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PM releases postage stamps on 'Smart Bangladesh'

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday released a Tk 10 commemorative postage stamp, a Tk 10 first day cover and a Tk 5 data card on the occasion of the government's steps to build smart Bangladesh by 2041.

She also released a commemorative postage stamp souvenir sheet of Tk 50, marking 50 years of Bangladesh's membership with the international civil aviation organisation.

The PM released the postage stamps, opening day covers and data card at a ceremony at her official residence Gono Bhaban.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

A series of political programmes led to gridlocks around the capital yesterday. While some had to wait for hours to reach their destinations, many had to resort to walking. The photo was taken in the capital's Farmgate area where a long tailback was seen in the afternoon.

PHQ issues guidelines for Durga Puja

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Police Headquarters yesterday urged all to remain alert so that no individuals or groups can harm religious harmony by spreading misleading information and rumours ahead of the Durga Puja.

"If such a situation arises, inform the police," it said in a set of guidelines. They include setting up CCTV cameras at all mandaps, refraining from entering mandaps carrying bags, ensuring adequate lights at mandaps and places of idols immersion, deployment of volunteers at mandaps at night, refraining from using firecrackers, and avoiding using loudspeakers during prayers of Muslims.

Anyone can contact PHQ control room at 01320001219, 013200013200; DMP control room at 025510266, 0255102666 and national helpline 999.

DU brought under CCTV surveillance

58 cameras set up on campus to ensure students' safety, say authorities

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Dhaka University campus has been brought under closed-circuit television surveillance.

A total of 58 CCTV cameras have been set up on the campus at a cost of Tk 68.84 lakh early this month, said authorities.

The cameras cover all the major roads inside the university except the road connecting Shahbagh and Doyel Chatar.

According to students, many incidents had occurred on DU campus in previous years but victims did not get justice as there was no adequate CCTV surveillance. It will help authorities detect and prevent unwanted incidents, including sexual harassment and mugging on the campus, they said.

Last year in June, a woman filed a case with Shahbagh Police Station, alleging that she had been sexually harassed at night in front of Sir AF Rahman Hall. Over a year has passed since the incident but the complainant is yet to get justice as police failed to identify the accused.

"Girls often experience unwanted incidents on campus. Universities must be safe for every student. Often, we feel unsafe when returning from the library at night or anywhere in TSC. Hopefully, the initiative will help curb such incidents," said Zarin Anjum, a student residing in Kabi Sufia Kamal Hall.

VC Prof Akhtaruzzaman said, "This initiative will play an important role in controlling any unexpected incidents on campus. We need cooperation from all for proper management and maintenance of the system."



BNP movement has no public support

Says Hasan Mahmud

UNB, Dhaka

Information Minister Hasan Mahmud yesterday said no one supports BNP's demand for a caretaker government.

"The stand of the western countries is clear, they back Israel... On one side, the western countries are encouraging Israel, which is involved in crimes against humanity, on the other, Fakhruul is saying they (western countries) are supporting them also. But BNP has no support from anyone for its movement."

The minister said this while exchanging views with media personnel about contemporary affairs at the secretariat.

He said BNP has no faith in people. "That's why BNP now looks at who said what from a faraway country," the minister said.

Address their struggles in manifesto

Speakers urge political parties on coastal people

DU CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a conference yesterday called upon political parties to address the struggles of people in coastal regions in their election manifesto.

In the last 35 years, salinity in the coastal regions has increased up to 26 percent, causing a drastic reduction in agricultural production. In Satkhira alone, agricultural output has decreased by 3.45 percent, they said.

Besides, between 2000-2020, frequency of natural calamities in the coastal areas has increased tenfold. However, major political parties rarely pay attention to these crises in their development policies, they added.

They were speaking at the conference titled "Jatio Upokul Shonglap (National Dialogue on Coastal Regions)", organised by three NGOs -- Ledars, Praan and ActionAid -- at Jatiya Press Club.

Mohon Kumar Mondal, executive director of Ledars, placed a six-point demand to be included in the election manifestoes. "The political parties must promise to form a coastal development board; provide safe drinking water; implement one house-one shelter project; declare Satkhira, Khulna and Bagerhat as disaster prone areas; protect the Sundarbans," he said.

Shekhar Dutta, member of AI's manifesto formulation committee, Gonoforum general secretary Subrata Chowdhury, JP presidium member Sunil Shuvo Ray, and BSD general secretary Bazlur Rashid Firoz were present.

Get ready for the final push

Fakhruul tells youth rally

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhruul Islam Alamgir yesterday said their party has no time to look back as they are going to initiate the final phase of their movement soon to topple the Awami League government.

Speaking at a youth rally, he also called upon the BNP rank and file to take all-out preparations to make their movement a success.

"Our only goal is to ensure the fall of the current regime and free our leader Begum Khaleda Zia for sending her abroad for treatment," he said.

The BNP leader also said the mammoth rally of the youth wing of BNP will help strengthen the ultimate movement of the opposition that will begin in the next few days after Durga Puja.

Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal arranged the rally in front of BNP's Nayapaltan central office.

Termining the gathering "historic", Fakhruul said it will surely inspire the country's people to participate in the final movement with fresh vigour and aspirations.

He alleged that the government has been in power illegally by bringing the 15th amendment to the constitution unconstitutionally.



DEV OF GREEN ENERGY

Access to capital, reliable partners crucial: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world. It not only needs investments to tackle climate impacts but also technical assistance in building knowledge and capacity, said Saber Hossain Chowdhury, special envoy of the prime minister on environment and climate change, at an event yesterday.

"The Norfund's Climate Investment Fund (CIF) can be a great facilitator," he said.

He was addressing a seminar titled "Investing in Our Planet: Introducing the Norfund Climate Investment Fund" as the chief guest at a city hotel.

The Norwegian Embassy in Dhaka, Norfund, and the Nordic Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Bangladesh (NCCI) organised the seminar to introduce the CIF to Bangladesh and highlight Norway's commitment to supporting its transition to renewable energy.

CIF, managed by Norfund, will invest 10 billion Norwegian Krone in renewable energy and low-carbon technologies in developing countries with high coal and fossil fuel power emissions, including Bangladesh.

Saber, who is also a member of parliament, said Bangladesh achieved energy security as everyone in the country has access to energy, including home-based solar systems.

Green energy is not alien to Bangladesh. So, how can we be cost-competitive? How can we reap all the co-benefits, whether in public health, lower costs, or energy security? These are the real questions now.

SABER HOSSAIN CHOWDHURY

Speaking about renewable energy, he said, "Green energy is not alien to Bangladesh. So, how can we be cost-competitive? How can we reap all the co-benefits, whether in public health, lower costs, or energy security? These are the real questions now."

Explaining the reasons why the government is seeking investment in renewable energy, he said the adverse impact of fossil fuels on public health is substantial, so the government is considering directing the benefits to public health.

"Bangladesh's energy and power sectors are in the midst of a transition, shifting from traditional fossil fuels to renewable energy sources, which is a testament to our determination to build a sustainable and resilient future," said NCCI President Tahrin Aman.

Espen Rikter Svendsen, Ambassador of Norway, said, "Access to capital and reliable financial partners are crucial for developing the renewable energy industry."

He also emphasised the importance of removing obstacles and creating a dynamic business climate for renewable energy by improving governance and transparency, regulating markets effectively, and offering incentives that promote the right kind of investments.



Scrap materials from ships, bought by local traders from shipbreaking yards for reselling, occupy the footpath, making it impossible for pedestrians to use them. Meanwhile, illegally parked pick-up vans on the road further add to the menace. The photo was taken in the capital's Dholaipar area yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN