

AL govt ensures security to BNP programmes

Says Hasan Mahmud

BSS, Rajshahi

Information Minister and Awami League joint general secretary Hasan Mahmud yesterday said BNP had carried out grenade attacks on Awami League rallies but the AL government is now ensuring security to BNP programmes.

"This is the difference between them and us. We are strong with people's power. But they believe in conspiracy and power of arms," he said.

Hasan was addressing a views exchange meeting with local AL leaders ahead of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to Rajshahi on January 29.

Rajshahi city and district units of Awami League arranged the meeting at Rajshahi Medical College auditorium, attended by leaders and activists of the party from all eight districts under Rajshahi division.

Hasan Mahmud is tasked with overseeing organisational activities in Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions as joint general secretary of AL.

Hasan said BNP is holding meetings in different parts of the country and the government is extending cooperation to hold the rally.

"When we were in opposition and they were in power, 24 people were killed and over 400 people, including Sheikh Hasina, got injured in the grenade attack on August 21, 2004," he said.

A dozen of people were killed in the attack on Sheikh Helal's public rally and Kibria and Ahsanullah Master were killed in bomb attacks, he said, adding that

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A group of women, under the banner of Samajtantrik Mahila Forum, forms a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday, demanding equal pay and safe working environment for women. The organisation held the event marking its 39th founding anniversary. PHOTO: STAR

PATUAKHALI-KUAKATA HIGHWAY

Risky road divider removed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The Roads and Highways Department removed a risky road divider on Thursday, which was causing accidents in the Patuakhali-Kuakata highway, much to the relief of motorists and commuters.

"The divider was removed following instructions of the higher authorities," confirmed Patuakhali RHD's Executive Engineer AM Atiq Ullah.

Earlier on Thursday, The Daily Star published a report titled "Road divider or death trap?", which shed light on how the road median was



turning into a menace due to its small size, poor positioning, lack of proper reflective paint and effective warning signs, which prompted

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With stores being closed on Fridays, this toy-seller sets up shop in front of shutter-down stores in Barishal city's Chowkbazar area, hoping that the colourful set up will attract the little ones. Every day, he sells toys worth Tk 1,500. PHOTO: TITU DAS

Good yield, fair price bring cheer to turmeric growers



Mohammad Miraz and his family members, residents of Ramdia village in Rajbari's Kalukhali upazila, harvest turmeric from the field. PHOTO: STAR

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Bumper production of turmeric and good market price have brought smiles on faces of Rajbari farmers this season.

According Rajbari Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), a total of 1,175 hectares of land have been brought under turmeric cultivation this season, compared to 1,220 hectares last season.

Agriculture officials said growers in the region got good production of turmeric due to favourable weather conditions.

During a recent visit to different villages of Rajbari Sadar, Baliakandi and Kalukhali upazilas, this correspondent saw growers were passing busy time in harvesting turmeric from their lands.

A number of turmeric growers said they are satisfied with good yield and fair price of their produce.

Turmeric is being sold at Tk 1,000 to Tk 1,200 per maund in local markets, which was Tk 700 to Tk 900 last year.

Farmer Firoz Sheikh of Paikkandi village in Baliakandi upazila said, "I have cultivated turmeric on 3.3 acres land, spending Tk 1.5 lakh this year."

He had already harvested 200 maunds of the crop and hopes to get another 350 maunds more, he said.

Another grower Zahangir Sheikh of Narayanpur said, he cultivated turmeric on 90 decimals land this year, and got 150

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Petition seeks permission to ply bikes on Padma Bridge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition has been filed with the High Court seeking its directives on the government to allow people to operate motorcycles on the Padma Bridge.

KM Abu Hanif Hridoy, president of Bangladesh Republican Party, a political organisation, submitted the petition as a public interest litigation to the HC last month, also challenging the legality of the government decision that on June 26 last year banned motorcycles on the Padma Bridge from June 27.

Citing the petition, Hridoy's lawyer larul Islam said the government decision prohibiting operation of motorcycles on the Padma Bridge has violated article 36 of the constitution that ensured people's right to freedom of movement.

The article reads, "Subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the public interest, every citizen shall have the right to move freely throughout Bangladesh, to reside and settle in any place therein and to leave and re-enter Bangladesh."

The HC bench of Justice M Khasruzzaman and Justice Md Iqbal Kabir Lytton may hold hearing of the petition tomorrow, as the case has been included in its hearing list on that day.

The bridge division under the ministry of road transport and bridges on June 26 last year banned the operation of motorcycles on the Padma Bridge from 6:00am on June 27 last year until further notice.

Two people were killed in an accident while riding on a motorcycle on the Padma Bridge on June 26 last year, the very day it opened for public.

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