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**Over 100 trees felled to widen Gulshan road**

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

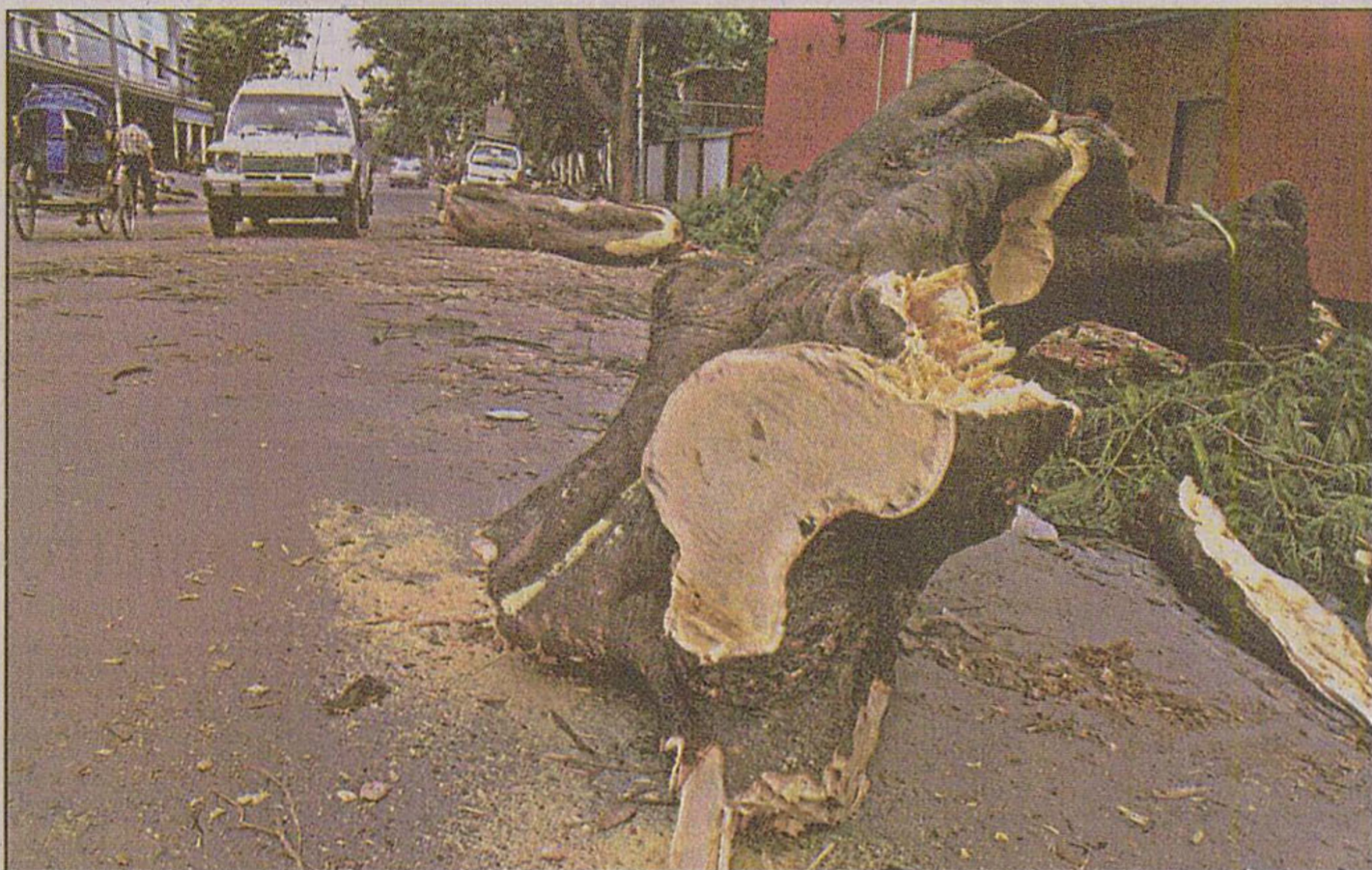
Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) officials chopped down over 100 age-old trees along Gulshan Road-71 with the excuse of widening the road and ensuring 'smooth flow of traffic' in the quiet residential area.

Residents alleged the DCC officials started chopping down the trees one by one about a week ago. The matter remained almost unnoticed by the unsuspecting residents as the DCC workers chopped each tree down with mechanical equipments and removed them quickly. The whole operation of chopping a tree down and removing it took hardly an hour. After the felling of each tree, they covered their traces with earth and quickly moved to another tree.

"We did not notice anything until today (yesterday) when they chopped down the old krishnachura tree in front of the Capital Recreation Club and tried to remove it quickly," said a resident requesting anonymity.

At the site yesterday members of the Bangladesh Paribesh Bachao Andolan were present to protest

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Trunks of trees chopped down for widening a road in Gulshan in the capital. The DCC has felled more than 100 old trees beside this road.

**Local firm chosen to build Dhaka subway**

**RAFIQ HASAN**

The Ministry of Communications selected local firm Contech Limited for constructing a 52 kilometre long underground railway system in the densely populated capital and sent the proposal to the government's high-powered Private Sector Infrastructure Committee (PICOM) for final approval.

After a long meeting with the firm's Managing Director Masud Reza on Tuesday, Communications Minister Nazmul Huda gave the approval as he got satisfactory answers on some important questions about the construction method of the underground line, sources said.

"We have sent the proposal of Contech to PICOM and after their approval the company would get letter of intent (LOI) for starting work on the project," Communications Secretary Shafiqul Islam yesterday said.

As per the rules, the principal secretary of the Prime Minister's Office chairs the PICOM meeting and gives approval of a development project by a private company after a ministry forwards it.

The company was selected as it was the lowest bidder in the pre-qualification tender and the government would not go for calling tender again, the communications secretary said.

He, however, observed that the company would have to pass some more stages before going for physical construction.

The selection was given on the basis of an international tender called by Bangladesh Railway in 2002 seeking application for establishing a metro rail system in the capital, sources said.

Only two firms had participated in the bid and local firm Contech Limited was the lowest bidder as it proposed to construct the 52-kilometre underground railway at a cost of Tk 5,200 crore.

The company would construct the metro rail on build, own, operate and transfer (BOOT) basis. As per BOOT guidelines, after getting LOI the private company would prepare terms and conditions and other requirements for a formal agreement with the authorities concerned.

After signing the agreement, the authority would issue work order for implementing the project. All this formalities would have to be completed within three months after issuing LOI, says the guideline.

Earlier, the Ministry of Communications decided to go for a feasibility study and sent a proposal to the Planning Commission seeking Tk 7 crore for the study. As the Planning Commission did not respond to the proposal, the ministry later abandoned the idea.

Consequently, the communications ministry asked the local firm to submit details of its legal status, technical, management and financial capabilities for project implementation and experience and status of ownership in the proposed project.

The company submitted all the

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**2 officials killed as truck rams Rab vehicle**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Two Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) officials were killed and three others including two Rab sources were injured when a sand-laden truck rammed their vehicle at Rajarbagh in the capital yesterday.

The dead Rab personnel are Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) ABM Al Mahub Prodhan, 35 and Lieutenant Commander Shabed Sarwar Khan, 30. The wounded are Flight Lt Mujahid and Rab sources Kamruzzaman Palash and Liton. The injured and killed Rab personnel are members of Rab-10.

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**Israeli troops seizes Hamas legislators**

*Forge ahead with military campaign*

**AP, Gaza City**

Israeli troops rounded up dozens of ministers and lawmakers from the Palestinians' ruling Hamas party yesterday, including the deputy prime minister, while forging ahead with a military campaign in Gaza meant to win the release of an Israeli soldier held by Hamas gunmen.

An Israeli spokesman warned that the government "will do everything we can" to get back the soldier, Cpl. Gilad Shalit.

The body of a kidnapped 18-year-old Jewish settler who was shot in the head was found in the West Bank, Israeli security officials said. Palestinian militants said they killed Eliahu Asheri, whose body was found buried near the West

Bank city of Ramallah.

Israeli aircraft attacked a car carrying Palestinian militants in Gaza City, the Israeli military said, but witnesses said the missile missed the vehicle and Mahdi Dahdoh, an Islamic Jihad activist, escaped from the car. An unidentified person was wounded, hospital officials said.

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**Woman to die for keeping 4kg heroin**

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced a woman to death and fined Tk 5 lakh for possessing 4kg heroin.

Judge Mohammad Nazrul Islam of the Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court handed down the sentence in presence of the convict Babeya Khatun alias Zahura Khatun.

The court acquitted Billal Hossain, another accused in the case, as the charge brought against him was not proved.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their

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Teachers of Ibtedayee madrasas continue their fast unto death at Muktangan in the capital yesterday to realise their seven-point demand.

**BSF abducts 7 women**

**UNB, Kushtia**

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) kidnapped seven Bangladeshi women from Daulatpur border area yesterday and the day before.

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) officials here said the Indian border guards entered Bangladesh territory and took away the seven women.

According to the officials, the BSF men picked up four women--Kakoli, China, Achera, and Farida-of Chilmari while they were working on a cropland near the border in Ramkrishnapur Union at about 9:00am yesterday.

Earlier on Wednesday, the BSF personnel of Muradnagar camp

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**Last day to whiten black money today**

*Banks, tax offices to remain open*

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) directed all commercial banks to keep their branches open today to collect revenue.

The banks circulated the BB instruction to all their branches to keep the offices open until 9:00pm.

The NBR in a press release said all income tax offices will remain open for the greater interest of tax payers.

Source said this will provide the black money holders, along with the general tax payers, an opportunity to pay their taxes to whiten black money.

A huge amount of black money was whitened in the last few weeks, the sources said, adding that around Tk 1,309 crore was whitened up to May this year whereas more than Tk 1,000 crore was whitened in the first week of June.

**160 victims of extra-judicial killings in 6 months**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

One hundred and sixty one people fell victims to extra-judicial killings by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police in the last six months, according to Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK).

Of them, 85 were killed in 'crossfire' or 'encounter' by Rab while the rest by police, an ASK

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**JCD man, outlaw killed in 'crossfire'**

**STAR REPORT**

A Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader was killed in 'crossfire' between Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel and his accomplices at Alurtal area of Sylhet city early yesterday while an outlaw was killed in an encounter with the police in Khulna.

Rab arrested Habib Islam Chamak, 22, on Wednesday afternoon at Sylhet's Topkhana area.

our Sylhet correspondent reports. Following Chamak's confessional statement, a Rab team set out for Alurtal to recover hidden firearms. As they reached the spot the team came under heavy fire from Chamak's accomplices. Rab retaliated and Chamak sustained bullet injuries when he tried to escape Rab custody.

He was rushed to the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College

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**Prayer Timing**

June 30

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-54	6-57
Esha	8-17	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation



Puja Udjapan Parishad members form a human chain in front of the High Court yesterday to protest the bid to relocate Ramna Kali Mandir, an old Hindu temple in the capital.

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