



Coastguards to be stronger Says PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government has adopted a plan to increase the number of ships, equipment and workforce for coastguards as per the Vision 2030 and Vision 2041 modernisation plans for ensuring blue economy and security at sea.

Procurement of nine replacement vessels and two helicopters for deep sea patrols has been approved, she said.

The prime minister was speaking at the 28th founding anniversary of the Bangladesh Coast Guard and Medal Giving Ceremony, held at the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

She said advanced-technology ships, maritime surveillance systems, hover-crafts and high-speed boats are going to be added to this force very soon.

Hasina mentioned that an initiative has also been taken to establish a digital connection with Bangabandhu Satellite-1 to bring about a revolutionary change in the communication system of the Bangladesh Coast Guard in the deep sea.

The PM mentioned that training capacity of the coastguard's workforce was also enhanced by setting up its own training base

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**PRAYER
TIMING**
FEBRUARY 14

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:25	12:45	4:30	5:57	7:15
JAMAAT 6:00	1:15	4:45	6:01	7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

‘No eviction without rehabilitation’

Demands Telegu community in Dhalpur

HELEMUL ALAM

“We have many problems. We live with waterlogging and a lack of pure drinking water. But we never complain. This place to live is all we have. Where will we go if we are evicted?” asked Meghla, a 30-year-old cleaner from the Telegu community who lives in Outfall Colony-14 of Jatrabari's Dhalpur.

Meghla's sentiments are currently being echoed by 1,200 residents of the Telegu community living in the colony, who are currently in constant fear of getting ousted, after Dhaka South City Corporation's (DSCC) alleged directive to evict the colony.

On Sunday, DSCC demolished around 1,000 structures -- which it identified as illegal -- to recover 15 acres of land in Dhalpur. The colony, with its two churches, one

temple and a school, is still intact.

However, the residents don't know for how long it is going to be like that.

The school, offering education in both Bangla and Telegu from pre-school level to eighth grade, has been in operation since 1991. Currently, it has 200 students, 110 of whom are from the Telegu community, said a teacher, requesting anonymity.

There are 130 Telegu families currently living in the colony, who have been living there since 1991, after getting allocated space from the then government.

Maria Das, priest of a community church, said the then British government brought their ancestors from India in the 19th century to this land, assuring them of a good livelihood. “Our community has been ousted thrice

from our homes before we came to Dhalpur in 1991, where 200 houses, churches and a temple were constructed by the then government.”

“We demand a permanent allocation of space for our community so that we don't have to face these situations again and again. DSCC has to build us our community spaces before evicting us,” she added.

Khushi Kabir, rights activist and coordinator of Nijera Kori, visited the colony along with members of other rights organisations and said the eviction of the Telegu community without rehabilitating them is against the Constitution and law.

Kajal Debnath, presidium member of Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad,

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Cervical cancer vaccination from September

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will launch a vaccination campaign against cervical cancer for adolescent girls aged between 10 and 15 years in September.

People will be able to avail the vaccine for free. Health Minister Zahid Maleque made the announcement after Gavi, a public-private global health partnership, recently assured the vaccine supply for the campaign, free of cost, from September, according to the officials.

Cervical cancer is a type of cancer that occurs in the cells of the cervix -- the lower part of the uterus that connects to the vagina.

“Of all cancer, cervical cancer is the single largest contributor for the death of women in the country. Through this inoculation campaign, incidents of cervical cancer and related death is expected to decline to a great extent,” said Zahid while briefing reporters at his office at the secretariat yesterday.

This will be a school-based campaign, and later, it will be integrated into the Expanded Programme on Immunization of the government, according to Dr SM Abdullah Murad, program manager (EPI) of Directorate General of Health Services.

The girls will receive a single-dose vaccine, he said without stating any targets.

Asked about Nipah virus, Zahid said the situation is now under control.



Politician-businessman Reza Ali passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Veteran politician and businessman Reza Ali passed away at a hospital in Singapore yesterday. He was 83.

He breathed his last at 11:45am (local time) at Mount Elizabeth Hospitals, his son Miran Ali told The Daily Star.

His family said he had been unwell for some time.

Reza Ali left behind his wife, Prof (retd) Nayeema Ali, and children Miran, Sarah, and Mishal as well

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Ali Haider now Baira secy gen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ali Haider Chowdhury was elected as secretary general of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) yesterday, after incumbent one, Shameem Ahmed Chowdhury Noman, submitted a resignation letter on Saturday.

A four-time secretary general of Baira, Haider has been chosen again for the post during a meeting of Baira executive committee, held at its office in the capital, chaired by its president Abul Basher.

Basher said Haider were chosen for the post “unanimously” at the meeting.

Besides, Belal Hossain Mazumder, an executive

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“We demand a permanent allocation of space for our community so that we don't have to face these situations again and again. DSCC has to build us our community spaces before evicting us.”

Maria Das, Local priest

“The mayor sympathises with the community, which is why the colony has not yet been demolished. Our engineering section has been working to rehabilitate them.”

Md Moniruzzaman, DSCC Estate Officer



In the Loving Memory of Al Hajj Lt. Col. Hesamuddin Ahmed, psc (Retd).

Sadly missed along life's way, quietly remembered every day. No longer in our life to share, but in our hearts, you're always there.

11th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Al Hajj Lt. Col. Hesamuddin Ahmed, psc (Retd), served as a Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh in various ministries. He was the Administrator of the Dhaka Municipality, Chairman of RAJUK and other important corporations.

Being the Founder President of the National Shooting Federation Bangladesh, the Founder Member and Founding Vice Chairman RAOWA, his contributions will always be remembered.

He was associated with UCEP Bangladesh, SAHIC and various sports and social welfare organizations. In recognition of his remarkable contributions in the field of Sports development and social welfare he was awarded the National Sports Award (2003), Atish Dipannkar Gold Medal, Poet Sarojini Naidu Gold Medal, C R Das Gold Medal etc.

—Dearly Missed & Always Cherished by
Wife, Son, Daughter, Daughter in Law
Son in Law & Granddaughters

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National Pension Authority formed

Will bring citizens aged 18-50, including expatriates, under pension scheme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has formed the National Pension Authority (NPA) to bring the country's growing elderly population under the universal pension scheme.

The Ministry of Finance issued a gazette notification in this regard on Sunday.

NPA has been formed in light of the Universal Pension Management Act-2023.

The authority, which will be a constitutional body, will comprise an executive chairman and four members.

The finance ministry is preparing rules. “Once the rules are formulated, the government will appoint executive chairman and members,” said a

ministry official.

Officials say that appointment of the chairman and members will be completed before the upcoming budget.

The expenditure of the authority will be borne by the government.

The authority will ensure introduction, management and development of universal pension scheme, protect the interest of beneficiaries and their money, resolve complaints, carry out research and publicity, take measure to increase skills, fix fees and charge, and maintain accounts.

There will be a 16-member pension-management board, chaired by the finance minister. The board will formulate and approve rules,

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‘Justice for those who suffered in BNP-Jamaat era’ Demand speakers at rally

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of people -- including freedom fighters, artists, lawyers, teachers and students -- yesterday rallied at the capital's Shahbagh, demanding justice for the victims whose human rights were violated after 1975 during the BNP-Jamaat government period.

The rally -- staged by Bangabandhu Sanskritik Jote -- was held in front of the capital's national museum.

About 50 people -- who took part in the rally -- claimed that they were injured by pro-BNP-Jamaat activists in several incidents.

Some of them participated under the banner of “Mayer Kanna”, a platform for families of the victims of the 1977 court-martial during the regime of late president Ziaur Rahman.

The rally was conducted by Tarana Halim, president

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