



After the three-day-long holiday, the roads were again clogged with vehicles, as educational institutions and offices re-opened. Many areas of the city were gridlocked for hours yesterday. This photo was taken in Kakrail.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Homecoming day of Sheikh Hasina today

BSS, Dhaka

Today is the 42nd homecoming day of Awami League President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

On May 17 in 1981, she returned to the country after a long exile.

Boarding on an aircraft of the Indian Airlines, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina reached the then Kurmitola Airport here from the Indian capital of New Delhi via Kolkata at 4:30pm on the day.

Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was brutally killed along with most of his family members on August 15 in 1975 and his two daughters – Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana – luckily escaped as they were abroad.

In a national council session of the Awami League on February 14-16, 1981, Sheikh Hasina was elected party president.

"I have returned to the country not to become a leader of the Awami League, rather to participate in the struggle for freedom by staying beside the people," said the AL president in a heart touching reception awarded by nearly 1.5

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More restrictions on foreign trips

No trips for officials of autonomous, semi-govt orgs, state banks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has stopped foreign trips for employees of autonomous, state-owned and semi-government organisations as well as state-owned banks and financial institutions.

The directive came following the government's decision to stop overseas trips for government officials on May 12, in the wake of post-Covid economic recovery and the current global crisis.

The finance ministry in an order yesterday said the decision of imposing the restriction through the May 12 circular will also apply to employees of the aforementioned institutions.

The decision will be effective immediately, it added.

The May 12 circular stated that all exposure visits, study tours, workshops and seminars abroad will remain suspended until further notice.

Meanwhile, the education ministry yesterday cancelled foreign trips to Australia for 12 University Grants Commission and ministry officials.

The Secondary and Higher Education Division (SHED) in an order yesterday cancelled the trips.

According to UGC sources, 11 officials of the commission, including two UGC members, and one SHED official were scheduled to go to Australia on May 28. They were supposed to visit various universities there.

Bridges Division cancelled a Malaysia tour for five officials of the division and bridge authority, according to Monjur Hossain, secretary of the division.

They were scheduled to visit the country between May 26 and 29.

The government imposed the embargo on foreign tours when it saw that too many officials of different ministries and departments were keen on going abroad.

Economists and watchdogs say that many of

AT A GLANCE

Directive comes after May 12 decision to stop trips for govt officials

Decision will be in effect immediately

Economists, watchdogs say overseas tours fruitless, unnecessary, waste of public money

Many officials make trips on taxpayers' money every year to take part in training, meetings, seminars

Despite directive, some trips will still take place

these overseas tours are fruitless, unnecessary and waste of public money.

Government officials and, in some cases, cabinet members of different ministries and projects make foreign trips on taxpayers' money every year to take part in training, meetings, and seminars.

Even though the government has asked to abandon all routine tours, except those involving emergencies, at least 100 agriculture ministry officials will participate, in phases, in a six-month international horticulture exhibition in the Netherlands.

The exhibition, which kicked off on April 13, will continue until October 9 in the Dutch city of Almere.

A 44-member delegation, including the daughter and son-in-law of Begum Monnujan Sufian, state minister for labour and employment, and the spouse of BEPZA executive chairman is set to visit Switzerland for the 110th session of the International

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UGC approves Tk 10,444cr budget for 50 public univs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The University Grants Commission yesterday approved a budget of Tk 10,444 crore for 50 public universities of the country for 2022-23 fiscal year.

It also approved Tk 71.67 crore budget for itself for the same fiscal year, UGC said in a statement.

Of the amount for 50 public universities, the size of revenue budget is Tk 6,023 crore and the development budget is Tk 4,420 crore.

Last year, UGC approved a budget of Tk 10,032 crore for 49 public universities.

Dhaka University got the highest allocation and Sheikh Hasina Medical University got the lowest allocation for next fiscal year.

The UGC also approved Tk 150 crore for research support in the upcoming fiscal year. The figure increased by Tk 32 crore in comparison to the outgoing fiscal year.

UGC member Abu Taher said they increased the budget for research as they want to ensure quality education and set up of the culture of research. He said this year, Tk 10 crore was allocated to facilitate teachers getting higher degrees from abroad.

The commission approved the budget at its 162th meeting held with acting UGC chairman Prof Dil Afroza Begum in the chair.

'Set up your own septic tanks by June'

DSCC mayor says they won't allow connecting sewerage lines to storm drains

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday said they will not allow connecting sewerage lines – the main polluter of Dhaka city's canals and waterbodies – to the corporation's storm-water drains from July 1.

"We are requesting all residents to set up their own septic tanks by June. We will not allow connecting their sewerage lines to storm-water drains, which are supposed to carry only rainwater, from July 1," he said while speaking at a press conference held at Nagar Bhaban, to observe his two years as DSCC mayor.

Stressing the need for decentralisation to ease pressure on Dhaka, Taposh said the prime minister's plan to turn every village into a city needs to be swiftly implemented. Planned urbanisation and development work around Dhaka will have to be done as early as possible. Suggesting the government to take initiatives

The city corporation's mosquito-control activities are being hampered due to these under-construction buildings. We're conducting drives regularly, and in some cases, we fined developers. But visible initiative from them in this regard is absent.



to bring Dhaka's activities under a specific schedule, the mayor said to make Dhaka a modern and liveable city, all private offices, shops, malls, markets and other institutes will have to be shut down by 8:00pm every day.

Except emergency and medical services, any other institute or commercial establishment will have to take special permission from the city corporation to be open after 8:00pm. Restaurants will be allowed to remain open till 10:00pm, he said.

He mentioned that DSCC would be in the top among all government agencies in terms of organisations with the least amount of corruption. He, however, said it is difficult to make an organisation 100-percent corruption free, but they are aware of it and taking necessary actions.

About clearing footpaths, the mayor said they want to make Dhaka pedestrian-friendly and bring hawkers under discipline through proper management.

"We will bring some roads and areas under 'red spots', where hawkers will not be allowed to set up, while some roads will be brought under 'yellow spots', where hawkers will be able to sit for a specific period," said the mayor.

On dengue, the mayor said they have already conducted a drive recently and destroyed Aedes mosquito larvae at 200 structures. They will also conduct mobile courts from mid-June and have already applied for 10 executive magistrates.

About waterlogging, the mayor said they took an initiative to construct infrastructure at 125 points, identifying those as hotspot for waterlogging, and 90 percent of the works have already been completed.

Expressing his hope to drain rainwater within 30 minutes from roads during this upcoming rainy season, the mayor said they have also identified 11 new hotspots and have taken

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PRAYER
TIMING
MAY 17



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	4:10	12:45	5:00	6:36	8:00
Jamaat	4:45	1:15	5:15	6:40	8:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

NATIONAL POLLS Cancel candidature of abusers: BMP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) yesterday demanded that candidature of those who abuse women and their rights, should be cancelled in elections.

The rights organisation said this while handing over a memorandum to Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal. While talking to reporters, Mahila Parishad President Fauzia Moslem said they urged the commission to create a conducive election environment so that women can take part in it without hindrance.

The parishad also demanded that the Election Commission (EC) take special measures so that more women can participate in the election. They also sought for women-friendly polling centres and an election free from use of muscle power and black money.

It urged the EC to take proper steps so that anti-liberation individuals, people opposing women's development, those who incite communal violence, goons and drug dealers cannot become a candidate.

They also said women should be instructed on how to cast vote using EVM.



Speakers at the unveiling programme of the braille versions of the government's "2019 national plan of action for persons with disabilities" at an event at Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Ensure rights of persons with disabilities

Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday said inclusive step from the government is required to ensure rights of persons with disabilities in the country.

They said persons with disabilities are deprived of their due rights as they have limited access to different services, stressing effective district- and upazila-level committees working on the rights of persons with disabilities.

Besides, they stressed for ministry-wise budget allocation to implement the national action plan.

Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) organised the event at Dhaka Reporters Unity where braille versions of the government's "2019 national plan of action for persons with disabilities" and a number of government gazettes for them were unveiled.

Addressing the event as chief guest, Ashraf Ali Khan Khasru, state minister for social welfare, said the government is dedicatedly working to ensure rights of persons with disabilities.

He said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is sincere when

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