

PADMA BRIDGE

Building it with own fund brightened our image: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government's move to self-finance Padma Bridge has brightened Bangladesh's image globally.

"Such a bold decision has also boosted self-confidence and mental strength of the nation," she said.

The premier was addressing the Army Selection Board 2022 held at Multipurpose Complex at Army Headquarters in Dhaka Cantonment.

PM's press secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed the media after the programme.

Hasina said the World Bank abruptly stopped financing the Padma Bridge construction without holding a board meeting and based on false accusations

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Not so long ago, Hazi Abdul Alim Playground in Old Dhaka could hardly be called a playground as it neither looked like one or served its purpose. However, through DSCC's initiative, the place has received a much-needed makeover, giving residents a place for respite and recreation. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

HAZI ABDUL ALIM PLAYGROUND

Once struggling to survive, now full of life

DIPAN NANDY

Five years ago, Lalbagh's Hazi Abdul Alim Playground was on the verge of extinction. It housed a garbage dumping station and those who abused drugs. And so, residents had no option for a recreational spot near their homes.

But things have changed for the better.

After the playground, situated just beside Dhakeshwari National Temple, got renovated, it is once again a place for locals to breathe fresh air.

The playground has been modernised under the "Jol-sobujer Dhaka" project of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), at a cost of Tk

8.10 crore.

On November 16, 2019, then DSCC mayor Sayeed Khokon inaugurated the renovated playground.

This 75-katha field has a place for adults to play football, net practice facilities for cricketers, 250-metre walkways, sitting arrangement for visitors, gymnasium, cafeteria and library.

Besides, CCTV surveillance and Wi-Fi facilities have added another dimension. DSCC has also set up toilets and water-treatment plants near the mosque. There are even special arrangements for Eid jamaats.

Authorities have ensured that when it rains heavily, all water drains away. A reservoir has been built below the

walkway; it can hold about 5,00,000 tonnes of water. The water will be drinkable after being filtrated.

At night, the whole field will be flooded with light.

There is a small three-storey building in the field's corner. It has a library on the first floor, and a gym, coffee house and flower garden on the top floor.

During a visit, it was seen that the field was surrounded by fences. Local youths were playing on the green grass. Many were spending time at the sitting area next to the walkway, and some were just hanging out with friends.

In the children's corner, adjacent to

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There will be no food crisis Says minister

UNB, Dhaka

There will be no food crisis in the country as Bangladesh's soil can yield gold, said Food Minister Sadhan Chandra Majumder yesterday.

"Farmers are harvesting Boro, Aush and Aman paddy and we'll do everything that is needed against the illegal hoarders. Rice will be imported to make consumers comfortable after reducing taxes, if needed," he said.

The minister said this while speaking at a virtual views-exchange meeting on "Boro procurement and market monitoring" at the secretariat.



Senior BNP leaders place a wreath at the grave of party founder and former president Ziaur Rahman in the capital's Chandrima Udyan yesterday, marking his 41st death anniversary.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Pro-AL panel sweeps Bar Council election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-Awami League lawyers have bagged 10 executive member posts, out of the total 14, in the Bangladesh Bar Council election.

BNP-backed lawyers' blue panel won the remaining four posts.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin, ex-officio chairman of the Bar Council, the licencing and regulatory body of the lawyers, announced the results at the council's office in Dhaka early yesterday, five days after the election was held throughout the country on May 25.

The winning pro-AL lawyers are: Syed Rezaur Rahman, Mohammad Sayeed Ahmed Raza, Mohammad Mokhlesur Rahman Badal, Md Rabiul Alam Budu, Abdul Baten,

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WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

Tobacco, a threat to environment: Progga

STAR REPORT

Anti-tobacco platform Knowledge for Progress (Progga) yesterday said tobacco is highly detrimental to Bangladesh's environment, economy, and society. And yet, the country yields 1.3 percent of the world's tobacco supply.

Arable land being used to produce tobacco poses a serious threat to the country's food security, it said in a press release, a day before World No Tobacco Day.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has set this year's theme as "Tobacco: Threat to Our Environment", to raise awareness among people and policymakers about the environmental impacts of tobacco cultivation.

For Bangladesh, this year's theme is "Tamak Mukto Poribesh, Susasther Bangladesh", says news agency BSS.

According to Tobacco Atlas, tobacco is responsible for about 31 percent of deforestation in the country, it mentioned.

Progga said 90 percent of all

tobacco production is concentrated in developing countries such as Bangladesh.

Agrochemicals used in tobacco fields often find their way into nearby waterbodies, thus negatively impacting fish diversity. Halda river, the only natural carp breeding ground in Bangladesh, is now facing a similar predicament, says the release.

Discarded cigarette butts have become a major source of environmental pollution in the country.

More than half of Bangladesh's tobacco consumers use smokeless tobacco products, sold in plastic boxes and pouches, regularly. This is not only detrimental to people's health but to the environment as well.

Approximately 4.5 trillion cigarette butts, the most littered item in the world, find their way into the environment each year, says the release.

Progga Executive Director ABM Zubair said tobacco is putting immense pressure on arable land, forests, fishing grounds and other limited natural

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Report on judiciary constructively: CJ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique yesterday suggested the media persons to publish and broadcast reports in a constructive manner to make the judiciary stronger.

"If the judiciary becomes stronger, democracy will be stronger," he said.

The CJ said this while meeting the newly elected executive committee of the Law Reporters Forum (LRF) at his Supreme Court office. The CJ also said he will take measures so that journalists get relevant information from the SC offices.

2 die as bike hits road divider

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two youths died after the motorcycle they were on hit a road divider in Dhaka's Hatirjheel area yesterday morning. The deceased were identified as Fahim (20) and Mamun (20), said police.

The accident happened around 10:00am when they were riding down a ramp in Madhubagh area of Hatirjheel. The rider lost control over the motorbike and hit the road divider. The motorbike skidded off the road on impact, and left Fahim dead on the spot, said Sub-inspector Sajib Koch of Hatirjheel Police Station.

The injured passed away at DMCH.

One Covid death reported after a week

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh registered one death from Covid-19 in 24 hours till yesterday morning after one week, said the health authorities.

Besides, the caseload mounted to 1,953,481 with 34 new cases recorded during the period, according to DGHS. The country last saw two Covid-linked deaths with 31 cases on May 23.

On Sunday, 40 new cases were seen with zero deaths. The daily test positivity rate slightly dropped to 0.63 percent from yesterday's 0.79 percent as 5,362 samples were tested.

PRAYER
TIMING
MAY 31

| | Fazr | Zohr | Asr | Maghrib | Esha |
|--------|------|-------|------|---------|------|
| Azan | 4-05 | 12-45 | 5-00 | 6-43 | 8-05 |
| Jamaat | 4-40 | 1-15 | 5-15 | 6-47 | 8-35 |

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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