

Prothom Alo, IPDC honours 10 teachers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ten teachers, including three who lost their lives in a tragic plane crash in milestone school earlier this year, were honoured with this year’s “Priyo Shikkkhok Sommanona”, jointly organised by IPDC Finance and Prothom Alo.

The award ceremony was held yesterday at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon hotel in the capital to mark World Teachers’ Day today.

The families of the deceased Milestone teachers – Maherin Chowdhury, Mahfuza Khatun and Masuka Begum – accepted the awards on their behalf.

The seven others who received the award in person are Azmira Khanom of Binapani Government Girls’ High School, Gopalganj; Jagadish Chandra Roy of Subrata Khajanchi Government Primary School, Dinajpur; Parveen Akhter, former head teacher of Brahmanbaria Government Model Girls’ High School; Md Alauddin of Alinagar Girls’ High School, Chapainawabganj; Mosammat ShahanaJ Parvin of Poura Model School and College, Jhenaidah; Ranjit Chandra Das of Ganoudyog Girls’ High School and College, Cumilla; and Sheikh Moniruzzaman of Mobaidul Islam Secondary School, Bagerhat.

Each recipient was given a crest, certificate, sash, and Tk 1 lakh. Families of the posthumous awardees received Tk 1.5 lakh each.

This is the fifth edition of the award, introduced in 2019 to recognise teachers who go beyond academics to instill values, ethics, and humanity in students. From 2019 to 2022, 40 teachers were honoured under the initiative.

This year, 2,662 nominations were submitted – 472 for primary and 2,190 for secondary teachers. A jury panel selected the awardees for the 2025 honour.

Speaking at the event, Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Adviser Muhammad Faozul Kabir Khan said, “Teachers are the foundation of any nation. The government is working to improve their status and numbers.”

Former caretaker government adviser Rasheda K Choudhury said, “Teachers are called the backbone of the nation, yet that backbone often cannot stand straight because society fails to give them due respect.”



PHOTO: PROTHOM ALO

Judges and guests with the recipients of the IPDC-Prothom Alo “Priyo Shikkkhok Sommanona-2025”, an award recognising exceptional teachers across the country ahead of World Teachers’ Day today, at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon in Dhaka yesterday.

Anthrax cases spread to Gaibandha

Health officials warn against consuming meat of sick cattle

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

After Rangpur, anthrax cases have been detected in Gaibandha, prompting the health and livestock authorities to launch a major awareness campaign warning people against consuming the meat of sick cattle.

The Livestock Department has also intensified cattle vaccination in all upazilas of Rangpur and several neighbouring upazilas of Gaibandha and Kurigram, officials said.

They, however, urged people not to panic but to remain cautious, as the disease is fully curable and the fatality rate in humans is very low.

So far, anthrax cases in humans have been detected in three upazilas of Rangpur—Pirgacha, Kaunia and Mithapukur, and Sundarganj upazila of Gaibandha, they said.

Humans can contract the disease through skin breaches, ingestion of raw or undercooked meat, or inhalation of spores, with an incubation period ranging from 1 to 20 days.

Eight out of 12 people whose samples were collected from Pirgachha upazila of Rangpur with anthrax symptoms tested positive at the laboratory of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) late last month.

The agency collected the samples after two people had died in Pirgachha earlier this month and last month with symptoms resembling anthrax.

However, IEDCR could not confirm whether they had died of anthrax, as no samples were taken from them before their deaths.

Besides, the Department of Livestock also detected anthrax in frozen beef in the same area.

Anthrax is an acute bacterial infection of zoonotic origin that affects both humans and animals, according to IEDCR. Humans can contract the disease through skin breaches, ingestion of raw or undercooked meat, or inhalation of spores, with an incubation period ranging from 1 to 20 days.

The infection is usually fatal for affected animals. While the fatality rate in humans is very low, if not promptly diagnosed and treated, the infection can turn deadly.

Since 2010, anthrax has been reported every year from different areas of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

China committed to deepening ties with Bangladesh

Xi writes to Shahabuddin on 50th anniv of relations

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Chinese President Xi Jinping has said that China attaches great importance to its relationship with Bangladesh and is committed to advancing



Shahabuddin Xi Jinping their traditional friendship, deepening mutually beneficial cooperation, and promoting shared development.

He made the comment in a letter written to Bangladeshi President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday, exchanging congratulatory messages marking the 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties between the two countries, reports Chinese state news agency Xinhua.

The Chinese president stressed China wants to take the 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties as “an opportunity to better benefit the two peoples and make a greater contribution to world peace and development”.

“In recent years, China and Bangladesh have continued to consolidate political mutual trust, expand high-quality Belt and Road cooperation and practical collaboration across various fields, and further deepen their comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership,” said Xi.

For his part, President Shahabuddin said that over the past 50 years, Bangladesh and China have forged a deep friendship rooted in mutual respect, trust, and enduring cooperation -- bringing tangible benefits to both peoples.

He noted that Bangladesh appreciates China’s important role in promoting regional peace, stability and common prosperity, and expressed gratitude for China’s long-term valuable support for Bangladesh’s sustainable development.

He expressed the belief that with the joint efforts of the leaders and peoples of the two countries, bilateral cooperation will yield even greater results.

On the same day, Chinese Premier Li Qiang and Bangladesh’s Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus also exchanged congratulatory messages.

Li said China is willing to collaborate across various fields while promoting the continued growth of the China-Bangladesh comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership.

On his part, Yunus said that since the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations 50 years ago, the friendship between the two peoples has grown stronger, bilateral ties have developed steadily, and cooperation has yielded fruitful results, which is worth celebrating.

“Bangladesh is committed to promoting new achievements in the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries,” he added.

Israel kills 61 despite Trump’s order to stop

FROM PAGE 1

of Israeli hostages for Palestinian prisoners, the country’s Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Hamas’ response to the plan drew a chorus of optimistic statements by world leaders, who urged an end to the deadliest conflict involving Israel since its creation in 1948 and called for the release of Israelis still held in the enclave.

Another possible boost to peace hopes came with a supportive statement from the Iran-backed Palestinian Islamic Jihad group, which is smaller than Hamas but seen as more hardline.

The group, which also holds hostages, yesterday endorsed Hamas’

response -- a move that could help pave the way for the release of Israelis still held by both parties.

Hamas’ stance, and its backing by Islamic Jihad, may raise the spirit of Gazans, who had watched one ceasefire effort after another fail as Israeli strikes hit the strip over the past two years, creating a humanitarian crisis and displacing millions.

Netanyahu’s office said Israel was preparing for “immediate implementation” of the first stage of Trump’s Gaza plan for the release of Israeli hostages following Hamas’ response.

Shortly after, Israeli media reported that the country’s political echelon had instructed the military to reduce

offensive activity in Gaza.

However, Gaza’s civil defence agency said Israeli bombardment has killed at least 61 people since dawn.

“Since President Trump called on Israel to stop bombing Gaza, Israel has actually escalated its attacks,” said Mahmud Al-Ghazi, 39, a resident of Al-Rimal neighbourhood in Gaza City.

“Who will stop Israel now? We need the negotiations to move faster to stop this genocide and the ongoing bloodshed,” he added.

Trump has invested significant political capital in efforts to end the war that has left US ally Israel increasingly isolated on the world stage.

In an interview Saturday with Axios, Trump -- highlighting his behind-the-scenes diplomacy, including with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu -- said a peace deal in Gaza was “close” and that he will push to have it finalized in coming days.

“I said, ‘Bibi, this is your chance for victory.’ He was fine with it,” Trump told the US publication. “He’s got to be fine with it. He has no choice. With me, you got to be fine.”

Trump also said his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan was “very helpful” in urging Hamas to agree to the release of hostages.

“Erdogan helped a lot. He is a tough guy, but he is a friend of mine and he was great,” Trump said.

Over 1,000 pro-Palestinian protesters rally in UK

AFP, London

UK pro-Palestinian protests went ahead Saturday despite a plea from Prime Minister Keir Starmer, two days after a deadly car-ramming and knife attack on a synagogue.

Six people -- three men and three women -- arrested on suspicion of terrorism-linked offences following Thursday’s attack remained in custody.

Section 144

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, the Jumma Chhatra Janata announced the withdrawal of its blockade through a press release issued by its media cell in the morning.

The blockade, enforced to protest the alleged rape of a schoolgirl, had earlier been extended until today.

The organisation said in its statement, “Considering the religious rituals for the martyrs, providing humanitarian support to the injured and affected, and partly in view of the assurances from the administration, we have taken this decision.”

According to the platform, a second round of talks was held on October 1 with the district council chairman, the deputy commissioner, police, and intelligence officials regarding the violence in Khagrachhari Sadar and Guimara.

“In the meeting, we clearly presented our eight-point demand, including withdrawal of Section 144

and exemplary punishment for the killings. The administration assured us the demands would be addressed and said Tk 50,000 would be given in cash to each martyr’s family,” the statement read.

Kripayon Tripura, spokesperson for the Jumma Chhatra Janata, said they would wage a tougher movement if the demands were not met.

The alleged rape took place when the eighth grader was returning home from private tuition around 9:00pm. Her father filed a case the next morning with Khagrachhari Sadar Police Station against three unidentified men.

Police later arrested a man named Shayan Sheel in connection with the case. However, his mother, Swaraswati Sheel, claimed her son had been falsely implicated.

Protests and violence broke out under the banner of Jumma Chhatra Janata, leaving three people shot dead and at least four others injured on September 28.

Battery rickshaws overrun capital

FROM PAGE 1

zigzag through traffic, posing safety risks to both passengers and pedestrians,” said Shamsul Alam, a resident of Mirpur.

Sharing his bitter experience, Alam said, “I had an accident while boarding a battery-powered rickshaw. Since then, I always ask the driver to go slow. But many don’t listen -- sometimes they even race with each other.”

Md Kamal, a company-employed car driver, said he struggles to maintain a steady speed due to the overwhelming number of rickshaws and their erratic manoeuvring on roads.

“They hardly pay attention to other vehicles on the road.”

Shahida Quader, a resident of Khilgaon, said she suffered a leg injury around three years ago when a battery-run rickshaw overturned and hit her.

“Haven’t yet fully recovered... These rickshaws have become a nightmare,” she said.

Kazi Md Shifun Newaz, assistant professor at Buet’s Accident Research Institute, said battery-run rickshaws can reach up to 30km per hour. This could easily lead to accidents on narrow roads where they mostly operate.

Calling for strict monitoring of rickshaw manufacturers, Newaz said such vehicles must be designed with a maximum speed limit of 20km per hour.

“If you allow them to move at 30km per hour, but expect them to drive at 20, they won’t comply -- just like bus and car drivers who often ignore speed limits.”

Newaz said the authorities should

immediately shut down all illegal charging stations and permit charging only at licensed points. Otherwise, it won’t be possible to reduce their numbers.

“If these measures are enforced, their numbers on roads will inevitably fall, and the situation will become manageable. Right now, nothing is controlled.”

Presenting a contrast between Dhaka and Chattogram, he said, “You’ll hardly see battery-run rickshaws on the main roads in the port city. The authorities there show zero tolerance, and people don’t dare to break the rules. In the capital, only vague statements are made. That is why the problem persists.”

WHY THE BOOM?

For many, battery-run rickshaws have become a lifeline.

Take Asif Mia for instance. Eight months ago, the 26-year-old worked as a security guard and struggled to survive on a monthly income of only Tk 12,000. Following the August 5 political changeover, he decided to drive a battery-run rickshaw to earn a living.

“Currently, I earn Tk 1,000 to 1,200 a day... Earlier I worked an eight-hour shift. Now, I can drive a battery-run rickshaw for 12-13 hours a day as it doesn’t take much effort,” Asif said.

Like him, thousands of low-income people took up this as an occupation amid a lack of regulation.

In recent visits to different city areas, these correspondents found that hundreds of rickshaws of all shapes and sizes were operating without adherence to safety standards. The areas include Pallabi, Shewrapara, Bhasantek, Agargaon, Gabtoli,

Mohammadpur, Rayerbazar, Gulshan, Banani, and Badda.

There were large rickshaws with four seats, while some pedal rickshaws were converted to battery-run ones that pose greater risks of accident due to their precarious braking mechanism.

Abdul Kader, proprietor of Kakoli Auto House in Bhasantek, said “Many low-income people from all over the country are coming to Dhaka to earn a living by driving battery-powered rickshaws.”

Abdul Jalil, president of Gulshan-Banani-Badda Autorickshaw and Easybike Drivers’ Association, said the number of such vehicles more than doubled in just 10 months. “About 3,000 such vehicles were in our area prior to August 5 last year. Now the number has risen to 8,000 due to a lack of monitoring.

“Anyone can start driving a battery-run rickshaw without any training,” he said, calling for the introduction of registration, licensing and proper regulation.

WHAT ARE THE AUTHORITIES DOING?

The government has drafted a policy to regulate battery-powered rickshaws nationwide.

According to the draft “Electric Three-Wheeler Management Guidelines 2025”, rickshaws and other slow-moving vehicles powered by rechargeable batteries are categorised as electric three-wheelers.

It will prohibit the use of these vehicles on highways and introduce requirements for registration, fitness certificates and driving licence.

Mahbuba Ireen, joint secretary at the Local Government Division (city