

## MOSQUITO CONTROL

# DSCC launches drives to combat dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As dengue-related deaths and infections continue to climb, the Dhaka South City Corporation conducted a special mosquito control and cleanliness drive yesterday in the capital's Dhanmondi area.

The drive, which began at 7:30am and continued until the afternoon, involved 700 participants – including 450 sanitation workers from the Waste Management Department, 50 mosquito control workers from the Health Department, 100 volunteers from the Red Crescent Society, 50 members of BD Clean, and 50 volunteers from the Dhanmondi Society.

Md Rezaul Maksud Jahedi, Secretary of the Local Government Division, attended the programme as chief guest.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services, at least one dengue patient died and nine others were hospitalised in the 24 hours leading up to yesterday morning. With the latest figures, the death toll for the year has risen to 19, while confirmed cases stand at 2,429.

Speaking at the event, DSCC Administrator Md Shahjahan Mia announced that similar mosquito control and cleanliness campaigns would be rolled out across all DSCC zones to combat the dengue outbreak ahead of the monsoon season. The campaign officially began in Dhanmondi.

DSCC's Chief Executive Officer Dr Zillur Rahman, departmental heads, and leaders of the Dhanmondi Society were also present.

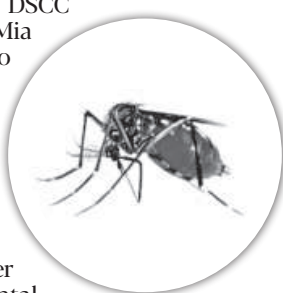
As part of the initiative, Dhanmondi was divided into seven zones. Major roads, lakes, parks, mosques, and the Eidgah area were cleaned and sprayed with mosquito repellent.

During a press briefing, Secretary Rezaul Maksud Jahedi highlighted the collaborative nature of the campaign, saying that efforts by DSCC and local community groups aim to make Dhaka cleaner and more liveable.

In a separate programme, Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Administrator Mohammad Azaz urged city residents to take personal responsibility in the fight against dengue by keeping their homes and surroundings clean.

"We've received numerous complaints regarding improper spraying of mosquito repellents," he said.

"As a result, we've decided not to renew contracts with previous service providers. To ensure accountability, the army will be involved in monitoring the spraying process," he added.



## Polls shouldn't be

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held to provide financial assistance to the mother of Abdullah Bin Jahid, who was killed during the July uprising.

He also expressed frustration that the government has not yet taken steps to withdraw what he described as false cases against 60 lakh BNP leaders and activists.

He praised Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin for his commitment that the

Election Commission will not wait for reform suggestions from the National Consensus Commission, but will proceed with election preparations using the powers currently available to it.

The BNP leader said elections should not be delayed for the completion of reforms. "So, the CEC's remarks are positive... we are reassured about the election from his statement," he said.

## Why veggies

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rising living costs, those extra savings can make a difference.

"I don't enjoy the crowd or the hassle," Babul added, "but at the end of the day, the money I save helps keep my household running," he said.

Nasima Akter, a domestic worker from Kalabagan, said, "I leave home before sunrise and come here once a week. Even if I save Tk 50 or 60, that means I can buy eggs or pulses with it."

## Blockade disrupts

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Patgram Sangram Unnayan Parishad's President ATJ Siddiqui said the railway authorities earlier promised to start the service from Burimari to Dhaka several times, but it has not been implemented. "The blockade programme will continue until our demands are met," he said.

Lalmonirhat Divisional Railway Commercial Officer Abdullah Al Mamun said that preparations are



PHOTO: STAR

## POUNE TIN ANI ZAMINDAR BARI

# Echoes of a forgotten palace

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

The century-old Pouné Tin Ani Zamindar Bari, a historic palace located in Sherpur Sadar upazila, is now on the verge of ruin.

Constructed by the zamindars (landlords) Satyendra Mohan Chowdhury and his brother Gyanendra Mohan Chowdhury, the palace has a striking architectural design that exudes a rich cultural and aesthetic heritage with Greek influence.

"The palace is estimated to be more than 100 years old. However, exact details regarding when it was established, as well as information about its founders, could not be known," said Advocate Md Akhtaruzzaman, convener of Sherpur Ethash Parishad.

Visiting the palace recently, this correspondent observed that bushes have grown in and around numerous broken structures of the mansion while it lies in an unprotected state.

The entrance of the palace features a staircase with wide steps and decorated columns. The design incorporates wooden windows and ventilation systems under the roof, allowing plenty of light and air to enter the building.

However, lack of maintenance left the structures in a shabby state.

In the southeast corner, there is a "Rang Mahal" (entertainment hall) embellished with floral patterns, which used to host cultural events including dance

and music performances. Another part of the palace is called "Shish Mahal", where the zamindar's wife used to reside, said locals.

There are seven ponds and several temples within the palace complex.

The mansion has intricately designed quadrilateral columns, adorned with square-shaped motifs. The interior features a temple with a spacious altar, ornate pillars, and decorative cornices. The walls are finished with plaster made from lime and brick dust. The roof combines traditional iron railings with lime



and brick dust casting. In front of the palace lies a pond with a paved ghat, adding to the estate's charm.

At present, the Ministry of Agriculture is in charge of the 42-acre estate, including the palace.

An agricultural training institute has been running on the compound since 1957, said Md Motiuzzaman, principal of the institute.

"The institute's activity began in the palace in 1957. At present, the institute runs in a new building on the compound, while the palace lies unused but

is being protected," he added.

Despite the passage of time diminishing some of its original splendour, the Pouné Tin Ani Zamindar Bari remains a significant symbol of Sherpur's historical and architectural heritage, said Hakim Babul, a senior journalist and local resident.

"Urgent steps are needed to save the palace from being ruined," he added.

"The Department of Archeology should take measures to restore the palace to keep its history alive for the next generation," said Rafiqul Islam Azhar, joint-secretary of Sherpur Etishash Parishad.

"On numerous occasions, we urged the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to renovate the palace, but no action has been taken yet," he added.

Tarafdar Mahmudur Rahman, deputy commissioner of Sherpur, said he recently visited the palace.

"The palace reflects Sherpur's rich architectural heritage. Steps will be taken regarding the palace's renovation and preservation," he added.

Admitting the importance of the palace as an important archeological site, Afroza Khan Mita, regional director of the DoA (Dhaka and Mymensingh), said the site is yet to be enlisted with the department.

"We will work in this regard gradually to make sure the palace is preserved," she added.

## Six AL activists

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8:30pm on Thursday. Montaz Parvin was held from the Banglamotor area half an hour later.

Zakir Hossain was picked up from Banani around 12:05am yesterday. He admitted to joining a recent flash procession of Chhatra League in Gulshan and is also a named accused in a 2015

case filed over an attack on BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia's motorcade, police said.

Detectives arrested MR Badol from Mirpur around 1:45am yesterday.

Monirul Islam was also detained the same day. He confessed to taking part in a flash procession in the Airport area on April 18, according to police.

## Nightmares don't let

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"After reaching Libya's Benghazi, I realised I had been sent illegally. I worked for a year in road construction but got paid for only three months. Meanwhile, both Mannan and Shah Alam became unreachable," he said.

Later, a colleague named Siru Islam from Habiganj's Ajmiriganj upazila offered to send him to Italy safely for Tk 10 lakh.

"My wife took loans from moneylenders and sold our land to pay the money to Siru. But instead, he sold me to a criminal gang based in Tripoli, where I was held captive for nine months until my wife paid a Tk 12 lakh ransom," Lokman said.

He said he was tortured during that time with iron bars, hammers, and pliers. To pressure his family, the gang sent videos of the torture to his wife.

"The gang held some 80 to 100 of us captive. Each of us received only a piece of bread and a cup of water daily," he said.

"They would play loud music to muffle our screams during torture. Four captives – including two from Gazipur and Madaripur – died in front of my eyes. I thought I would die too," Lokman recalled, shuddering.

He said the gang included 7-8 Bangladeshi men – Raju, Tawhid, Hanif, Picchi Sohel, Kuddus, Rony, Abdullah, and Sharif – who operated with the help of Libyan militants. "I'm not sure if those were their real names," he said.

Once strong and healthy, Lokman now struggles to walk after being repeatedly beaten with hammers.

His wife eventually managed to contact a broker, Dadan Jomadder of Madaripur, and paid him Tk 12 lakh to secure Lokman's release.

"But Dadan scammed me as well. The kidnappers dropped me at the wrong address, and police arrested

me. I was then sent to Tajoura Detention Centre, where I was held for another two months," he said.

He finally returned to Bangladesh with help from the International Organization for Migration and the Bangladesh embassy in Libya.

Lokman said he now needs urgent medical treatment but has no money left. Unfit to work, he feels overwhelmed thinking about how to support his family of five.

Rimi, who fought relentlessly to bring her husband back, said, "To arrange the money, I had to sell all our trees and even our homestead land. The house will be registered to the new owner soon."

She demanded the return of the Tk 25 lakh they spent and exemplary punishment for the culprits.

Contacted, Abdul Kayum, upazila nirbahi officer of Mathbaria, said he is aware of Lokman's plight. "I have asked Lokman to come to my office in this regard. I will try to help him to the best of my ability," the UNO added.

## Prime accused

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The next day, his cousin, Humayun Kabir, filed the case with Banani Police Station, naming eight people – including Sobhan Niyaz Tushar, joint convener of Students Against Discrimination's Banani thana unit, and Hriday Miazi, joint member secretary of the same unit – and accusing 25-30 unnamed individuals.

PRAYER TIMING					
APRIL 26					
Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 4-20 12-45 4-45 6-29 8-00					
JAMAAT 4-55 1-15 5-00 6-34 8-30					
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					



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**11<sup>th</sup> CONVOCATION**

The 11<sup>th</sup> Convocation of the University of Asia Pacific (UAP) will be held on **26 July 2025 at Senapranagan, Matikata MP Check Post, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka.** Undergraduate and postgraduate students who have completed their degrees in **Spring 2023, Summer 2023, Fall 2023 and Spring 2024** semesters are advised to register for the convocation by filling out the online registration form available at: **www.convocation.uap.ac.bd.**

During registration, students must upload a **recent color photograph** (lab print copy) with a **white background** and a resolution of **300 x 300 pixels.**

Registration will be open till **12 May 2025.**

For any queries, please contact the Office of the Controller of Examinations (Tel.: 02-41010626-629, Ext.: 145, 113, Cell: 01834136417).

**Students failing to register by the deadline will not be allowed to attend the convocation.**

**Registrar**

## Arrest warrants

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an ad hoc basis, bypassing University Grants Commission (UGC) and syndicate approval.

In many cases, appointments were renewed multiple times, violating the 2018 University Act, which allows only a six-month extension.

The ACC found that 46 appointees lacked age eligibility, 18 had no relevant work experience, and several had academic deficiencies – including four with third-division results and two without required degrees. Despite being hired temporarily, some were illegally promoted to higher salary grades.

Moreover, the university created 141 unauthorised posts beyond the 112

approved by the UGC, and salaries were paid using funds from the Health Ministry's development budget without necessary approvals.

The irregularities came to light through a UGC investigation conducted in 2023. Based on their findings, the ACC filed a case against the accused on April 1, 2024, at its Sylhet Integrated District Office.

The accused list includes administrative staff and faculty members such as Fahima Khanam Chowdhury, Anjan Debnath, Maidul Islam Chowdhury, and others.

The ACC alleged that the recruitment practices were not only unlawful but also resulted in significant misuse of public funds and positions of authority.



BRAC University seeks dynamic and visionary leader for the position of Pro Vice-Chancellor to drive academic excellence, enhance research impact, and foster an inclusive, student-centered learning environment. Established in 2001 by BRAC, the world's largest NGO, the university has emerged as a leading institution in Bangladesh, committed to advancing higher education and societal progress.

With a mission to create future leaders who achieve academic excellence and lead with empathy and ethics, BRAC University aims to position ideas and solutions from the Global South for human flourishing. The university's vision is to be a leading university of the Global South that reimagines excellence for the future by fostering academic excellence, societal impact, and human flourishing.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor will play a pivotal role in advancing these goals by leading initiatives in academic excellence, enhancing the student experience, and strengthening research impact. This position requires compliance with BRAC University Rules and the Private University Statutes, along with carrying out responsibilities assigned by the Vice-Chancellor. The Pro Vice-Chancellor will work to position BRACU as a leader in higher education, cultivating a holistic, values-based learning environment.

### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Oversee curriculum development and promote innovative teaching practices that embed ethical leadership, lived values, and practical learning.
- Prepare students for lifelong learning and meaningful contributions to society.
- Lead initiatives in academic excellence, curriculum development, and innovative teaching practices. Strengthen research impact and institutional strategy in alignment with BRAC University's mission.
- Cultivate a values-based learning environment that prepares students for impactful contributions to society.

### CANDIDATE PROFILE:

The ideal candidate will be a distinguished academic leader with substantial experience in higher education. Candidates must demonstrate a strong background in academic administration, a proven record of research excellence, and a deep commitment to student success and institutional development.

In line with the Private University Act 2010, we are seeking accomplished individuals with a Ph.D. and a distinguished academic record. Applicants must have at least 10 years of teaching experience at a recognized university and a minimum of 15 years combined experience in teaching, research, or administrative roles.

Applications, comprising a cover letter, curriculum vitae, and five professional references, should be emailed to **pvcrcruitment@bracu.ac.bd**. Review of applications will commence on **15 May 2025**, continuing on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.