

Dhaka air 2nd most polluted in the world

UNB, Dhaka

Air pollution still remains one of the top-most challenges for Bangladesh. Dhaka has been ranked as the second most polluted city in the world.

Dhaka's air quality index (AQI) was recorded at 190 at 9:00am yesterday.

India's capital Delhi and Kuwait's capital Kuwait City occupied the first and third spots, with AQI scores of 257 and 158. An AQI between 101 and 200 is considered "unhealthy".

An AQI between 201 and 300 is said to be "poor", while a reading of 301 to 400 is considered "hazardous". AQI, an index for reporting daily air quality, is used by government agencies to inform people how clean or polluted air of a certain city is, and what associated health effects might be a concern for them.



PHOTO: SHEIKH ENAMUL HAQ

Due to the ruling party's rallies all across the capital yesterday, commuters were stuck in gridlock at different points of the city. The traffic situation frustrated both commuters and transport workers, like this rickshaw-puller and his passenger. These two were left exhausted, stuck in the traffic for a long time amid the scorching heat. The photo was taken from Bangla Motor.

'It's now more relevant than ever'

Speakers call for extending UN women, peace and security resolution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An extension of the deadline to implement the National Action Plan on the United Nations' women, peace and security resolution is urgent due to the hindrance caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, speakers at a discussion said yesterday.

As the pandemic has discovered many new ways women can be vulnerable, the action plan is now more relevant than ever, they added.

The implementation of policies related to women has always been delayed. This particular plan is more important now, as derogatory comments and behaviour against women are on the rise.

ROKEYA KABIR
Executive Director of BNPS

They were speaking at a webinar organised by Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS), supported by UN Women, with The Daily Star as the media partner.

In November 2019, the government adopted the National Action Plan, led by the ministry of foreign affairs with 11 relevant ministries, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad and BNPS as stakeholders.

Presiding over the discussion, Rokeya Kabir, executive director of BNPS, said, "The implementation of policies related to women has always been delayed. This particular plan is more important now, as derogatory

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Process on to collect \$1.5b as budgetary support

Says PM; funds to be used for emergencies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government started a process to collect an additional \$1,000 million as budgetary support to tackle future emergencies and the economic crisis stemming from the Russia-Ukraine war.

Besides, another process was going on to collect \$500 million as budgetary support to deal with the economic crisis caused by the pandemic, she told parliament.

The leader of the House revealed this in a tabled answer to a question from ruling Awami League lawmaker Md Mozaffar Hossain from Jamalpur-5 during her question-answer session.

This budgetary support of \$1,000 million will be spent on stimulus packages for industries, factories, businesses, small and medium enterprise entrepreneurs as well as social safety net, the PM said. She, however, didn't mention from where the money will be collected.

The PM said the government was making relentless efforts for well-planned socio-economic development of the people, generating employment and implementing the Sustainable



BUDGETARY SUPPORT

\$1,000m to tackle future emergencies, economic crisis stemming from Russia-Ukraine war

\$500m to deal with economic crisis caused by pandemic

Development Goals (SDGs).

Replying to another question from AL MP Kazim Uddin Ahmed, the premier described various measures taken by her government to develop the country's aviation sector and the national flag carrier, Biman Bangladesh Airlines.

In response to a query by AL MP Shahiduzzaman Sarker, Hasina said 35,52,340 homeless people have so far been rehabilitated. She said all landless

and homeless families will be rehabilitated in phases through construction of homes.

"They are being rehabilitated even by procuring land in areas where proper khas land is not found," Hasina said her government is committed to abolish the words "no place to stay", forever.

Responding to a question from AL lawmaker AKM Rahmatullah, she said production of food grains was 3.36 crore tonnes in 2009. This has now gone up to 4.53 crore tonnes.

Currently, Bangladesh ranks third in the world in terms of rice and vegetable production, seventh in mango and potato production, fourth in tea production and first among 11 hilsa producing countries, the PM told the House.

Replying to another query by Momtaz Begum of the ruling party, Hasina said 43 districts are now under the coverage of the railway network. Once the ongoing railway projects are implemented, 19 more districts will come under its coverage.

"The remaining four will also come under the railway network after completion of the 30-year master plan," she added.

DBC news producer found dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the body of a producer of private TV channel DBC News from Hatirjheel lake in Dhaka yesterday morning. The deceased was identified as Abdul Bari (27), hailing from Sirajganj.

On information from some homeless children, police recovered the body around 7:00am from Hatirjheel lake near Police Plaza.

The body bore stab marks in the chest and throat, said Abul Hasan, officer-in-charge of Gulshan Police Station.

"Police are investigating the matter, analysing CCTV footage of nearby areas," the OC said.


He said they recovered a blood stained knife, the victim's wallet and mobile from the spot.

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PRAYER TIMING
JUNE 9

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-05	12-45	5-00	6-45	8-15
JAMAAT 4-40	1-15	5-15	6-50	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



'People need to know they exist'

Speakers tell launch event of 'Indigenous in the Edge', urge for documentation to preserve indigenous culture



Speakers at the book launching event yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There is an urgent need to document the lives and cultural practices of some of the smallest indigenous communities on the verge of disappearing.

Speakers said this at a book launch event, organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) at the capital's The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

The book, "Indigenous in the Edge", brought out by MJF,

documents the lives and cultural practices of 17 indigenous communities.

The communities are Malo, Koch, Hajong, Hodi, Kora, Santal, Munda, Mahato, Mahali, Banai, Barman, Dalu, Garo, Khasi, Oraon, Patro, and Ganju.

Even among the indigenous communities, the attention received by the groups living in the plain lands is disproportionately less. Many small communities are getting

homogenised with larger indigenous groups, and thus their culture is getting erased, said speakers.

According to official estimates, there are around 50 indigenous groups in Bangladesh.

"Many of the general population do not even know the names of some of these indigenous groups. People need to know that groups like Ganju and Banai exist," said Sanjeeb

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Impose 'fat tax' on junk food

Experts tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should impose a "fat tax" on high-calorie food and beverage, as one in every three people in the country has been suffering from fatty liver disease due to consumption of such unhealthy foods, said speakers at a seminar yesterday.

Urging the government to take immediate steps, they warned that about 10 million of those suffering from fatty liver disease are at risk of developing cirrhosis or liver cancer.

Fatty liver disease is a common condition caused by having too much fat in the liver. It is associated with an increased risk of serious health problems, such as diabetes, high blood pressure and kidney disease, according to experts.

Besides, nutritional labels on menus of fast-

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Put an end to lead pollution

Government urged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Policymakers, development partners and other stakeholders yesterday urged authorities to join hands to put an end to lead pollution, to protect every child's potential to flourish.

They made the call at a seminar titled "Together We Can End Lead Pollution, Protect Every Child's Potential" organised by Pure Earth Bangladesh -- with support from the Department of Environment (DoE), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) and Unicef -- at the auditorium of DoE in the capital.

The seminar came up with some grim data on how lead is wreaking havoc on people's health.

Thirty-six million Bangladeshi children are lead poisoned, and millions are at risk. Lead annually causes 38,000 deaths in Bangladesh. The country loses \$15.9 billion in GDP due to productivity loss, which is a result of reduced IQ

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OLD BURIGANGA CHANNEL

Dredging work starts this month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday said they will start the re-excavation work of the Old Buriganga channel by this month.

The DSCC mayor said this while talking to journalists during a visit to the sluice gate in Companihat.

"The process to complete the tender of the excavation project is in its final stage and we are hoping that we will be able to inaugurate the work by this month," he said.

"We will recover the channel properly by freeing it from all kinds of encroachments after the demarcation of its boundary," he said.

Responding to a query, the DSCC mayor said they have recovered around 6 acres of land from encroachers.

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