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# A milestone in sewage treatment

## PM to inaugurate South Asia's largest single STP today

**STAR REPORT**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is set to inaugurate the recently completed modern and environment-friendly Dasherbandi Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) in Dhaka today, the largest of its kind in South Asia.

The Dasherbandi Sewage Treatment Plant is the first modern STP and also the first modern sludge drying-incinerator in Bangladesh as well as the largest single sewage treatment plant in South Asia.

Having the capacity to treat 500 million litres of sewage, the modern plant will play an enormous role in preventing environment pollution and improving the water quality of Balu and Shitalakshya rivers, Rampura canal and other water bodies.

The plant was constructed on the east of Aftabnagar area, reports UNB.

In the plant, some 45 tonnes of fly ash will be generated from sewage sludge a day, which can be used as raw materials in cement factories.

The Dasherbandi STP will treat sewage coming from a number of the city's areas, including Tejgaon, Niketan, Badda, Banani, Gulshan (part), Banani, Ramna, Eskaton, Nayatola, Moghbazar, Wireless, Mouchak, Outer Circular Road, Mohanagar Housing, Hatirjheel, Kalabagan and Dhanmondi (part).

The plant will be able to treat 20-25 percent of the 2,000 million litre sewage generated in Dhaka.

The plant was constructed as part of a master plan taken up by Wasa to construct five STPs to treat 100

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



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PHOTO: ANISIUR RAHMAN

# Strengthening armed forces for protection, not war: PM



**UNB, Dhaka**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government has taken adequate steps for the overall development of the armed forces to safeguard the country's independence and sovereignty, but it has no intention to lock into war with anyone.

The prime minister said this while commissioning naval base BNS Sher-e-Bangla and eight ships, including four Landing Craft Utility, at Kolapara in Patuakhali.

She joined the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

# Ex-Gulshan OC, wife jailed in graft case

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced Firoz Kabir, a former officer-in-charge (OC) of Gulshan Police Station, to six years' imprisonment in a case filed over amassing Tk 87 lakh illegally.

His wife Sabrina Ahmed Eva was also jailed for four years for assisting her husband to acquire the illegal wealth.

Judge Sheikh Hafizur Rahman of the Special Judge's Court-9 of Dhaka handed down the sentence in presence of the couple, now on bail, at the courtroom.

The judge also fined Firoz Kabir Tk 1,74,34,638 and directed the convict to pay it to the state treasury within 60 days, in default of which the government can confiscate the fined money.

Soon after the verdict, the judge cancelled their bail and sent them to Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj with a conviction warrant.

Besides, the judge directed the authorities concerned to confiscate Tk 87,17,194 from Firoz Kabir, which was earned illegally, in favour of the state.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 12 prosecution witnesses, including the case's complainant.

According to the case statement, Firoz Kabir earned Tk 87,17,194 through corruption and bribery from January 2012 to May 2016 and deposited it in his current accounts of AB, Dutch-Bangla, NRB, Islami and Brac Bank Ltd.

He also deposited Tk 30.97 lakh at an account of his wife at Gulshan's Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited branch.

During an investigation, the ACC interrogated the couple about their wealth but they did not give any satisfactory answer.

# SAIDPUR RAILWAY WORKSHOP

# A much-needed initiative in the works

## BR to revamp 153-year-old establishment

**TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY**

While the Bangladesh Railway has taken and implemented dozens of projects to expand its rail lines and acquire new locomotives and carriages, its workshops remained neglected for years.

A decade has passed since the last workshop (where locomotives, carriages and wagons get repaired and maintained) modernisation project in 2009, leaving these vital facilities to wither away while production sharply declined.

Take the case of Saidpur Railway Workshop – the largest workshop in BR. At least 665 of 787 (84.5 percent) of its plants and machinery are over two decades old, and many of them are out of order now, BR sources said.

In 2020, BR initiated efforts to modernise the workshop by preparing a proposal for a feasibility study. However, the project remained in limbo without further advancement.

After over three years, BR has revived the plan; and a project evaluation committee led by the secretaries of the ministry is going to hold a meeting on the project proposal today.

The meeting will decide whether

Workers repairing train carriages at the Saidpur railway workshop in Niphamari.

FILE PHOTO

the project should be sent to the Planning Ministry for approval, Partha Sarkar, additional director general (rolling stock) of BR, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The proposal contains a feasibility study, detailed design preparations, and bid document development, at an estimated cost of Tk 16.02 crore.

The project, if approved, aims to be completed by December 2024.

However, even if approved, the actual modernisation of the workshop will be a time-consuming process, as BR would need to initiate a separate project

based on the study's outcome to carry out the repair and renovation works.

BR has a total of six workshops – four for repair and maintenance of the locomotives while two for carriages and wagons. BR took two projects to modernise Pahartali and Saidpur workshops in 2007 and 2009 respectively.

After these projects, no new project was taken for modernisation of the workshops, a BR official, having knowledge about the matter, told this correspondent.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Education Minister Dipu Moni awarding a student at the 24th convocation of North South University at Bangabandhu Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Centre in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

# Record 101 hajj pilgrims die this year

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

A record 101 Bangladeshi hajj pilgrims died so far in Saudi Arabia this year.

Of the deceased, 24 are female and 77 are male, according to the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

The ministry's hajj bulletin released on July 11 revealed that 85 hajj pilgrims died in Makkah, five in Medina, seven in Mina, two in Arafat, and one each in Jeddah and Muzdalifah.

This year's hajj has been observed amid intense heat. Thirty-two hajj pilgrims died within a week since July 3. On June 29, seven hajj pilgrims died due to heat stroke, according to media reports.

This is the highest number of Bangladeshis who died in Saudi Arabia during the hajj, according to the Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh.

Hajj pilgrims who die in Saudi Arabia are usually buried in Saudi Arabia, HAAB President M Shahadat Hossain Taslim told The Daily Star.

This year the hajj was observed on 1,22,884 people went to Saudi Arabia to perform Hajj this year.

# Release Khadija immediately

## Demand citizens' platforms

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Khadijatul Kubra, the Jagannath University political science student who is incarcerated under the Digital Security Act, must be released immediately, demanded different citizens' platforms yesterday.

Shujan sent a statement expressing deep concern over the fact that Khadija's bail order has been stayed for four months by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

"We have noticed that ever since she was arrested on September 17, 2022, her bail has been repeatedly denied by the court. It is a major violation of human rights to keep a student in jail simply because she had allegedly made remarks that criticises the government," said the statement.

"This raises questions about the judiciary's independence," it observed.

"Getting bail is the right of a citizen – it is not dependent on the kindness of the judiciary," it added.

They also questioned the silence of the university administration. "It is inconceivable that a student will be wrongfully incarcerated month after month, and the university administration will remain quiet," they said.

The Digital Security Act Victims' Network also sent a statement decrying the judiciary's decision to stay Khadija's bail order.

"Since we are a democracy, it cannot be a crime to criticise the government on social media," they said.

They pointed out that Khadija was a minor at the time of the filing of the case, but she was arrested as an adult. Both demanded that the DSA be repealed.

**Getting bail is the right of a citizen – it is not dependent on the kindness of the judiciary.**

# Join hands to combat epidemics

## Speakers tell conference on health diplomacy

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The International Conference on Public Health and Diplomacy ended yesterday with a call for strong cooperation among countries.

Organised jointly by the foreign affairs and health ministries, and World Health Organization, Bangladesh, the two-day event was inaugurated by the prime minister in a city hotel on Tuesday.


The conference explored the scope of collaborative research and development initiatives to combat epidemics, including dengue, malaria, and other communicable diseases.

Discussions on health diplomacy were difficult earlier as most people were unaware of its seriousness. However, following Covid-19, this topic has become very important," said Ambassador Masud Bin Momen, senior secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while delivering the concluding remarks.

Combating public health threats like tuberculosis, malaria, antimicrobial resistance, and noncommunicable diseases is challenging

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

PRAYER  
TIMING



JULY 13

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-10	12-45	5-00	6-55	8-17
JAMAAAT 4-45	1-15	5-15	7-00	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION