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## ILLEGAL BRICK KILNS IN N'GANJ

### High Court blasts government for not demolishing them

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday blasted the government authorities for not demolishing all the illegal brick kilns in Narayanganj despite its repeated orders.

"It has been found from relevant documents that one of the owners of illegal brick kilns has been jailed for a month while other such offenders have only been fined. There might have been some under-the-table dealings among officials and owners of such kilns," the HC bench of Justice KM Kamrul Kader and Justice Mohammad Showkat Ali Chowdhury said during the hearing of a petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh.

Petitioner's lawyer Manzill Murshid told the HC bench that though the HC issued contempt of court rules against the high officials of the government, appropriate action was not taken against them.

The HC bench also summoned the deputy commissioner of Narayanganj and two other high officials on May 31 to explain why illegal brick kilns were not shut down despite its repeated directives.

The other two officials are the director (enforcement) of the DoE and the deputy director of DoE (Narayanganj).

DoE's lawyer Amatul Karim Swapna told The Daily Star that the DoE has demolished one illegal brick kiln and shut down the operations of 10 others in Narayanganj in compliance with the HC orders.

"The government officials cannot comply with the HC orders as the owners of brick kilns moved appeals before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court against the HC orders," she added.



Senior Awami League leaders present a bouquet to party President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Gono Bhaban yesterday, marking the premier's 43rd Homecoming Day.

PHOTO: PID

## Community clinic gets global recognition

UN adopts it as a resolution

UNB, Dhaka

The United Nations has unanimously adopted the first-ever resolution on community-based health care.

The resolution, titled "Community-based primary health care: a participatory and inclusive approach to universal health coverage", acknowledged the important role community clinics play in promoting primary health care, women's empowerment, community engagement and mobilisation towards achieving universal access to health.

The resolution, in recognition of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's contribution in establishing model community clinics in Bangladesh, highlighted "The Sheikh Hasina Initiative" as an exemplary innovative model of public-private partnership.

By introducing the "Community Clinic Model of Bangladesh", the resolution asks member states to explore measures to scale up and reference best practices to benefit from successful national experience.

It reflects Bangladesh's commitment to improving its citizens' health and well-being and to contributing to global health equity.

Permanent Representative of  
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## Don't play with fire

### Quader warns BNP

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary and Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday urged BNP not to play with fire.

He said this while speaking at a discussion organised by AL at Bangabandhu International Conference Center.

The discussion was organised marking the 43rd homecoming day of AL President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Quader said, "Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina did not go abroad to complain. She went to make the country's economy more prosperous. After her tour, she does not return empty-handed."

AL Presidium Member Mosharrif Hossain said, "We got back democracy, we got back the right to vote as Sheikh Hasina came back to the country."

## DHOLAIKHAL RETENTION POND

### DSCC to undertake beautification works

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) has taken an initiative to beautify the retention pond at Dholaikhal.

"The environment of Dholaikhal water retention pond will be more beautiful than Hatirjheel when the activities undertaken by the city corporation are completed," said DSCC Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh while laying the foundation stone of the project at the site yesterday.

The project will be implemented on a 200297.4 square feet

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## Provide fishers with salaries, insurance

Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should support hilsa fishers by providing salaries and insurance coverage to enhance their livelihood, said speakers yesterday.

Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon, Sundarbans and Coast Protection Movement, and Waterkeepers Bangladesh made the demand in a dialogue held at Jatiya Press Club.

Researcher Syed Ali Azhar stressed the importance of ensuring adequate security against robbers.

Bapa General Secretary Sharif Jamil highlighted the decline in fish eggs per litre in Pasur river, urging for a closer examination of the gap between hilsa production and its accessibility for the common people.

Gulshan Ara Latifa, former chair of Dhaka University's Zoology Department, called for research on development projects to safeguard hilsa sanctuaries.

Mir Mohammad Al, assistant professor and chairman of the Department of Aquaculture at Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, emphasised the need for regional collaboration in determining the duration of the ban on hilsa catching and creation of funds to support fishers.

Bapa President Sultana Kamal questioned the adequacy of a 40-kilo grant of rice for a fisherman's family. She also criticised the irregularities and shortcomings in the allowance card distribution.

## Action against those selling drugs at higher price

DGDA decides in meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcement agencies will take action if anyone sells drugs and other medical products at a higher price than the one fixed by the drug administration.

The Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) decided this at a meeting yesterday after it was instructed by the prime minister's office recently to take measures to reduce the "excessive price hike" of drugs and medical equipment.

Representatives of pharmaceutical companies, medical product importers, consumers and law enforcement agencies attended the meeting with Maj Gen Mohammad Yousuf, DGDA director general, in the chair.

The meeting concluded that the recent price hike is not "excessive" since it was done to adjust the depreciation of the taka against the US dollar, Yousuf told reporters after the meeting.

On June 30 last year, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare hiked the prices of 53 out of 117 essential medicines by 13 to 75 percent.

Prices of around 1,500 generic medicines and all other medical equipment – which are indicated by DGDA based on the demand of the companies – were also hiked at different times accordingly.

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"No one in the meeting could place any proof that the price has been hiked excessively. But we will find a way if there is an option to reduce the price," said Yousuf.

DGDA will also write to the National Board of Revenue for tax and other duty exemptions on medical imports and to the

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## Make SRHR services more accessible

### Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday emphasised the need for making Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) easily accessible and judgement-free while also protecting adolescents' privacy and informing them of their legal rights on SRHR issues.

The roundtable, titled "Adolescent Sexual Health and Rights (SRHR), Service Access in Bangladesh", was jointly organised by Dnet and Unicef at Dnet's office in the capital.

Dr Jannatul Ferdous, health specialist (maternal and adolescent health) at Unicef Bangladesh, said, "For adolescents to break social norms and protect their health rights, schools must teach their students about all facets of sexual and reproductive health care."

Dr Fariha Haseen, head of the Division of Reproductive and Child Health at BSMMU, said, "The contact information of the closest adolescent health facilities must be provided to students by all educational institutions."

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## NIKO GRAFT CASE

### Khaleda files petition to scrap indictment order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday filed a revision petition with the High Court challenging a lower court order that framed charges against her and seven others in the Niko corruption case.

She submitted the petition through her lawyer Kayser Kamal. ACC filed the case on December 9, 2007, accusing Khaleda and several others of abusing power to award a gas exploration and extraction deal to Canadian company Niko.



## 38 more hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 38 dengue patients were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

With the new ones, the total number of dengue cases this year rose to 1,330. Some 111 dengue patients are still undergoing treatment while 1,207 have been released from hospitals. Twelve people have died from dengue so far this year.



Carrying large bags full of plastic waste, a boat wades through hyacinth-filled water of the Buriganga to take the plastic to a factory in Kamrangirchar for recycling. The growing problem of water hyacinths in the river poses a significant challenge for those who depend on it for transportation and trade. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## 323 extremists to surrender to Rab on May 21

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With over 200 arms and weapons, at least 323 members of over 14 extremist groups in the country's northwestern and southwestern regions will surrender on May 21.

They will surrender under the supervision of Rab-12 at the Sirajganj Stadium, in the presence of Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal.

Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director of the legal and media wing of Rab Headquarters, confirmed the development. "This initiative has been taken by Rab after extremist group members from the regions including Tangail, Sirajganj, Rajbari, Pabna, Bogura, Kushia, and Meherpur districts expressed willingness to return to normal life," he said.

## We Mourn



"The Staff of the Embassy of Italy in Dhaka and many of his friends inside the Italian community mourn the sad loss of Dr. Ehsanur Rabbi, an eminent orthopedic surgeon, an extraordinary person and a dear friend to all of us. Gone from our sight but never from our heart. May his soul rest in peace. Our deepest sympathy goes out to his wife and all members of his family."

Embassy of Italy  
Dhaka
**PRAYER TIMING**  
MAY 18

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-10	12-45	5-00	6-36	8-00
JAMAAT 4-45	1-15	5-15	6-40	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION