

PHOTO OF THE DAY

RASHED SHUMON



With the mercury climbing to mid-30s amid high humidity, a large group of children and teenagers have found Crescent Lake behind the National Parliament building to be the perfect spot for some water-acrobatics. Meanwhile, those not willing to get their clothes wet have found a vantage point at the top of the bridge. Swimming and bathing in the lake is prohibited, but it does not appear that anyone is enforcing that. The photo was taken yesterday.

Govt not allowing minimum democratic space to opposition

Says Mirza Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is unwilling to allow minimum democratic space to its opposition, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir alleged yesterday.

Talking to journalists after placing floral wreaths at party founder Ziaur Rahman's grave in the capital to mark the party's 41st founding anniversary, he said, "We are now practicing politics in a very adverse situation. Our founding anniversary programmes have been obstructed across the country. This means the government doesn't want to allow its opposition the minimum democratic space," he said.

Fakhrul further said their party will intensify the movement to ensure release of party Chairperson Khaleda Zia, and to restore democracy in the country. The BNP leader reiterated the party's demand of scrapping the last parliamentary election result and fresh elections under a neutral Election Commission.

"We are waging a movement on these two issues, and the movement will be intensified," he said while senior leaders of the party, accompanied him at the graveyard.

Fakhrul alleged that the government is conspiring to annihilate its opponents after "destroying democratic structures through repressive acts".

"The government has continued all types of plots to wipe out opposition politics and disagreements. As part of it, our leader Khaleda Zia has been put behind bars unlawfully," he said.

The BNP leader further said, "There's no democracy in the country; democratic structures have been destroyed through repression and suppression. That's why BNP must restore democracy and free our leader [Khaleda] through a united struggle together with people."

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Rangpur-3 by-polls on October 5

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

By-polls to Rangpur-3 constituency -- which was left vacant after the death of Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad -- will be held on October 5, the Election Commission said yesterday.

Voting will start from 9am and will continue till 5pm, additional secretary to the EC Mokhlesur Rahman said while announcing the election schedule at a press briefing at the media centre of EC.

The last day for submission of nomination papers is September 9. Scrutiny of papers will be held on September 11, the official said. The last day for withdrawal of nomination is September 16.

Ershad passed away at the age of 89 at Combined Military Hospital on July 14.

Election Commission is constitutionally obliged to complete by-polls within 90 days after a constituency falls vacant.

A total of 4,42,072 people are expected to exercise their franchise in the election.

DENGUE OUTBREAK

One dies, 902 patients hospitalised across country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One more patient died of dengue yesterday at a hospital in Savar, taking the countrywide death toll to 127.

However, official figure of deaths stood at 57.

Khadija Begum, 42, wife of a college teacher, breathed her last at Enam Medical College Hospital in Savar, after she was admitted to the hospital on the same day, said Yousuf Ali, duty manager of the hospital.

Khadija was diagnosed with dengue fever few days ago, but stayed at her residence as her condition was stable. Yesterday, she was admitted to the intensive care unit of the hospital, as her condition deteriorated suddenly, said Habibur Rahman, husband of the victim.

Meanwhile, the number of dengue patients admitted to hospitals across the country in a day again went up yesterday, just after a day of reaching in the 700s.

According to Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), a total of 902 dengue patients were admitted to different hospitals and clinics till 8am yesterday across the country, significantly up from Saturday's tally of 760.

With the number, total number of dengue cases have risen to 71,097, of which 41,098 are in Dhaka, and 29,999 outside Dhaka.

DSCC BUDGET 2019-20

Major focus on mosquito control

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With priority to mosquito control activities, Mayor Sayeed Khokon yesterday announced a Tk 3,631.40 crore budget for Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) for 2019-2020 fiscal, Tk 32.65 crore higher than last year's.

"We have kept Tk 43.3 crore for mosquito control activities in the current fiscal, which was Tk 26 crore last year," said the mayor while announcing the budget at Nagar Bhaban.

He said they have taken a five-year plan to control mosquitoes -- specially Aedes -- and have a plan to set up a separate department to conduct proper research and activities.

"We have to work round the year to control Aedes mosquito, and our

DSCC budget	2019-20 fiscal year	2018-19 fiscal year
Total budget	3,631.40 crore	3,598.75 crore
Development expenditure	2,894.93 crore	2,856.78 crore
Revenue income target	972.80 crore	909.42 crore
Road and traffic infrastructure development	896.74 crore	742.83 crore
Garbage management	12.50 crore	10.70 crore
Mosquito control activities	43.30 crore	26 crore
Environment development	151.99 crore	4.30 crore
Land development and expansion of Matuail landfill	619.99 crore	234.28 crore

ongoing works will continue," said mayor.

Mentioning his pledge to bring

dengue under control by the first week of September, Khokon said with the

efforts of everyone, the number of

dengue cases have started to reduce.

About the DSCC's waste bin initiative, the mayor said they had set up 57,000 waste bins in 57 wards of DSCC for collection of light waste, but the project did not work due to various reasons.

"We have decided to replace or repair those bins in another design," said the mayor, adding that they have kept Tk 2.25 crore in the budget for this purpose.

About garbage management, Mayor Khokon said they have kept Tk 12.50 crore for garbage management, which was Tk 10.70 crore in last fiscal.

He said they have already set up 22 secondary transfer stations for waste collection, and construction of a few others are going on.

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9TH WAGE BOARD FOR JOURNOS

It's up to PM now: Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will now take decision over the ninth wage board award for newspaper and news agency journalists and employees.

Talking to reporters at his secretariat office on various issues, Quader, who heads the seven-member cabinet committee on the wage board, said the process to send their recommendations in concise form to the prime minister is underway.

On July 25, Quader had said a cabinet committee finalised its report for endorsement of the ninth wage board for journalists, and after final approval by the cabinet, a gazette will be published for its implementation.

Yesterday, Quader, however, said there is no necessity for fresh discussion at the cabinet on the issue. "Recommendations in concise form will be sent to the prime minister and decision will come from her,"

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Remembering an unwavering politician

Speakers at memorial for Prof Muzaffar Ahmed term him a key figure of Liberation War

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Muzaffar Ahmed was the kind of person who never deviated from norms, and dedicated his political career to people's well-being, citizens said yesterday at a memorial meeting for the eminent politician and Liberation War organiser.

His contributions to achieving the independence of Bangladesh is unforgettable -- which he made not only through politics, but also by helping the nation earn international support through lobbying, they added.

Cultural organisation Shilpito arranged the meeting in memory of Prof Muzaffar Ahmed -- an iconic political figure of the country -- who passed away at a hospital in Dhaka on August 23, at the age of 97.

The event was held at Central Public Library auditorium in the capital, where a few poems were also recited in his memory.

Speaking on the occasion, veteran politician Pankaj Bhattacharya said Muzaffar introduced the politics for people's well-being in the country. He dedicated his career to changing people's fate and giving them a better life.

"In my eyes, he was one of the key figures of the Liberation War," Pankaj

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A law enforcer punctures tyre of a rickshaw for plying the Mirpur Road -- one of the three major roads in the capital made off limit to them. Officials also seized many rickshaws for flouting the ban, inset. The photos were taken around 11:30am yesterday near Dhaka College. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Workers of Bangladesh Palli Unnayan Board started their indefinite sit-in in front of Palli Bhaban at Karwan Bazar yesterday to press home their various demands, including payment of arrears and regularisation of jobs. PHOTO: STAR

TR 40 LAKH BRIBE SCAM Ex-ACC director Basir seeks bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Suspended director of Anti-Corruption Commission Khandaker Enamul Basir yesterday submitted a petition to the High Court, seeking bail in a case filed over the transaction of Tk 40 lakh as bribe.

He submitted the petition through his lawyer, claiming he is innocent and has become a "victim of circumstances".

His counsel Jamal Hossain told The Daily Star that the HC will hear the petition tomorrow.

On July 16, ACC Director Sheikh Md Fanallah filed the case with the ACC's Dhaka District Coordination Office-1 under the anti-money laundering act, on charges of taking Tk 40 lakh in bribe from suspended deputy inspector general of police Mizanur Rahman.

Following a TV news report -- in which Mizan alleged that Basir took the bribe from him for clearing him of corruption charges, ACC formed a three-member investigation committee headed by Fanallah, and suspended Basir.

In May last year, ACC launched an inquiry into the wealth of Mizan, tasking Basir with the job.

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CIRCULATING NUSRAT'S VIDEO Two more witnesses testify to tribunal

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Two more prosecution witnesses, including a Supreme Court lawyer, yesterday gave their statements before a tribunal in connection with a case filed over filming Nusrat Jahan Rafi's statement and circulating the footage on social media without her consent.

The witnesses are: advocate Subir Nandi Das and Gobinda Chandra Dev, a lawyer's assistant.

Judge Ash Sams Joglul Hossain of Dhaka Cyber Tribunal recorded their statements, following which lawyer for suspended Sonagazi OC Moazzem Hossain cross-examined them.

In his statement, Subir said on April 11 he sat beside Barrister Syed Sayedul Haque Sumon, a Supreme Court lawyer and the case's complainant, at hall-1 of the SC Bar Bhaban. He said he watched a Facebook video clip from Sumon's phone, where Moazzem was seen asking Nusrat several indecent questions. Gobinda also gave an identical statement.

Sumon was present at yesterday's hearing. The judge afterwards summoned two other witnesses to appear before it on September 11 to narrate what they knew about the matter.

On July 31, the complainant gave his deposition before the tribunal. He was cross-examined by the defence on August 20.

Sumon filed the case against the former OC on April 15.

Nusrat, a student of Sonagazi Islamia Senior Fazil Madrasa in Feni, was set ablaze on April 6, allegedly after refusing to withdraw a case she had filed against her principal, Siraj Ud Doula, for sexually harassing her. She died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on April 10.

The OC was withdrawn the same day after Nusrat's family alleged that he had not cooperated. A video clip of Moazzem asking Nusrat humiliating questions also went viral on social media, drawing widespread criticism.