

Cantonment road reopened to public for limited hours

**BSS, Dhaka**

Military authorities yesterday said they were forced to revert to an earlier time schedule for civil vehicles to use main cantonment road as "alternative road" due to growing traffic pressure.

According to an Inter-services Public Relations (ISPR) statement, civilian light vehicles would now be allowed to use the cantonment road during the construction of the Mohakhali flyover from 8:30 am to 12 noon and from 3:30pm to 11:00pm in line with an earlier decision taken at a coordination meeting.

It said the road was opened to public as one of the alternative passages to divert vehicles due to construction of the flyover that began in 2001.

The army authorities later relaxed the timetable allowing civil vehicles to use the road from 6:00 am to 11:00 pm for nine months in two phases hoping the other alternate passages would be developed

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Rumi suicide case in Khulna  
**Six arrested, hunt for other accused on**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna**

Police have so far arrested six people in connection with college girl Farzana Afrin Rumi suicide case.

The arrestees are Saleha Begum, 40, Rahima Begum Shetu, 42, Arifur Rahman Russel, 28, Shahdad Hossain, 24, Mizanur Rahman, 30, and Bacchu Molla, 25, of them, Saleha Begum and Rahima Begum were taken on remand for quizzing. The two women are mothers of FIR-named accused Mizan and Hassan.

The prime accused in the case, Rony, 25, is still at large. Police have launched combing operations in and outside the city to arrest Rony and his associates. Five check points have already been set up in the city.

Farzana Afrin Rumi, 19, only daughter of Abdul Bari of Pabla ward under Daulatpur Police Station, committed suicide by hanging herself from a ceiling fan in her bedroom on Monday.

According to Rumi's parents, drug

addict Rony, 25, stormed into their house along with 13 unruly young men at about 1:30 pm on Monday. They threatened Rumi for not accepting the proposal to marry Rony. At one stage of altercation, the associates of Rony made an attempt to violate her chastity. Having failed to do that, they left the house threatening to abduct her.

They also gave death threat to her father for not trying to convince his daughter to marry Rony. While going away, one of Rony's associates fired blank shots, witnesses said.

She was found hanging from the ceiling fan of her bedroom at 2.30 pm.

Her dead body was recovered by police on Monday afternoon and sent to the morgue for autopsy. She was buried at her family graveyard at Gazipara under Sadar Police Station of Pirojpur district.

According to her father Abdul Bari, who is an accounts officer of BFIDC's Khulna office, drug addict Rony teased her daughter over the last five years.

"Daulatpur police never recorded my written complaint as GD about this matter. As a result, Rony and his associates were emboldened to tease my daughter," Abdul Bari said.

Abdul Bari and his wife Jahanara Akhter said that drug addict Rony wanted to marry Rumi. "We refused with consent of our daughter," they said. She received threats of abduction and acid attack several times while going to and returning from college for refusing to marry Rony, said her parents.

Abdul Bari has lodged an FIR with Daulatpur PS, accusing Rony and his associates of compelling his daughter to commit suicide. The case has been recorded under Sections 448/306/334 of the CrPC.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury has ordered the KMP commissioner to arrest the culprits responsible for compelling Rumi to commit suicide.

As per directive of the home

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**Too hot to work**  
Labourers at the Karwan Bazar kitchen market take rest in their load baskets yesterday at noon as the mercury hit 33.8 degrees Celsius.

Four Islamic militants held in Natore

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi**

Police arrested four members of the Islamic militant outfit, Zama'atul Mujahidin Bangladesh, yesterday morning at Natore town.

They were caught while distributing leaflets at the Station Bazar area.

The arrestees are -- Ahsan Habib, 30, Al Ameen, 22, Shihab, 18, and Abbas Ali, 21.

Sayed Nazrul Islam, superintendent of police of Natore, said the arrestees confessed that they were members of the militant outfit and that they were asked to distribute the leaflets.

Police are interrogating them to find out more about their organisation and leaders.

Five killed in Savar road mishap

**JU CORRESPONDENT**

Five people were killed and five others injured in a road accident on the Dhaka-Aricha Highway yesterday morning.

Police and witnesses said the accident occurred when a Dhaka bound pick-up van carrying dairy milk collided head on with a brick-laden truck near Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) at Savar at 9 am.

One of the dead was identified as Abdul Gazi, son of Chand Gazi of village Krishnapur in Satoria upazila of Muanikganj district. Identity of four others could not be known.

Police recovered the bodies and sent those to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia inaugurates the conference of the Bangladesh Medical Association at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

PM asks doctors to treat patients better

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday urged doctors to restore people's confidence in them to stop patients from going abroad for better treatment.

"If we can stop this we can save huge foreign currency," said Khaleda told a conference of the new executive committee of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) at the China-Bangladesh Friendship auditorium in the city.

She sought suggestions and cooperation from BMA to reduce the treatment cost and ensure availability of doctors in remote areas.

Khaleda announced a Tk 5 crore financial assistance for BMA and Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons (BCPS) at the gathering of more than 8,000 medical practitioners.

Tk 1.5 crore will be spent to set up a scientific library at BMA, Tk 1.5 crore for

the construction of a BMA hostel and Tk 2 crore for the construction of a BCPS building.

The prime minister said priorities would be given in the next three-year plan to train physicians abroad for have them do specialisation.

"The government is also considering setting up a health management institute in Dhaka as a fully-fledged training institute in the health sector," she said.

Khaleda also distributed BMA Gold Medal Award, introduced for the first time, to Dr Shah Alam Bir Uttam (posthumously), Dr Shamsul Alam Milon (posthumously) and Prof MA Majed.

The award will be conferred upon three personalities every year in recognition of their outstanding contributions in the field of medical profession.

Dr Shah Alam Bir Uttam, a valiant freedom fighter, was given the award

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Another witness cross examined

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**

The 11th prosecution witness in the Shazneen case gave his deposition before court yesterday and he was then cross-examined by lawyers of all the six accused.

Kazi Rahamat Ullah, Judge of the Second Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka recorded the deposition.

The court then adjourned the hearing till tomorrow.

In his deposition, witness Hussain Akhter Chowdhury alias Akku Chowdhury, a friend of the victim's paternal uncle, told the court that in the early morning of April 24, 1998 he came to know from newspaper reports about the

tragic

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Teasers hound schoolgirl to death

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna**

School student Bina Rani Mondol, 17, has committed suicide to spare herself the indignity of being teased by some youths for long.

The tragic incident occurred in Parshemari village of Paikgachha upazila on Wednesday.

Daughter of Sabuj Kanti Mondol, Bina was a student of class ten at South Kainmari Model Girls' High School.

Her father said Bina took insecticide soon after returning from school as some eve teasers made indecent

remarks and gestures on her way back. One of the eve teasers even caught hold of her hand and proposed to marry her. As she turned down the proposal, he abused her in filthy language.

Bina was rushed to Paikgachha health complex where she died in the afternoon.

Her body was taken to Khulna Medical College Hospital morgue yesterday morning for autopsy.

A case was lodged with the Paikgachha Police Station, accusing four youths. None however could be arrested till the filing of this report.

Political jockeying hot up in post-Saddam Iraq

**AFP, Baghdad**

Iraq's confused post-war administrative landscape became even more blurred yesterday, as US forces denied sanctioning the appointments of two Iraqis claiming to be the governor and mayor of Baghdad.

The political jockeying for position in Iraq gathered steam as the United States prepared to bring in tens of thousands of new troops to stabilise the country after the fall of Saddam Hussein.

On Wednesday, two close associates of an Iraqi opposition leader said they had been elected governor and mayor of Baghdad by tribal and religious chiefs acting with the consent of occupying US troops.

But Captain Joe Plenzler, a spokesman for the US marines, shot down the claim. "Anyone declaring themselves as

mayor or anything else is just not true. The US government has not appointed anyone."

"Anyone can call themselves anything they want to," Plenzler told AFP. "But future appointments like this will be handled through USAID (the US Agency for International Development)."

Mohammed Mohsen Zubeidi, a veteran anti-Saddam politician, earlier looked official enough with a huge media entourage to boot as he proclaimed himself head of a new interim administration for Baghdad.

Zubeidi said Iraq's political life was reawakening, with 65 parties preparing to resume activities banned by the Saddam regime before the fall of Baghdad on April 9.

"We will be a model of democracy," the 51-year-old Zubeidi told a news

conference at the Palestine Hotel before leaving on a tour of the battered capital with a flock of reporters and photographers in tow.

The balding Zubeidi, who spent 15 years in northern Iraq and was under a death sentence from Saddam's regime, said he was heading an executive committee tasked with restoring normalcy.

"Then the Iraqi people will be free to choose their government," said Zubeidi, a close associate of Iraqi National Congress (INC) leader Ahmad Chalabi who is backed by the Pentagon for a future leadership role.

He was vague about the interim arrangements but said they could include members of Saddam's Baath Party except "the criminals -- and they know who they are -- who

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Ex-White House aide new US envoy to Bangladesh

**UNB, Dhaka**

President George W. Bush has chosen former White House aide Harry Thomas Jr. as new US ambassador to Bangladesh.

He replaces incumbent ambassador Mary Ann Peters who was appointed on July 26, 2000.

Thomas was director for South Asia at the White House's National Security Council and also deputy director and director of the NSC operations center.

The new envoy would take up his new assignment after confirmation by the US Senate.

Harry Thomas served as senior watch officer, deputy director and director of the State Department Operations Center, special assistant to the under secretary for political affairs and staff assistant to the assistant secretary for African affairs.



On Bangla New Year's shopping... Women try on bangles at a Boishakhi fair at the Shishu Academy in Dhaka yesterday.

