



NATION HONOURS MARTYRS OF THE LIBERATION WAR

The nation marked its 56th Independence and National Day with solemn yet vibrant tributes to the Liberation War martyrs, as President Mohammed Shahabuddin and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman placed wreaths at the National Memorial in Savar yesterday. Throughout the day, people of all ages, along with political, social, and cultural organisations and persons with disabilities, arrived with flowers to honour the fallen. Leaders from various parties, including the Jamaat-e-Islami and CPB, also paid their respects.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN, PID



Liberation War was not fought to establish a religion-based state: Tuku

BSS, Sirajganj

Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister and freedom fighter Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku yesterday said the Liberation War was not fought to establish a religion-based state.

"Bangladesh was not created through any conspiracy of any country. It was born to ensure people's rights and to build a progressive state. The Liberation War was not fought to establish a religion-based state."

The minister was addressing a reception accorded to freedom fighters, organised by Sirajganj district administration, marking Independence and National Day 2026 at the local Shilpakala Academy auditorium at 11:00am.

He said the Liberation War was a people's war.

Referring to the events of March 25, 1971, he said the Pakistani forces carried out brutal killings that night, adding that people seeking freedom continued the struggle during the war.

Tuku also said freedom fighters had joined the war to protect the country, its soil and sovereignty, not for personal gains.

"But over the past years, the spirit of the War of Liberation has been misused as a tool to cling to power and for corruption."

Addressing the freedom fighters, he urged them to remain vigilant, saying the country was not liberated to establish a religion-based state, and warned that anti-liberation forces could rise again if people remain inactive.

He also said various benefits and welfare measures for freedom fighters were introduced during the tenure of former prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

The minister also said fuel, which used to last two days at the pumps, is now running out within just two hours. "Where is this fuel going? No one will be allowed to siphon it off," he said, urging the administration to remain

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Unlicensed kitchen markets plague DSCC

Only 12 of 116 within Dhaka South registered

DIPAN NANDY

Only 12 of the 116 private kitchen markets operating under the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) are legally registered, while the remaining 104 continue to operate without oversight, often encroaching on footpaths or land owned by government agencies and private individuals.

Although these markets supply essential goods to lakhs of residents, their lack of registration hampers revenue collection and raises concerns over public health, fire safety, and urban management.

To regulate such establishments, the DSCC introduced a policy in 2022 requiring all private markets -- excluding supershops and shopping malls -- to obtain licences.

However, enforcement has been slow. According to data from the DSCC Estate Department, only 12 private markets have registered in the last three and a half years. Of them, only Shantinagar Kitchen Market has a valid, up-to-date licence.

Under the 2022 policy, a private market is defined as any land or establishment where daily trade takes place between multiple buyers and sellers. Operators must obtain a licence from the Estate Department, renew it annually, and comply with zoning, health, and safety regulations.

Failure to comply is a punishable offence under Section

92 of the City Corporation Act, which allows authorities to shut down markets, impose fines, or take legal action.

The licensing process is relatively affordable. Applicants must pay a Tk 500 fee, followed by an annual renewal fee -- Tk 215 per square metre for markets on main roads and Tk 108 per square metre for those on secondary roads.

For example, a 1,500-square-



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ADIL MOHAMMED KHAN, Urban planner

metre market on a main road would require an annual fee of Tk 2.15 lakh.

On September 2 last year, the DSCC issued a public notice reiterating that operating without a valid licence is illegal and punishable under the Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009.

DSCC Chief Estate Officer

Mobasswer Hasan told The Daily Star, "As the policy is new, many people are still unaware of it. We are working to raise awareness. After Eid, we will begin conducting mobile courts against illegal markets."

He added that the corporation plans to re-inspect these sites to assess their suitability for commercial use. "We will verify whether the locations are appropriate for markets before making a final decision," he said.

Urban planner Adil Mohammed Khan said operating private raw markets without licences is unlawful, as it violates the 2022 policy.

He noted that these markets generate significant revenue, a portion of which should go to the city corporation.

Calling it a failure of authorities, he said many markets remain unlicensed.

He also questioned how such markets continue to operate and under whose patronage, suggesting the possible involvement of syndicates engaged in extortion or informal collections.

"These practices deprive the government of legitimate revenue," he said, adding that authorities should identify such syndicates and investigate whether political figures, influential groups, or law enforcement members are involved. "If proven, legal action must be taken."

Zubaida stresses global partnership for child welfare

UNB, Dhaka

Dr Zubaida Rahman, spouse of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, joined the closing session of the "Fostering the Future Together: Global Coalition Summit" at the White House in Washington, DC on Wednesday.

The two-day summit, attended by first ladies and spouses of leaders from over 45 countries, focused on advancing children's well-being and future prospects. Dr Zubaida participated at the invitation of US First Lady Melania Trump.

Leading a four-member delegation, she was accompanied by Dhaka University Professor

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Dhaka urges action against slavery, oppression

BSS, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman has called for intensified global efforts to confront slavery and oppression, urging renewed international action while addressing a UN General Assembly commemorative meeting.

He made the call while speaking at a meeting marking the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade at the United Nations headquarters in New York on Wednesday, according to a message received by BSS yesterday morning.

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Boats remain moored along the banks of the Buriganga in Keraniganj upazila of Dhaka, as the city has yet to return fully to its usual hustle and bustle following the Eid holidays. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

BEGUM ROKEYA UNIVERSITY, RANGPUR Liberation War monument lies incomplete after 13yrs

S DILIP ROY

Construction of "Swadhinata Smarak", the first Liberation War monument on Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur (BRUR) campus, remains incomplete even after 13 years, despite the change of five vice-chancellors at the university.

The monument has an 11,696-square-foot base, featuring three fringe-like stone pillars that symbolise the participation of people from different walks of life and their sacrifices in the Liberation War.

A 20-foot tunnel like canopy will connect the pillars, representing the unity and collective struggle of the people during the war. The pillars will bear engravings depicting wartime memories, with murals behind them.

According to BRUR sources, the monument's construction began in December 2012 during the tenure of the then vice-chancellor Prof Md Abdul Jalil Mia, with funding from Janata Bank.

The foundation stone was laid on November 28, 2013, by the then VC Prof Dr AKM Nur-un-Nabi. However, the work was halted shortly afterwards. Later, the

construction work resumed during the tenure of the following VC, Prof Dr Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah.

The project's cost was initially estimated at Tk 1.30 crore. Later, the then VC Prof Kalimullah proposed increasing the budget to Tk 4.30 crore.

However, following allegations of corruption in the project, the Ministry of Education in December 2019 instructed the university to conduct an investigation through the University Grants Commission (UGC).

As the investigation found evidence supporting the allegations, the ministry halted the work of three major projects of the university -- the Swadhinata Smarak, a research institute, and a 10-storey female dormitory.

Since then, these projects have remained stalled for years. Although the construction of the research institute and the female dormitory resumed recently, work on the Swadhinata Smarak did not.

Tasbiul Habib Nishad, a student of the Political Science department, said, "The current administration has resumed many stalled projects. I hope the work on this

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