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Govt for inclusive development

Hasina tells Buddhist community leaders



UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated that the Awami League government is dedicated to the socioeconomic development of all citizens, regardless of their religion.

"I want to make one thing clear: we aim to build up our country without considering religion or caste. We work for the people and their socioeconomic upliftment," she said.

The prime minister made these remarks while exchanging pleasantries with religious leaders and eminent personalities of the Buddhist community at Gono Bhavan on the occasion of Buddha Purnima.

Hasina emphasised her government's commitment to progress and unity.

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Little Raisa could not control her smile as soon as her elder sister Sathi scooped up their pet cat in her arms and showed it to her. The photo was taken in Khulna's Khalishpur area yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

A legacy that lives on

Nation celebrates 125th birth anniv of Nazrul



UNB, Dhaka

The 125th birth anniversary of Kazi Nazrul Islam, Bangladesh's national poet, was celebrated yesterday.

Born in Churulia village, West Bengal in 1899, Nazrul's works inspired resistance against injustice and oppression. His fiery poetry and creative genius have left an indelible mark on Bangla literature.

Marking the day, various government and non-government organisations, along with cultural platforms, organised programmes, including cultural performances and discussions on Nazrul's life and legacy.

The poet's birth anniversary was also observed in Mymensingh and Daulatpur, Cumilla, locations of special significance to him.

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BANGABANDHU SHILPA NAGAR RHD to turn 10km road into 4-lane

It will enhance connectivity with Dhaka-Ctg Highway, port

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

With the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar expected to revolutionise the country's trade, the roads authority is planning to make its connectivity smoother with the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway and the Chattogram Sea Port.

The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) is going to turn the existing 10km road, which connects Shilpa Nagar with the important highway, into a four-lane one.

The agency has submitted a development project proposal, involving Tk 563.29 crore, to expand the road, which was proposed as Sheikh Hasina Swarani.

The Project Evaluation Committee of the Planning Commission is expected to hold a

meeting soon, an official said.

The Shilpa Nagar, built on about 33,800 acres or 136.86 square kilometres of land in Mirsarai, was launched by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in November 2022.

The biggest economic zone in Bangladesh is located 200km from Dhaka, 60km from Chattogram city and 70km from Chattogram Port and the Shah Amanat International Airport.

Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority, the implementing agency of the flagship economic zone, aims to attract investments of \$20 billion for the Shilpa Nagar by 2030, generating employment opportunities for around 14 lakh people.

Till January, five companies have started commercial operations at their industrial units in the industrial zone.

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SOLAR INSTALLATION '20pc EPZ spaces can add 222MW to nat'l grid'

Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An additional 222 megawatts could be added to the national grid if only 20 percent of open spaces within eight Export Processing Zones are utilised for solar installations, according to a study.

The study, conducted by Estiaque Bari, senior lecturer at the Department of Economics, East West University, also said over 333MW could be added to the national grid if 30 percent of open spaces can be utilised.

The findings were unveiled at a roundtable organised by Change Initiative at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Zakir Hossain Khan, chief executive at Change Initiative, said, "If 80 percent of spaces and household rooftops come under the net metering, the power generation will be massive and the country will be highly benefited."

Net metering is a billing tool that allows one to send the excess energy the panels generate to the local grid in exchange for credits on monthly electric bills.

The study outlined several challenges hindering the widespread adoption of rooftop solar systems in EPZs, including the lack of

CHALLENGES
➤ Lack of comprehensive policy
➤ High tax on solar equipment
➤ Weak transportation systems
➤ Inefficient energy transmission
RECOMMENDATIONS
➤ More funding
➤ Govt subsidies
➤ Promoting net metering system
➤ Project-based solar initiatives

comprehensive policies, high taxes and duties on solar equipment, weak transportation

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'Ansar Al Islam formed new group to run activities'

Rab says after arresting 3 members of 'Shahadat'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion arrested three members of "Shahadat, a new organisation based on the ideology of banned militant outfit Ansar Al Islam", in separate drives in Dhaka and Narayanganj on Friday.

The arrestees are Ismail Hossain, 25, recruitment head of "Shahadat", and its regional trainers Jihad Hussain alias Huzaifa, 24, and Aminul Islam, 25.

Quoting the arrestees Rab Legal and Media Wing Director Commander Arafat Islam at a press briefing yesterday said the arrestees are actually the members of Ansar Al Islam.

But the leaders formed the new organisation, Shahadat, as the name, Ansar Al Islam, is known to all and sometimes it is difficult to continue activities under the banner, the Rab official said.

The number of members of this organisation is more than 100. Ismail, who was the head of the recruiting wing of Ansar Al Islam, is the head of the "Shahadat" group, Commander Arafat Islam said.

The three were arrested from Dhaka's Gulistan and Narayanganj's Signboard area, the Rab official said at the briefing at Karwan Bazar.

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'Prescribe generic names of medicine'

Experts say it will promote competition, lower healthcare costs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Generic names of medicine should be written in prescriptions, a practice followed by most developed countries, said speakers at an event yesterday.

Health experts also said even neighbouring India has made it mandatory to prescribe medication this way. Bangladesh lacks such law or guideline, they added.

They were speaking at a policy dialogue programme titled "Can the use of Generic Names in Prescriptions effectively control aggressive Drug Marketing in Bangladesh?", organised by the Institute of Health Economics at Dhaka University.

Experts expressed concern over the prevailing practice of using brand names in prescriptions. They argued that this practice not only reduces competition in the medicine market but also contributes to the increased burden of healthcare costs on patients and their families.

Prof Ahmedul Kabir, additional directorate general (admin) of the Directorate General of Health Services, emphasised the need for holistic reform in the healthcare sector.

Prof Syed Abdul Hamid of the Institute of Health Economics at DU pointed out the limitations faced by the Directorate General of Drug Administration in ensuring quality control and uniform pricing of generic medicines due to a shortage of human resources.

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Commuters travel through dust, which has covered the entire area as road work proceeds without necessary measures to curb pollution in the capital's Tilkatuli area. Yesterday, Dhaka ranked third on the list of cities worldwide with the worst air quality with an AQI value of 132.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Canada deputy minister in town

To discuss Rohingya, Indo-Pacific issues

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Canada's Deputy Minister of International Development Christopher MacLennan arrived in Bangladesh yesterday evening to discuss the ongoing Rohingya crisis and advance the Indo-Pacific Strategy.

During the two-day visit, he will meet with officials and development partners to discuss Canada's international assistance in the context of Bangladesh's graduation from Least Developed Country status in 2026 and opportunities to leverage Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy in Bangladesh, according to a statement of the Canadian High Commission in Dhaka.

MacLennan will also have discussions about the ongoing response to the Rohingya refugee crisis and the situation at the border.

