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Your Right to Know

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ILLEGAL MODHUMOTI MODEL TOWN Still active in disguise

No steps taken by developers or Rajuk to restore Savar wetland, flouting SC order

HELEMUL ALAM

The Modhumoti Model Town developers continue operations while the government authorities turn a blind eye -- both failing to comply with the highest court's verdict on retaining the flood flow zone in Savar where the housing project was built illegally.

The project, first declared illegal by the High Court in 2005, remains active in the area apparently under a new name, "Nandonik Housing", as seen during a recent visit by The Daily Star.

Not only this, plot owners are still attempting to change the status of the project area despite the Supreme Court declaring it illegal and rejecting earlier review petitions.

The housing and public works ministry recently sent a letter to Rajuk, asking it to take necessary steps to incorporate the project as an urban area or withdraw it from the sub flood flow zone in the Detailed Area Plan (DAP).

The noncompliance with the order to retain the flood flow zone and the recent letter of the ministry, following an application by the plot owners, are brazen violations of the apex court judgment, said experts.

The full bench of the Supreme Court on April 25, 2019 quashed five review petitions while upholding its earlier verdict that had directed the authorities concerned to restore the wetland on which Modhumoti Model Town illegally developed its housing project.

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TIMELINE

AUG 2004
Bela files petition with HC against Modhumoti Model Town project

JULY 2005
HC declares the project "illegal", "unauthorised";

AUG 2012
SC upholds HC verdict

JULY 2013
The Appellate Division releases full verdict; project developers given 6 months to restore wetland, dismantle all construction

MORE ON PAGE 2



Students, teachers, and friends of the girl who died after being raped, hold a candlelight vigil and demonstrate demanding justice on Dhanmondi-27 yesterday evening. The protesters demanded institutional changes to ensure that respect for women are taught in schools.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON



The Modhumoti Model Town Project, termed illegal by the High Court, has now taken up the name Nandonik Housing and continues to occupy flood flow zones in Savar. The photo of the new signboard was taken recently.

PHOTO: HELEMUL ALAM

The European Union is moving from a development partner of Bangladesh to trade partner as Bangladesh is graduating to a developing country by 2024. After 50 years of Bangladesh's independence, how does the EU look at its relationship with the country? Rensje Teerink, EU Ambassador to Bangladesh, shared her thoughts in a recent interview with The Daily Star.

Focus on issues that'll help you get GSP Plus

EU ambassador says in interview with Star

PORIMOL PALMA and REFAVET ULLAH MIRDHA



Rensje Teerink

TDS: How do you assess Bangladesh's progress?

Teerink: Bangladesh has been a very trusted partner of the EU since its birth in 1971. In the first decade, the relationship was characterised by development assistance. We worked with NGOs like Brac, Proshika and GSS that were filling in the gaps where the government had some challenges. Our main development funds were directed through these NGOs. I must say that our relations has now enormously moved to trade.

TDS: How has that relationship changed?

Teerink: EBA (Everything But Arms) has been the game changer. That has enabled Bangladesh to step in and focus on RMG exports to the EU. It is admirable how Bangladesh used the opportunity. It really lifted the RMG and textile to become the second largest producer in the world. Out of 47 countries under EBA, Bangladesh is the biggest beneficiary. Some 60 percent of the benefits were actually reaped by Bangladesh. It is really the one country that stands out. The vision and the strong determination that the government is showing as it moves towards graduation from Least Developing Country (LDC).

TDS: Businesses have been affected due

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RELATED STORY ON B1

STUDENT RAPE, MURDER Police looking for a missing security guard

CCTV footage, mobile, call lists under scrutiny

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police are looking for a security guard of the building where the 17-year-old girl was raped before her death on Thursday.

Abul Hasan, assistant commissioner (New Market Zone) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said, "We are looking for him. He helped the accused carry the victim out of the house. He may know something."

Abdul Motalib, another security guard of the building in the capital's Kalabagan, said the man police were looking for was Dulal, aged about 45.

"He was on duty that day. He used to live here. His belongings are here," Motalib said, adding that Dulal had not been answering his phone.

A medical officer and a ward-boy of Anwer Khan Medical College Hospital,

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Explore alternative sources of vaccine

Experts say country should find all possible ways to meet future need of Covid-19 vaccines, take part in trials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should explore more sources of Covid-19 vaccines, instead of relying only on the ones currently being considered, and take part in vaccine trials immediately to meet future needs, experts say.

They also said the country's overall vaccination efforts may turn futile if people did not accept the vaccines "positively".

The experts made the comment while speaking at a discussion at the Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) conference room in the capital yesterday. Bangladesh Health Reporters Forum (BHRF) organised the event as part of a series of dialogues on Covid-19.

Bangladesh has already made an advance payment of Tk 509 crore for three crore doses of Covid-19 vaccine from Serum Institute India (SII). The government has also announced that it will procure 68 million shots of vaccine under a global arrangement called COVAX.

"We do not know how long these vaccines will give us immunity. If the novel coronavirus regularly mutates -- like the influenza virus -- we may need regular vaccination. In this case, we should think of sustainable sources," Prof Sayedur Rahman, chairman of BSMMU's pharmacology department, said at the discussion yesterday.

About vaccine selection, he said, "Safety, efficacy and standard are the three basic parameters to select any vaccine. The dose is another issue. If we can select a single-dose vaccine, it would be better for our country."

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Bangabandhu's homecoming day today

BSS, Dhaka

The historic Homecoming Day of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will be observed today across the country in a befitting manner.

Bangabandhu, the undisputed leader of the nation and supreme commander of the country's Liberation War, returned to the sacred soil of independent Bangladesh via London and New

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Khokon questions Taposh's eligibility

Claims his successor transferred DSCC funds to his pvt bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former mayor of Dhaka South City Corporation Sayeed Khokon yesterday claimed incumbent Mayor Barrister Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh to be ineligible to continue the mayoral post.

Khokon said this while addressing a human chain in front of the High Court premises in the capital, demanding rehabilitation of those affected by a DSCC demolition drive last year.

Khokon alleged that Taposh transferred hundreds of crores of taka from DSCC's coffers to Modhumoti Bank, which is owned by the incumbent mayor.

Taposh received and was still receiving crores as profit from the money after it was invested to different individuals and organisations, Khokon alleged.

On the other hand, because of monetary shortage, poor

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

31st Death Anniversary

DEATH: 10TH JANUARY 1990

We deeply mourn the death of our beloved mother Late "Masuda Begum" wife of Late Mr. Abul Khair, founder of Abul Khair Group (Abul Co.). Today with due respect, we remember her works, ideals and memories and pray to Almighty for His divine blessings.

We request all our relatives and well-wishers to pray for her eternal peace.

BELOVED SONS & DAUGHTERS

WE MOURN



Veteran Industrialist and social worker, our honorable Director Engr. Reazat Ali Bachchu has expired on 25 December 2020 at the age of 74 (inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi rajiun). We all pray to Almighty Allah for granting him Jannat.

Directors and All Employees of



NOTICE

We have brought out a four-page colour supplement on THE DAILY STAR-DHL BANGLADESH BUSINESS AWARDS 2019 with our regular business pages today. Please look out for your copy.

SINGER HAPPY NEW OFFER. This New Year, replace your used electronics with brand new SINGER products! Amazing discounts on different products!