

Can't go door to door killing mosquitoes

Says LGRD minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) Minister Md Tajul Islam said punitive measures will be taken against those found responsible in Aedes mosquito breeding.

"It is difficult for the city corporation to go door to door to kill mosquitoes," he said while speaking as chief guest at the inaugural function of an awareness campaign organised by Dhaka North City Corporation at Mirpur yesterday.

"City dwellers are being made aware of the issue through campaigns. Entire communities cannot be harmed due to the negligence of a few," he said of those who facilitate mosquito breeding through accumulation of water in and around their homes, despite repeated warnings.

"This is a punishable offence," the minister added. "If these mosquito breeding grounds are not destroyed, legal action will be taken against the negligent by conducting mobile courts," he warned.

Tajul said the two city corporations have appointed 10 magistrates to run the mobile courts. DNCC Mayor Atiqul Islam also joined the programme.



LGRD Minister Tajul Islam himself spray-paints a big red cross, along with a sticker, inset, on the gate of a building in the capital's Mirpur area where aedes mosquitoes were found. Dhaka North Mayor Atiqul Islam accompanied him at the launch of an awareness campaign against mosquitoes yesterday.

Indigenous people worst sufferers of climate change

Experts tell webinar marking Int'l Day for Biological Diversity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indigenous people are the worst sufferers of the impact of climate change in the world including Bangladesh, said environmentalists and researchers at a webinar yesterday.

They also said Bangladesh's biodiversity is under immense threat, and the situation is similar worldwide. To solve this problem, there should be policy reformation, conservation of wildlife and greenery, regulatory use of renewable natural resources, and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) before implementing any project.

Marking International Day for Biological Diversity, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Bangladesh, and Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (Bela) organised the webinar titled "Policy Reforms for Transformative Changes for Protection of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services".

The theme of this year is "We're part of the solution".

IUCN Country Representative Raquibul Amin, during a presentation said, "Climate, biodiversity, ecosystem and everything changed a lot over the years. We have seen its negative effect mostly in areas lived by the indigenous and the poor community."

Referring to the IUCN red list of threatened species, he said 24 percent of animals and plants of Bangladesh are under threat of extinction, while globally it is 28 percent.

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Return to Dhaka still a hurdle race for many

People struggle to reach capital as long-haul and waterways transports remain suspended

STAR REPORT

Defying coronavirus scares and multiple hurdles on their way, a large number of Dhaka dwellers yesterday returned to the city after celebrating Eid at their village homes.

As operation of public transports remained suspended, people were seen travelling on trucks, pickups, minibuses, motorbikes and other small vehicles, risking their lives.

Many were seen walking for miles after failing to avail any transport.

As passenger launch operations remained suspended, people from southern districts had to cross the river Padma on ferries.

On Shimulia-Banglabazar ferry route, a huge crowd of Dhaka-bound people were seen. People boarded ferries in crowds, in complete absence of health safety rules.

Many passengers were seen travelling without wearing masks.

The ferry route's Shimulia point is



Massive crowds at Banglabazar Ferry Terminal yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

located at Munishiganj while Banglabazar is located at Madaripur.

A total of 17 ferries were in operation on the route yesterday, said Profullah Chowhan, manager of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) at Shimulia terminal.

Several hundred private cars and cargo carriers crossed the river yesterday through

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Babunagari's assistant Enamul held in Ctg

Hefajat leader Monir remanded in Dhaka over 2013 violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested top Hefajat leader Junayed Babunagari's personal assistant Enamul Hasan Farooqi in Chattogram on Friday night over mayhem in Hathazari on March 26.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday placed Monir Hossain Kashemi, finance affairs secretary of Hefajat-e-Islam's dissolved committee, on a four-day remand in a case filed with Paltan Police Station over the 2013 mayhem in Dhaka.

Lt Col Moshirur Rahman Juel, commanding officer of Rab-7, told The Daily Star, "Rab men from Hathazari camp held Enamul Hasan Farooqi (24) from Boro Digharpar area in Fatehbad union of Hathazari around 11:30pm."

"Farooqi is FIR-accused in a sabotage case filed over the mayhem on March 26 with Hathazari Police Station. Apart from that, he is also an accused in Shah Ahmad Shafi murder case filed by Shafi's brother-in-law," added Rab CO.

Farooqi, who was handed over to Hathazari Police Station, used to send press releases of Hefajat to the media, he said.

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Shaheb Bazar, a bustling commercial area is Rajshahi city's most traffic-congested neighbourhoods by far, according to residents.

PHOTO: STAR

Misplaced priorities?

Tk 850cr project undertaken by Rajshahi City Corporation to build five new flyovers, but most congested spot skipped 'due to fund issues'

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) has taken up a Tk 850-crore project for constructing flyovers at five more locations in the city, but has skipped the city's most traffic-congested area, Shaheb Bazar.

The area needs a longer flyover than the ones planned, and as a result will involve huge costs, said the corporation's supervising engineer Noor Islam. RCC is planning a separate project to build a flyover at that point, but it is not happening anytime soon, he informed.

"It is difficult to gather funds for a flyover at Shaheb Bazar," said Islam.

The city corporation has been building a flyover at the city's Mohonpur area since 2018. Rajshahi Development Authority is also building another flyover beside Rajshahi University of Engineering Technology.

Now, the corporation has taken the fresh "Urban Infrastructure Development Project" for constructing the five new flyovers -- at Horogram, Court Station railway crossing, Bhadra railway crossing, Bernali intersection and Martyred AHM Qamaruzzaman Square areas.

However, locals said other than the flyover at Qamaruzzaman Square, most flyovers would be barely used.

However, Noor Islam, who is also the project director, said the flyovers will be utilised in the near future, as the city's population has been soaring.

Prof Md Kumruzzaman, head of

Urban & Regional Planning department at Rajshahi University of Engineering & Technology (Ruet) said RCC's plans for the flyover were logical in the sense that these would be essential in the near future with increase of population and vehicles. However, he criticised the city authorities' approach.

"I felt sorry that the corporation didn't think to consult with the university's experts before taking up those plans. If consulted with, quality services could have been ensured."

He also said a prior assessment would have been required to figure out how many flyovers the city of about 90 square kilometers needs.

Ahmed Shafi Uddin, president of Rajshahi chapter of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik, said some of the locations chosen for constructing the flyovers have no more than five-minute congestions.

"Contrarily, reducing traffic of Shaheb Bazar is an emergency," he said, adding that he and many others avoid Shaheb Bazar even when necessary to avoid congestion in office hours.

Shafi, also a retired Rajshahi University officer, said the flyovers have become an obsolete technology and create environmental pollution in many cities.

"Developed world is installing mass rapid transit systems," he said.

On Thursday afternoon, Noor Islam signed agreements with three architectural institutions for preparing designs for the

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CJ constitutes nine more HC benches for virtual hearing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain yesterday constituted nine more High Court benches for virtually hearing and disposing of urgent cases, as the court will reopen today, after a two-week annual vacation.

With these nine benches, a total of 16 benches of the HC will perform judicial functions from today, using information technology and maintaining health and hygiene guidelines. They, however, cannot hold hearing on anticipatory bail petitions till further notice, Supreme Court sources said.

Of the nine benches constituted yesterday, six are division (two judges) benches, and three are single (one judge) benches, according to a notification issued by the chief justice.

The division benches are of Justice Krishna Debnath and Justice KM Zahid Sarwar Kajo; Justice Md Abu Zafar Siddique and Justice KM Hafizul Alam; Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim and Justice Mohi Uddin Shamim; Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif and Justice Ahmed Sohel;

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WOMEN IN POLITICS

Parties get another nine years to ensure 33pc representation

EC stipulates in draft law as all parties fail deadline

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Political parties of the country are likely to get another nine years to keep at least 33 percent positions of all committee at local and national levels reserved for women as all the major parties failed to ensure it before the deadline.

The Election Commission in 2008 gave a deadline of 12 years to the political parties to ensure women's representation. The move was taken to encourage and ensure more participation of women in politics.

The deadline ended last year, but the parties failed to implement the directive. Now, the EC has raised the time-frame till 2030.

In a draft law titled "Registration of Political Parties Act-2020", it proposed that all political parties should keep 33 percent positions for women by 2030 and they will now need to report to the EC about fulfilling the reservations annually.

Although the EC is still in the dark as to which parties have or haven't met the deadline, it is also going to send letters to all the 39 registered political parties, asking them about the progress in achieving the target of 33 percent women

representatives by 2020.

"This is our proposal, that the political parties can be given another 10 years to ensure 33 percent women representatives at parties," Election Commissioner Rafiqul Islam told The Daily Star.

He said they also discussed the proposal as there were discussions about increasing the deadline.

EC Deputy Secretary Abdul Halim Khan said they will send the draft of the law to the law ministry soon.

Reserving at least 33 percent of all committee positions, including that of the central committee, for women by 2020 is a pre-requisite for any political party's registration with the EC in line with the Representation of the People Order, 1972.

This target came about following an amendment to incorporate this provision into the RPO in 2008, and failure to meet this means the EC can cancel registration of a political party, according to EC officials.

The EC prepared the draft of "Registration of Political Parties Act-2020", repealing the chapter VIA of the Representation of the People Order-1972

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CCU at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital in disarray

Angiogram machine out of order for six months, air conditioners don't work either

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

The Cardiac Care Unit (CCU) of Barishal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH) is not in operational condition. Its only angiogram machine is not working, and all its air conditioners are out of order, which means the unit is barely functioning.

While the angiogram machine has been out of order for at least six months, the air conditioning has not been working for around two years, sources told this correspondent.

On top of this, the 12-bed unit has to regularly deal with two to four times its capacity. The situation has become so bad now that patients from the city are looking for alternative healthcare facilities, despite the hospital's locational convenience.

Speaking to this correspondent, the relative of an admitted patient said due to the environment at SBMCH, they are left with no choice but take their patient to the capital.

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The English name for it -- Bombay duck -- is quite confusing to the uninitiated. Also known as bombil and locally popular as loitta, the lizardfish is not nearly as popular in its natural form as it is dried, and a group of small traders make the most out of the low prices in the market by leaving them to dry under the sun, hanging them by fences at the capital's Tejgaon. Once dried, the fish is then packed and sold at nearby markets for a much better price. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN