DHAKA

Our focus is on grassroots dev

Says Hasina after receiving Cirdap award

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina vesterday said her government is developing the country in a planned way from the grassroots.

The premier said this while receiving "Azizul Haque Polli Unnayan Padak-2021" (Azizul Haque Rural Development Award-2021) from Cirdap Director General Dr Cherdsak Virapat at an event at her official residence Gono Bhaban.

The Bangladesh-based Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (Cirdap) has honoured the prime minister with the prestigious award in recognition of her contribution to rural development.

Hasina said that the country would achieve desired development and prosperity once rural development is ensured.

She said the Awami League had undertaken necessary plan even when it was outside the state power and that is why after coming to power, it has been able to take the country ahead by working as per its

The premier thanked the Cirdap and its board of directors for honouring her with the award, which she dedicated to the people of Bangladesh.

"I think people of Bangladesh are the recipient of this award and I am dedicating this to them," she said.



A herd of reared buffaloes taking a relaxing dip in a waterbody in the capital's Purbachal area yesterday. After a hard day's work at nearby fields, they swam in the waters for hours, before their owner took them back to their shed. PHOTO: ANTSUR RAHMAN

Serajul Islam Choudhury awarded first Nazrul Puroskar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

has

From this year, Bangla Academy launched the "Nazrul

Puroskar" to honour individuals for their contributions towards research on National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam.

The first Nazrul Puroskar has been awarded to Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury.

State Minister of Culture KM Khalid handed over this award to Prof Choudhury at an event arranged by Bangla Academy on the occasion of the 123rd birth anniversary of the national poet yesterday.

At the event, Prof Leena Taposhi Khan gave a speech on "Kazi Narul Islam. Bangla Academy president Selina Hossain presided over the event.

'He cannot extract sand from Meghna' SC scraps 2018 **HC verdict on Chandpur AL**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

leader

The Supreme Court yesterday scrapped a 2018 High Court verdict that allowed Md Salim Khan, a local Awami League leader, to extract sand from the Meghna river in Chandpur.

The SC order means that no sand can be extracted from the river in the district without permission from proper authorities, Attorney General AM Amin Uddin told The Daily Star. A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique passed the order following a petition filed by the state, seeking cancellation of the HC directive.

Following a petition, the HC on April 5, 2018 allowed Salim Khan, now chairman of Chandpur's Lakshmipur union and also AL president of the union unit, to extract sand from the Meghna in Chandpur Sadar and Haimchar areas.

Deputy Attorney General Kazi Mynul Hasssan told this correspondent that Salim Khan ĥad taken the HC directive by misleading it, as he had no permission and valid documents from the government.

Senior lawyer Ajmalul Hossain appeared for Salim.





Shahbagh has worst air, Gulshan-2 noisiest

Finds study on Dhaka's pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The air quality in Dhaka's Shahbagh area is the worst, while Gulshan-2 has the worst level of noise pollution in the capital, finds a new study. Jatiya Sangsad area is the least polluted in

terms of both air quality and sound level. The scenario came to the fore in the study on Dhaka's air and noise pollution. Measurements were taken from 10 points of the capital between April 2021 and March 2022.

The 10 points include Ahsan Manzil, Abdullahpur, Motijheel, Shahbagh, Dhanmondi-32, Tejgaon, Agargaon, Mirpur-10 and Gulshan-2. Air quality and noise level were monitored for four hours every day.

Waterkeepers Bangladesh Consortium, Department of Geography and Environment of Jahangirnagar University (JU), and Center for Atmospheric Pollution Studies (CAPS) of Stamford University revealed the findings at a press conference at Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

The annual average particulate matter (PM) 2.5 in Dhaka is 5.1 times higher than the national standard level, finds the study, while the annual average PM 10 is two times higher.

In Shahbagh, the average PM 2.5 was 85 micrograms per cubic metre, 5.6 times higher than the standard level; even the least polluted spot measured 70.

Among the 10 points, an annual average of 95.44 decibels (dB) of noise was recorded in

> It is everyone's responsibility to save Dhaka from pollution. Noise and air pollution are claiming lives. Children are getting sick, medical expenses are on the rise, and nature is

PROF AHMAD KAMRUZZAMAN MAJUMDER CAPS Founding Director

losing its balance.

Gulshan-2, 1.7 times higher than the standard level of 55 dB in residential areas. The peak noise level, 132 dB, was recorded in the area.

Abdullahpur recorded 95.43 dB on average; the standard for a "mixed area" is 60 dB, the report shows, adding that in Jatiya Sangsad area, 31 dB on average was recorded.

CAPS Founding Director Prof Ahmad Kamruzzaman Majumder, in his keynote paper,

FINDINGS

- PM 2.5 in Dhaka 5.1 times higher than standard level; PM 10 two times higher
- Peak noise level, 132 dB, recorded in
- Jatiya Sangsad area least polluted

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase budget allocation for environment ministry
- Finalise draft of Clean Air Act 2019
- Appoint environment BCS cadres Make public aware about noise
- pollution policy
- Implement HC directives to prevent

Monitor noise pollution regularly

said the study found overall annual average PM 2.5 to be 77 micrograms per cubic metre, while the standard is 15.

air pollution

He said a number of development activities are ongoing from Abdullahpur to Shahbagh. As a result, PM 2.5 is high in those places.

"It is everyone's responsibility to save Dhaka from pollution. Noise and air pollution are claiming lives. Children are getting sick, medical expenses are on the rise, and nature is losing its balance," Kamruzzaman said.

In the press conference, a number of demands were made, including increasing the budget allocation for the environment ministry, finalising the draft of Clean Air Act 2019, appointing environment BCS cadres, making the public aware about the noise pollution policy, monitoring noise pollution regularly, and implementing High Court directives to prevent air pollution.

Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon General Secretary Sharif Jamil said air pollution can be checked if construction work is checked, as it is

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Ensure accurate data on house helps in survey Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday said accurate data of domestic workers following proper definition as per the Domestic Workers Protection and Welfare Policy, 2015 is required to determine their contributions to the country's GDP.

They called for strengthening awareness among all stakeholders, including domestic workers, employers, statisticians, and local government representatives, to ensure accurate data on domestic workers in the labour force

Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) organised the discussion at the capital's Jatiya Press Club marking May Day, said a BILS press release.

Addressing the event as chief guest, Workers Party of Bangladesh President and lawmaker Rashed Khan Menon said workers' due rights will not be ensured by creating so-called bond between employers and workers overlooking workers' interest.

He said domestic workers have to be more organised for bringing their issues to the fore.

Mentioning domestic workers are "not treated with dignity" compared to their contributions to the GDP, BILS Joint Secretary General Wazedul Islam Khan urged everyone to work unitedly to ensure their due rights.

BILS Deputy Director Yusuf Al Mamun said three domestic workers were tortured to death and at least nine were hurt in January-March this year.

EDU INSTITUTIONS Attempts on to create anarchy Says Dipu Moni

UNB, Dhaka

Education Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said attempts are being made to create anarchy at the educational institutions of the country ahead of the national election.

"Their plan of destabilising the country through creating anarchy at educational institutions will not be implemented. Conscious students will obstruct it," she said while speaking at a prize giving ceremony at Baburhat High School in Chandpur town.

"The evil forces are trying to raise their heads ahead of the national election and trying to take advantage of the chaotic situation created by them," she said.

DU student drowns in pond

A Dhaka University student drowned in the pond of Shaheed Sergeant Zahurul Haq Hall yesterday

Deceased Polash Ahmed hailed from Jamalpur and was a third-year student of the anthropology department. He drowned in the pond while bathing along

with fellow students after playing on the hall playground around 12:30pm. The students then carried out a search and rescued him.

He was declared dead at DMCH around 2:00pm, inspector Bachchu Mia, in-charge of DMCH Police outpost, said.

BNP denounces govt amnesty plan Says it will legalise money laundering

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday described the government's plan to offer an amnesty for money launderers as a devilish trick to legalise the funds the ruling party leaders siphoned off abroad from Bangladesh.

"They (AL leaders) are looting the assets of the country and siphoning off public money abroad,"

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Buses continue to park illegally, right in front of the main gate of **Jagannath University** in Sadarghat area, taking up a large section of the road. Despite repeated efforts by the university, the situation remains the same, as authorities concerned turn a blind eye to the issue. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

