

PHOTO OF THE DAY

SK ENAMUL HAQ



Huddled in a cuddle ... A litter of six puppies use each other's warmth on the roadside, to catch a nap on a chilly morning. With winter descending on the capital and dogs' breeding season passing only recently, a little bit of love and care from local communities -- maybe by creating small temporary shelters with boxes or putting out plastic/cloth sheets outdoors -- can help these animals survive the cold and grow up healthy. This photo was taken in Ahmedbagh area.

Warm clothes' market heats up as mercury drops

UNB, Dhaka

Businesses are taking advantage of the increasing demand for warm clothes amid a bone-chilling weather which is likely to continue.

People are thronging the markets and makeshift stalls on Dhaka's footpaths to buy clothes for winter, prompting sellers to hike prices.

Vendors said they have also stockpiled colourful winter wears to attract buyers.

A large number of people were seen at shopping centres and markets in Gulistan, Bangabazar, Chawkbazar, New Market, Elephant Road, Baitul Mukarram National Mosque area, Mouchak and Bashundhara City shopping mall.

Makeshift shops on footpaths are doing brisk sales as well.

Traders said buyers are more interested

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First phase of Bishwa Ijtema on Jan 10-12

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

The first phase of Bishwa Ijtema -- the second largest congregation of the Muslim community after Hajj -- will be held from January 10 to 12 and the second phase from January 17 to 19 next year.

To hold the Ijtema properly, concerned departments of the government have been asked to take necessary steps to complete all sorts of preparation by January 7.

The decision came yesterday at a preparatory meeting at Gazipur Circuit House auditorium on holding the Ijtema. Deputy Commissioner of Gazipur SM Tariqul Islam chaired the meeting.

On the first phase, Maulana Jubayer and his followers will take part in the Ijtema while Maulana Saad and his followers will take part in the second phase.

Akheri Munajat of the first phase will be held on January 12 and the second phase on January 19.

Over 450 CCTV cameras will be installed at the Ijtema ground and sufficient law enforcement agency members will be deployed to ensure security.

Thirty mobile courts and bomb disposal teams will also remain alert to provide necessary security to the devotees, the meeting decided.

To facilitate the devotees, 8,331 toilets in 31 buildings, 17 deep tube wells and seven floating bridges on Turag river will be built.

'PROKRITIR GARI' N'ganj city launches green waste-collecting vehicles

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

To upgrade the waste management system in the town, Narayanganj City Corporation (NCC) has introduced two electric vehicles that can collect waste in an environmentally friendly way.

The vehicles, named 'Prokritir Gari' (car of nature), were handed over to NCC Mayor Selina Hayat Ivy by the manufacturing company on Tuesday afternoon.

Trajectory Technology, a startup founded by a group of university students, manufactured the vehicles under 'Startup Bangladesh' programme, an initiative of the ICT Division.

Speaking at the handover ceremony, mayor Ivy said "the vehicles will reduce the suffering drivers have to go through in collecting waste."

"We have prioritised buying the vehicles as they have been locally manufactured using local technology. If the results prove to be good, we are open to buying more vehicles," she added.

A 'Prokritir Gari' has the capacity to run a maximum of 35 kms per hour with the help of its 60-volt battery. It can enter

narrow roads and collect waste in an environmentally friendly way. Its wheels come with a hydraulic brake system. Drivers will feel comfortable to drive the vehicle as various modern features have been incorporated into it, according to officials.

One vehicle can collect up to 800kg waste at a time. While carrying waste, its body will be covered automatically, preventing stench from spreading.

Dr Md Khalilur Rahman, associate professor of Brac University and team leader of Trajectory Technology, said city dwellers will need to use special calling bell to avail the vehicles' service.

A device installed in the calling bell will make it ring automatically whenever one of the vehicles are nearby.

"Apart from this, the vehicles' location can be traced using an Internet of Things (IoT)-based app. City dwellers can use the app to send notifications to the vehicle. Signals for handing over waste can be sent by using the app or with calling the bells. The app will be available in the Google Play Store soon," he added.

Elderly man murdered in Tejgaon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A seventy-year-old man was murdered by unidentified miscreants at his flat in the city's Tejgaon industrial area early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Tobarak Hossain, a businessman by profession.

As Tobarak was a follower of Chattogram-based Tarika-e-Maizbhandari, law enforcers are investigating whether militants are behind the murder, said Wahiduzzaman, additional deputy commissioner of Tejgaon Division of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Police are also focusing on whether he had personal and business enmity with others, he added.

Tobarak used to live in

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Lost in investigation

Two years and two failed probes later, Shammi's family awaits justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shamima Laila Arjumanna Khan Shammi was rushed to Samarita Hospital in the capital by her husband in the early hours of June 8, 2017, where doctors pronounced her "brought dead".

Over the last two years, investigation of the case has changed hands twice -- from Mirpur Police Station to the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) and finally now to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), as judges at different courts found the first two investigation reports unsatisfactory.

The Daily Star recently obtained copies of the case documents.

Shammi's brother Farhad Hossain Khan filed a murder case with Mirpur Model Police Station, with Nawsher Ali -- sub-inspector of the police station -- assigned as the investigation officer (IO).

On August 8, 2017, Shammi's five-year-old son gave a statement to a magistrate in connection with the case, where he said his mother was "tortured to death" by his father, Md Alamgir Hossain Titu.

However, the post-mortem report of Shammi, received by the police station on August 30 that year, said Shammi died by suicide.

On November 6, 2017, Supreme Court lawyer Md Khurshid Alam filed a writ petition with the High Court seeking necessary order, based on a report filed in Bangla daily Jangantor which said there were allegations against the IO of dilly-dallying in the case.

After hearing statements of investigating officer Nawsher Ali and post-mortem conductor Dr Sohel Mahmud, head of forensics department at Dhaka Medical College, the bench of Justice Enayetur Rahim and Justice Shahidul Karim on December 6, 2017 ordered that the case be handed over to PBI for further investigation, as it found "negligence" by the IO in carrying out investigation.

The HC bench also observed that further opinion was required to ascertain the cause of death, and ordered the director of Dhaka Medical College to form a three-member committee to review the post-mortem report and submit its review within 21 days of receiving the order.

The order was sent to them on January 4, 2018.

Curiously, the review committee was formed keeping Dr Sohel Mahmud -- the physician who prepared the original post-mortem report -- and lecturer at DMC's forensic medicine department Dr Prodig Biswas, a subordinate of Dr Sohel.

The committee, headed by Prof Dr AM Selim Reza, head of forensic medicine at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College, submitted the review on December 10, 2018 -- a staggering 309 days after receiving the order, in contrast to the HC deadline of 21 days.

The review report also said the cause of death was suicide, "considering the first autopsy report and other documents".

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Illegal market demolished, road still unusable



There is no way to walk on the road without stumbling on rubble, locals complain.

PHOTO: STAR

MAHBUUR RAHMAN KHAN

About seven years ago, a road adjacent to Balda Garden in Old Dhaka was leased -- shown as "an open and abandoned site" -- to build a market. Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) recently dismantled the establishment but left the road in a state that can still be best described "abandoned".

Visiting the spot yesterday, this correspondent found debris piled up all over the road. Concrete slabs are still on the road, and partition wall still stands in one or two places. The south entrance is blocked with tree branches and twigs while the north entrance is partially blocked with poultry cages.

There is no way to walk on the road without stumbling on rubble, said Hafizur Rahman, a shopkeeper in Wari.

"At night this place becomes a safe haven for drug users," he added.

Mahmud Chowdhury, a resident of Narinda, said the city corporation demolished the market before the Eid-ul-Azha in July.

He said, "These have been here since the city corporation demolished the market. It seems they did not want to free the road at all."

In a strange move, DSCC in 2012 leased out the public road near Balda Garden to local Awami League men, who set up 44 shops on the road and turned it into a kitchen market. Some of the shops were rented out and some were sold.

Local leaders kept some shops for themselves while the rest were sold for Tk 6-10 lakh each.

The road is adjacent to the western wall of Balda Garden, between Nawab Street and Hare Street in Wari.

In January this year, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed a case accusing incumbent DSCC councillor of Wari Sarwar Hasan Alo, former DSCC administrator Khalilur

Rahman, and 46 others for their alleged involvement in setting up a kitchen market on the road near Balda Garden in 2012.

Documents state that Tasabbibor Hossain, son of Ward-41 AL president Abul Hossain, and local AL activist Shahidul Hasan jointly sought the allocation of 1,980 sqft area of the lane for setting up a market in early 2012 -- showing the place as "open and abandoned".

Estate Department officials of DSCC were supposed to survey and see whether the site could be allocated for a market but they did not do so, as they themselves were part of the plot, according to the FIR of the case filed by ACC.

In the middle of this year, DSCC's Estate Department demolished the market.

Contacted, DSCC's current Chief Estate Officer Rasel Sabrin said, "If debris still remains on the site, those

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Environmentally friendly waste-collection vehicles 'prokritir Gari' (car of nature) stand ready at the Narayanganj City Corporation premises.

PHOTO: STAR

Quader wants BNP to join city polls

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday hoped that all the political parties, including BNP, will join the upcoming elections to two city corporations of Dhaka as the polls will be free and fair.

"We welcome BNP to join the election as it'll be free and fair. This is what Prime Minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina wants," Quader said.

Quader, also road transport and bridges minister, was addressing a reunion event, organised by Dhaka University Political Science Department Alumni Association at TSC auditorium.

The Awami League leader said the elections will be competitive and anyone can win the polls.

Quader further said, "The Election Commission will get all the necessary support from the government so that it can exercise its full authority."

The AL general secretary said having dissenting and diverse views in politics are quite natural but unfortunately intolerance is growing in Bangladeshi politics.

"These days, politicians talk like reckless drivers ... their words are poisonous," he said.

Quader stressed the need for reviving the culture of respect in politics and building political bridges to check division.

DHAKA TODAY

TALK Design your Career Path: Electrical and Electronics Engineering Venue: EMK Center Time: 11am	Conference Center Time: 10am-8pm
FOOD EVENT Winter Regular Pitha Adda Venue: Adda Prabartana, Mohammadpur Time: 4pm-8pm	OPEN MIC Venue: Jatra Biroti Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani Time: 7pm
MUSIC Pink Artist Pretty Never Grew will perform songs from their album Venue: Jatra Biroti, Banani Time: 6pm	SEMINAR Cyber-Security and Ethical Hacking Venue: Creative IT Institute, Dhanmondi Time: 4pm Register at: bit.ly/DT-CS
HOUSING FAIR Winter Fair 2019 Venue: Bangabandhu International	POETRY SESSION Poetry Night - Special with Kaiser Haq Venue: Counter Culture Club, Dhanmondi Time: 5pm