city corporation was divided into two parts -- DSCC and Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), in the last eight years, manpower crisis has not been addressed. It is extremely frustrating

and unfortunate," he said.

Referring to different development works, Khokon said he tried his best in the last four years to provide services to city dwellers.

"I leave it to city dwellers to evaluate my performance," he said.

Khokon said citizens' awareness is the driving force of change. "I firmly believe if a citizen becomes conscious alongside our earnest and tireless efforts, this will become a green, liveable and smart city," he added.

He took oath as mayor of DSCC on May 6, 2015. Khokon took charge with serious pledges and commitments to bring about qualitative change in delivering civic services.

The DSCC mayor highlighted several development works that have taken place in the last four years. He said the city corporation has so far set up 41,133 LED lights on streets; constructed and repaired about 670-kilometre road, 632-kilometre drain and 133.16-kilometre footpaths; solved water logging problems in Shantinagar, Nazimuddin Road, Ganaktuli and Bangshal areas.

Besides these, DSCC took initiatives to develop city's parks, build foot-bridges, shift chemical factories from old town, and manage waste, the mayor said.



Mayor Sayeed Khokon speaks at the press conference.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

# Govt must procure paddy directly from farmers

Set up purchasing centres in every union, Bangladesh Krishak Samity demands

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Bangladesh Krishak Samity (BKS), an organisation of farmers, yesterday called a sit-in programme in front of deputy commissioners' offices in all districts of the country on May 23, demanding fair prices of paddy.

Sazzad Jahir Chandan, general secretary of the association, made the announcement at a farmers' rally in the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

He also demanded setting up paddy purchasing centres under government supervision in every union to ensure profitable price for farmers.

"We will call non-stop sit-in and nationwide road blockade programmes next month if the government does not take any initiative in this regard by this time," he said.

Advocate SMA Sabur, president of the association, said the government is yet to take any step, although farmers are frustrated and have been protesting by setting their paddy on fire.

"The government claimed that the country has achieved self-sufficiency in food

grains but the farmers who contribute to this achievement are not getting reasonable prices for their paddy," he claimed.

Sabur alleged that the government itself is enabling local political leaders who are involved in determining low prices of paddy.

Condemning this practice, he said the government must procure paddy directly from farmers through establishing government purchase centres at union level. Prices of agricultural goods must also be reduced, he added.

Sabur also said many farmers have already become farm labourers, losing their land due to poor agricultural policy of the government.

"If the government does not take immediate steps, the country will face a severe agricultural crisis soon," he said.

Along with the industrial sector, the government must also focus on the agricultural sector, he said.

After the rally, at least 50 farmers from different parts of the country brought out a procession and marched roads surrounding the press club.



City corporation workers busy setting up pipes in a trench dug up on a road in Motijheel's Dilkusha area. Though the work has been continuing for a while as part of a drainage development project, DSCC apparently forgot to put up safety barriers other than a flimsy cautionary tape. Be it day or night, this road is used by pedestrians and vehicles alike.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

# THE CROWN JEWEL OF IFTAR

|| KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD ||



DHAKA VIBE

Iftar is never complete without delving into a bowl of haleem. The photos were taken at Mama Haleem in Kalabagan.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

When I sit for iftar after a long day of fasting, I imagine the table is a treasure trove. There is the gold, silver, and precious stones: the fruits, piyaju-beguni-alu chop, and chickpea dishes. The shine of the glazed jilapi attempts to blind me, but I look beyond. At the end of the table I find what I have been looking for.

Covered with a plastic sheet, paper and tied with decorative string, a clay pot that is the star of the entire iftar, the crown jewel: haleem.

Haleem is enjoyed particularly during the month of Ramadan. Restaurants and hotels around Dhaka bring out their biggest cooking pots to prepare Haleem. Sale of this hot, meaty delicacy begins in the afternoon. Truth be told, it is difficult to not find haleem in any locality, be it in the narrow Old Dhaka lanes or around the nicely landscaped Gulshan Avenue.

The earliest record of haleem dates back to 10th century. Originally an Arabic dish called "harees", it found its way across Persia and into the Indian subcontinent. As years went by, the haleem slow cooked itself into the essential Muslim cuisine.

"During iftar, the pot of haleem is the centre of

attraction. I remember days when my father returned home from work carrying a pot of haleem, and our family knew that iftar would be special," recalls Samia Noor, senior teacher at an English medium school.

While the recipe varies from region to region, haleem in

of haleem is enjoyed with a cheek of lime, thinly-sliced ginger and garnished with coriander and beresta (crispy, fried onion). Beef and mutton monopolise this dish, while word of chicken haleem are heard of but not paid attention to.

Growing up in the '90s,



Bangladesh is predominantly cooked for long hours with a variety of ingredients such as pulses and lentils mixed with oil, ghee, and a long list of spices. The highlight, however, is the meat added to it. A bowl

I had only learned of two "brands" of haleem: the classic "shahi Haleem", and the widely popular "Mama Haleem". While the first was common everywhere, with colourful banners and loud

vendors outside every restaurant cajoling prospective buyers, the latter was a special Dhakaite experience. The Mama Haleem hype is still alive, although its legacy is perhaps being eroded by more and more "special" haleems popping up throughout the city.

Brac University student Asif Ayon says a lot of people often tend to overlook the nutritional value of haleem and dwell on the flavour and quantity of meat. "Haleem is a slow-cooked stew of meat and pulses. I see many people complain that they didn't receive enough meat in their bowls, but they don't see that it's already a protein-packed bowl of energy. It really is an entire meal in itself," comments Asif.

While your local restaurant may cook up a good haleem, the best ones in the city really do stand out. As evident from a discussion in the Facebook group "The Food Talk", the best haleem can be found at Tarka in Banani, Premium Sweets in Gulshan 2, Chili's in Dhanmondi and a few other places. The clear winner, however, is Decent Pastry Shop on Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi -- the most recommended haleem in town.

# Rohingya issue to be taken to int'l court of justice

Gambian FM tells PM

BSS, Dhaka

Visiting Gambian Foreign Minister Dr Mamadou Tangara yesterday expressed his country's commitment to continue to support Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue and take the matter to the International Court of Justice.

"We'll continue our cooperation with Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue and take it [the matter] to the International Court of Justice as it is a humanitarian issue," he said.

The Gambian foreign minister made the remarks when he paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her Gono Bhaban residence in the morning. PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed reporters after the meeting.

Dr Mamadou praised the prime minister's leadership, especially in women's development and empowerment. At the meeting, he handed over a letter from the Gambian president to the prime minister.

The Gambian foreign minister informed the PM of the meeting with his Bangladesh counterpart and signing of a Foreign Office Protocol. "We are keen to have cooperation in the field of science and technology," he said.

The PM recalled her long struggle for restoration of democracy in Bangladesh after returning home from six-year exile on this day in 1981, after being elected the president of Awami League.

"We're now trying our best to uplift the condition of the country's people," she said.

In this context, the PM mentioned that the poverty level has been brought down to 21 percent while the country is going to achieve 8.13 percent GDP growth in the current fiscal year, thanks to various pragmatic steps of her government.

The prime minister said the government is setting up 100 economic zones across the country aimed at ensuring industrial development and generating employment.

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen, PM's

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# HEALTH HACK

Staying fit in Ramadan

1. Choose a suitable time to work out. A preferable time might be 2-3 hours after iftar.
2. Calculate your required calories and eat accordingly.
3. Don't push yourself too much this month. The objective should be to maintain your fitness level, so avoid high-intensity activities.
4. Keep the workout sessions short.

# DHAKA TODAY

WORKSHOP

Constitution, Civil Rights and Structural Challenges  
Organiser: School of People's Law  
Venue: Institute of Modern Languages, DU  
Time: 10am

FAIR

Daraz Pop Shop 15  
Venue: Steak Republic, Gulshan 2  
Time: 12pm

FAIR

Eid Anondo Mela  
Venue: Officers' Club Dhaka  
Time: 10am

ART EXHIBITION

Bodyspace Mindscape by Wakilur Rahman  
Venue: Dwip Gallery, Lalmatia  
Time: 6:30pm

FILM SCREENING

The End of the Tour  
Venue: Charcha, Mohammadpur  
Time: 3:30pm



# Fasting & drowsiness

While fasting, drowsiness occurs during working hours because of decreased blood sugar level, which make the body weak and thus the brain finds it difficult to concentrate. In Ramadan, thirst makes one tired and being tired makes one drowsy. Consciously water intake should be increased, as water hydrates body and keeps mind fresh. Sehri and iftar meals should include foods that help sustain energy levels throughout the day, every bite should be properly chewed, sugar and starch loaded meals and eating immediately before sleep should be avoided. Deep & slow breathing through nose while doing regular work, helps increase oxygen delivery to brain and heart to ease the fatigue and state of low energy. Scheduling some exercise into Ramadan routine, like a short walk after sehri, can boost energy levels for the rest of the day. Adequate and quality sleep at night helps stay fresh at wake-up time in the morning. If there is no urgent need, sleeping late should be avoided to go to bed earlier than usual.



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