



'Bangabandhu Nadi Padak' to be awarded for saving rivers

UNB, Dhaka

The government will award "Bangabandhu Nadi Padak" to encourage people and organisations to come forward to save the country's rivers.

The shipping ministry has formulated a draft of the award policy.

Any person or organisation or institution can be given this award for visible contribution in protecting rivers.

Many of the rivers that crisscross Bangladesh are dying because of pollution and sedimentation while many are being encroached illegally.

One Bangabandhu Nadi Padak will be given at the district level and three at the national level.

The district level award will include a gold medal, certificate and Tk 30,000. At the national level, winners will get gold medals, certificates and Tk 50,000.

As per the policy, committees have been formed at upazila, district, divisional and national levels. The award may be distributed during World Rivers Day in September or at a time set by the prime minister.

The shipping ministry can change the number of awards.

SEASON OF GIVING

As Eid draws nearer, number of beggars on streets, at intersections and in front of shopping centres in Dhaka goes up. Scores of them arrive in the capital to earn a quick buck. This being the festive season, people are usually more generous and give alms to the needy. Beggars utilise the opportunity to the fullest, which at times can become a nuisance as well. The photo was taken from Road 27 in Dhanmondi yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Regional development parity must for sustainability

Urban planners observe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite national development growth, poverty has increased simultaneously in the country with disparity in regional development and per capita income, said leading urban planners citing a research finding in the capital yesterday.

According to official information, poverty has increased in ten districts of the northern region, including five districts in Rangpur division alone, said Prof Adil Mohammed Khan, general secretary of Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP).

The districts are Kurigram, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Gaibandha and Lalmonirhat.

"The country's poorest people live in Kurigram, with 71 percent people living in poverty in the district," said Khan while presenting the findings.

Dinajpur stands second in poverty rate with 64 percent people under the poverty line.

The other five poverty-stricken districts are Bandarban, Khagrachhari, Jamalpur, Kishoreganj and Magura.

BIP organised a press conference to share the findings of a research on "Comparative regional development analysis" at its premises.

As a result of disparity in development, Dhaka, Chattogram and Sylhet divisions have experienced uneven development growth compared to Rangpur division, which has three times more poverty than those three divisions, the research said citing Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

Now, in keeping with the country's constitutional obligation, an even allocation of annual development is a must to alleviate regional development disparity, said Khan.

BIP vice-president Prof Md. Akter Mahmud said that an imbalance and disparity of development have occurred thanks to centralised allocation of resources in certain chosen regions on political consideration.

"As a result, poverty and regional development disparity have grown consistently," he said, "It is time to look into the pattern of public expenditure for a national development parity."

In the country's annual development programme, Dhaka district gets 47 percent allocation, Chattogram 24 percent while Rangpur 1.79 percent, according to the research work based on data of annual development programme budget for five

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

NIKO GRAFT CASE

Hearing on Khaleda's petition over changing court adjourned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday adjourned till June 10 the hearing on a writ petition filed by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, challenging legality of a government notification that said the Niko corruption case trial against her will be held at a special court in Keraniganj Central Jail.

The HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Md Khairul Alam adjourned the hearing as petitioners' counsels did not produce sufficient relevant documents before it, Anti-Corruption Commission's lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star.

The ACC lawyer, however, said there is no legal bar for the special court to hold trial of the case as the HC did not pass any stay order on the government notification.

Barrister Moudud Ahmed and Advocate AJ Mohammad Ali appeared for Khaleda Zia. Attorney General Mahbubey Alam argued for the state.

On May 13, the law ministry issued a gazette notification, saying that trials of 17 cases, including the Niko graft case, against the BNP chairperson would be held at a special court set up at building-2 in Keraniganj Central Jail for security reasons.

Khaleda filed the writ petition with the HC on May 26. Niko graft case trial was being held at a special court inside the Old Dhaka Central Jail.

Trials of 16 other cases were being held at a makeshift court at Government Alia Madrasa in Dhaka's Bakshibazar.

DNCC mayor Atiqul gets minister status

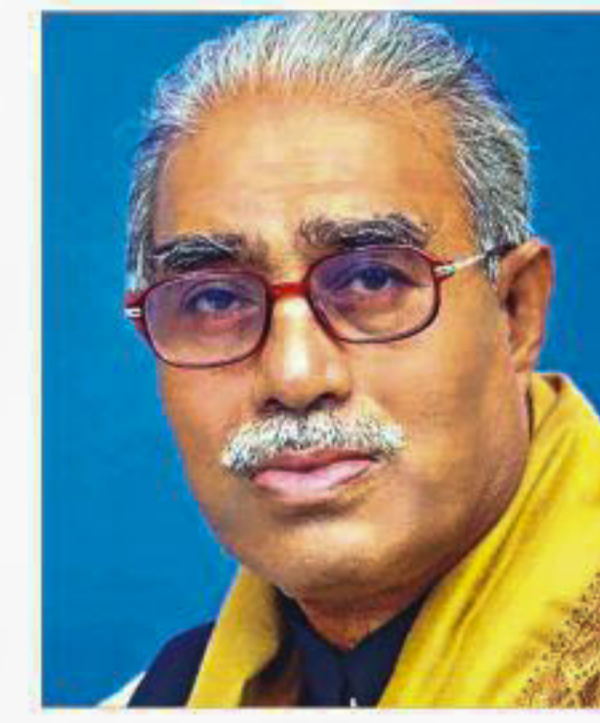
Rajshahi, Khulna mayors get state minister status; Sylhet mayor left out



Atiqul Islam



Khairuzzaman Liton



Talukder Abdul Khaleque

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Mayor Md Atiqul Islam will enjoy the rank and status of a minister while mayors of Rajshahi and Khulna city corporations will have the rank and status of state minister.

The Cabinet Division issued a gazette notification in this regard yesterday. The decision took immediate effect, the gazette said.

However, BNP's Ariful Haque Chowdhury, who won the Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) election last year, has

not been given any such status.

Atiqul, AHM Khairuzzaman Liton and Talukder Abdul Khaleque won the city corporation election as Awami League candidates.

Talking to The Daily Star, SCC Mayor Ariful said it is unfortunate that the elected mayors were given this honour and status but he was deprived.

Ariful said the then BNP government had given due honour and status to his predecessor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, who was an AL candidate.

Int'l Day of UN Peacekeepers today

BSS, Dhaka

The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers is being observed in the country like elsewhere today in a befitting manner.

The day is being observed on May 29 every year across the world, aiming to underscore the importance of maintaining global peace, pay tribute to those involved in the peacekeeping missions and honour the UN peacekeepers who sacrificed their lives for ensuring global peace.

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina issued separate messages, marking the occasion.

In his message, President Abdul Hamid said Bangladesh is among the countries that contribute the largest number of troops to UN peacekeeping missions.

Utmost sincerity along with professionalism of the Bangladeshi peacekeepers have been playing a vital role in achieving the reputation they enjoy, he said.

In pursuing the country's diplomatic objectives, the president said, the government has been consistent in upholding the principle of "Friendship to all, malice towards none" as enunciated by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

"The outstanding contribution of our peacekeepers has upheld the image of Bangladesh in the international arena," Abdul Hamid said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in her message, said the Bangladeshi peacekeepers have been working relentlessly to establish peace and harmony in various conflict zones in the world.

They are highly praised worldwide for their high standard of professionalism, devoted service, hard work and courage, she said.

On behalf of the government and the people of Bangladesh, the PM assured of full support to UN peacekeeping operations.

"I hope Bangladeshi peacekeepers will contribute more in the future with their highest standard of professionalism, efficiency and sincerity," she added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

PHOTO OF THE DAY

AMRAN HOSSAIN



AT THE COST OF PEDESTRIANS ... This road median at Matsya Bhaban intersection connects the zebra crossings on two sides of the road, but metal barriers -- set up here to prevent motorbikers from crossing through the walkway -- defeats the purpose of smooth pedestrian crossing.



HEALTH HACK

Relieving a headache: We have all experienced a bad headache some time in our lives. Instead of just bearing with it until it goes away, you could try these home remedies.

1. You can have a hot cup of coffee or tea. Caffeine can help ease acute headaches. Don't get too dependent on it, though, as caffeine withdrawal can produce its own headache.
2. Use a cold pack. It can be an actual pack from the pharmacy or a makeshift one with ice or cold water inside. Keep it on the forehead for 10 to 20 minutes.
3. Try taking ginger with your tea or food. There is some evidence that ginger helps relieve headaches and the nausea that sometimes accompanies it.
4. Stay hydrated. Dehydration is a common cause of headaches, and it is a serious problem in this scorching heat.

DHAKA TODAY

| | |
|--|--|
| ACADEMIC SESSION Open Forum with US Higher Education Specialist Venue: EMK Center, Dhanmondi Time: 11am | WORKSHOP Classical & Creative Dance Venue: Center for Advance Nurturing & Visual Art Studies, Pallabi Time: 4pm |
| DISCUSSION Hassles during Eid journey: Our responsibilities Organiser: Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity Venue: Jatiya Press Club Time: 11am | PRODUCT DISPLAY Unimart Presents: The Artsy Home Organiser: Unimart Venue: Chef's Table BD, Gulshan-2 Time: 4pm |

BNP serves politicians Tk 30 meal at iftar party

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday provided political party leaders with Tk 30 iftar package each, an amount allocated for its jailed Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

BNP hosted the iftar party in honour of politicians at Ladies Club in the city, participated by around 2,000 leaders and activists of Jatiya Oikyafront, the 20-party alliance and other professionals of various other fields.

Though the party invited senior leaders of the ruling Awami League, none of them turned up at the event.

Convener of Jatiya Oikyafront Dr Kamal Hossain was not present at the event either.

The iftar items included two dates, one jilapi, one beguni, one paju, some cooked grams and puffed rice and a small bottle of water.

In a brief address prior to the iftar, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said they arranged the iftar with a heavy heart, since their chairperson has been kept in jail in "false" cases.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Fasting and Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)

In UTI, intake of fluid is necessary to have a flushing effect to clear the debris from urinary bladder to prevent stagnation and colonization of bacteria. In this hot and dry Ramadan, abstinence of food and drink during fasting hours, can lead to dehydration, further rousing UTI. To tackle this, plenty of non-sweetened non-carbonated drinks should be consumed between the time of iftar and sehri. Diabetics having previous episodes of UTI should keep their blood sugar in control since high glucose content in the bladder can aggravate urine infection and consequently worsen kidney function. Poorly controlled diabetics with recurrent UTIs, kidney dysfunction and patients with prostate disease & who have had prostate surgery in last three months are advised not to fast.

Dr. Muhammad Yasser Arafat
Consultant, Urology

CALL 10666
9852466

For Appointment
Emergency & Ambulance

United Hospital
Exceptional People. Exceptional Care.