

Burning people to death won't be tolerated: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said no one would be allowed to gain advantage by burning people and thwarting election in Bangladesh.

The premier made this remark while exchanging greetings with the Christian community at the Gono Bhaban to mark Christmas Day.

Bangabandhu's youngest daughter Sheikh Rehana was also present.

Hasina condemned the perpetrators of arson violence and their commanders saying that burning people alive is a great sin and not accepted in any religion.

"It is also unfortunate for us that we see some people in our country kill people through arson violence to achieve political goals. I don't know what type of politics it is. If anyone has ideology and political programmes, they can go to the people and raise these before them," she said.

Noting that a mother and a baby in her lap were burnt to death in a recent train fire, the PM said, "What are they gaining by harming and burning people to death to achieve their political goals? That is my question. We want such violence to be stopped."

About Palestine, the premier said it is very unfortunate that the place has now

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina cuts a Christmas Day cake at Gono Bhaban yesterday. The premier also exchanged greetings with the Christian community on the occasion of Christmas. Bangabandhu's youngest daughter Sheikh Rehana was also present at the event.

PHOTO: PID

Polls code violators to face music

Says Quader

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday

said the ruling party wants a peaceful election, so it will not tolerate any kind of anti-poll violence.

He said this while speaking at a press conference at AL President's Dhanmondi political office.

Quader also said the AL will not favour any particular party or independent candidates.

The AL will support the measures taken by the Election Commission if there is any anti-election violence. If anyone violates the electoral code of conduct or laws, he/she should be brought to justice, he added.

About BNP's call for non-cooperation movement, he said, "If you don't pay tax, you will have to go to jail. If you don't pay the utility bill, you will be punished. If you don't pay the electricity and water bill, your connections will be cut off. It's simple."

US Ambassador in Dhaka Peter Haas went to India, but India's position is clear as it will not interfere in the internal affairs of Bangladesh, he said.

The AL leader said the country's people have started boycotting those who are boycotting the elections.

Careful who you befriend online

Two members of transnational blackmail gang held in Dhaka

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

A transnational syndicate embezzled a significant amount of money by blackmailing Bangladeshi university and college students, as well as businessmen.

The mastermind of the syndicate, Shakil, is based in India but has agents in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

The female members of the group would befriend their targets on social media, and then pretend to be in an intimate relationship with them. Subsequently, they recorded private moments during video chats and threatened the victims that they would spread the videos unless they paid them money.



The two arrestees with law enforcers at DB office.

The Financial and Social Media Crime Investigation team of the Cyber and Special Crime Division of the Detective Branch disclosed the findings yesterday, following the arrest of Tipu Sultan, 27, and Moslem Rana, 28 – two Bangladeshi agents of the syndicate from Dhaka, on Wednesday.

Saifur Rahman Azad, additional deputy commissioner of DB police, said, "We have got details of two Indian, three Pakistani, and two Bangladeshi nationals of the syndicate so far."

"We will inform the embassies concerned through diplomatic channels. For this, we are sending a letter to the police's Special Branch," he said.

The incident came to the fore after a college student filed a case with Shahbagh Police Station on December 19. He received a friend request on Facebook from an ID named – "Deepika Agrawal" – on August 29.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

PREVENTING SABOTAGE

Cameras being set up at train stations: IGP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector General of Police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun yesterday said the installation of Internet Protocol (IP) cameras at important places including the railway stations is underway to prevent sabotage acts in trains.

The IGP said they will try to complete the work within a week.

He told this in response to a question from journalists after observing the security measures taken on the occasion of Christmas at Kakrail church in the capital.

The IGP said miscreants could not carry out anti-election activities openly as their programmes do not have public support.

"The law-and-order situation is completely under our control. Still, some destructive incidents are taking place. But people are apprehending these perpetrators and handing them over to us. People are with us," he added.

In response to another question, the police chief said they are working as per the instructions of the Election Commission to maintain the law-and-order situation during polls. Strict legal action will be taken if anyone tries to deteriorate the situation, he warned.

Meanwhile, the counter terrorism and transnational crime (CTTC) unit of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

43RD BCS 404 new cadre posts added to meet demand

BAHARAM KHAN

Candidates of the 43rd BCS examination have some good news to look forward to.

Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) is going to add 404 posts to accommodate the additional demand sought by the public administration ministry.

The commission will soon publish the final results of the 43rd BCS examination to fill 2,218 vacant posts, including the newly-introduced 404 positions, in various cadres, said BPSC sources.

Of the 404 posts, 195 would be increased in agriculture cadre, 82 in tax, 84 in livestock, 24 in food and 19 in railway (engineering) cadre, they added.

More than 4.35 lakh aspirants took part in the preliminary test held in various centres under eight divisions on October 29, 2021, and the results came out on January 20, 2022.

A total of 15,229 candidates passed the test.

BPSC started the written examination in July of the same year, where 9,841 candidates came out successful.

According to the BPSC officials, the commission will hold a final meeting to decide the date of publication of the final results.

Contacted, BPSC Chairman Md Soharab Hossain said, "I can't specify any date because the commission is yet to decide that. I hope we will be able to publish the results by this month."

This time, BPSC has decided to publish the results of both the cadre and non-cadre posts together, although the commission usually publishes the results of cadre posts first.

The decision, however, triggered commotion among candidates, many of whom have been staging protests in the capital for the last few weeks, demanding cancellation of the current non-cadre circular and separate publication of cadre and non-cadre results.

The commission will soon publish the final results of the 43rd BCS examination to fill 2,218 vacant posts, including the newly-introduced 404 positions, in various cadres.

No fish farming in canals: DNCC mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Atiqul Islam yesterday said they will conduct a drive against illegal fish cultivation in canals.



"Fish farming cannot be done in public canals," he said while speaking at a discussion at Nagar Bhaban in Gulshan.

"All the parties have to work together to prevent encroachment and pollution of the canals in Dhaka. We want to engage the community," he said.

There are many waterbodies adjacent to the canal with shallow land. Arrangements can be reached to include these special lands as the boundary of the canal, the mayor said.

"The banks of the canals will be barricaded. There will be walkways, cycle lanes and trees along the canals," he said.

The DNCC mayor ordered the formation of a committee including all organisations and experts to determine the boundaries of the canal and decide what to do to protect them.

Kamrun Nahar Ahmed, chairman of the National River Protection Commission, Md Mujibur Rahman, professor of Civil Engineering Department of United International University and Md Ataur Rahman, professor of water resources engineering department of Buet, also spoke at the event.

Doctor impersonator held at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

She forged an identity card and purchased an apron from Nilkhet in Dhaka, collected a stethoscope from the Mitford area, and subsequently posed as a doctor at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Munia Khan Roza, 25, was caught red-handed by Ansar members deployed at DMCH on Saturday night.

The hospital ward master Zillur Rahman filed a case with Shahbagh Police Station in this regard, said Sub-inspector Alice Mahmud.

She was sent to jail yesterday, he added.

She was arrested following a CCTV footage at the ICU of the hospital's new building, said Ansar Platoon Commander Uzzal Babari.

Munia first introduced herself as a doctor. Later, she admitted that she was not a physician and used to steal mobile phones from various wards wearing an apron, said Zillur Rahman.

Munia – who is from Chandpur – resides in Old Dhaka, said Zillur quoting her.

Dengue claims four more lives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least four more dengue patients died in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.



The total number of deaths rose to 1,697, of which 977 are from Dhaka, according to the DGHS.

With 188 new dengue cases, the total number of cases this year rose to 3,20,460.

A total of 1,101 dengue patients are still undergoing treatment at different hospitals across the country. Among the total cases, 3,17,662 dengue patients have already been released.

According to the DGHS, a total of 62,382 patients were hospitalised last year while the total number of deaths was 281.

City corporations and other local government bodies are yet to take any measures to prevent another deadly outbreak of the mosquito-borne disease during monsoon next year, experts fear.

Judging by what happened this year, they say the situation may worsen in 2024 unless there is a proper plan and effective surveillance from the beginning.

Entomologist GM Saifur Rahman said the authorities do not seem to be procuring the equipment needed for effective surveillance. "They are rather likely to follow the same old methods that are ineffective," he added.

Don't forget about Dalits after polls: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENTS

Despite many promises made in the previous elections about the Dalits, discrimination still very much persists in the state and society, said speakers at an event yesterday.

Those people still don't get to share the same cups for having tea with others in many places; they need separate cemeteries to bury their loved ones, and their occupations are also under threat as others are being appointed to their posts in government offices, they said.

USAID and Counterpart International organised the roundtable under the Promoting Advocacy and Rights (PAR) programme, where four lawmakers joined and promised to take action in favour of Dalits and Harijans if they get elected again. The event was held at The Daily Star Centre.

The organisers recommended ensuring constitutional rights and access to social empowerment processes for over three crore marginalised people across

the country, including the aforementioned castes.

The roundtable titled "Opportunities for the 12th Parliament: Citizen Recommendations for Sustainable Development" made two other recommendations – investing in smart and sustainable urbanisation

Lawmakers and civil society need to work together in this regard. We need to find out if we keep the promises on paper only or if we actually take action to implement them.

AROMA DUTTA, member of parliament

to ensure the well-being of all citizens and strengthening environmental protection by reducing air, noise, and water pollution.

Ruling party lawmaker Saber Hossain Chowdhury said Awami League will announce its election manifesto on December 27, which will

incorporate the aforementioned issues.

"We believe that we need to incorporate all the people of the country into our policies for sustainable development," he said.

Lawmaker Shameem Haider Patwary said, "In the 11th parliament, we couldn't finish enacting laws about the rights of Dalits. The law is currently in the law ministry for revision. I hope the 12th parliament will pass the bill," he added.

Shirin Akhter, another parliamentarian, said more vocational training is required to incorporate marginalised people into society.

"There should be a quota system for them (Dalits and other marginalised) in government jobs," she said.

Lawmaker Aroma Dutta said lawmakers and civil society need to work together in this regard. "We need to find out if we keep the promises on paper only or if we actually take action to implement them," she added.

Katie Croake, chief of party of the PAR programme, presided over the discussion.



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Due to the blockade enforced by BNP and its allies, security was heightened in the capital yesterday. As part of it, BGB members were seen deployed in front of the residence of the chief justice. The photo was taken in Kakrail area.