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All set to create water retention point in city

269 acres to be acquired at Kalyanpur

By Morshed Ali Khan

The government has finalised plans to acquire 269 acres of low lying land at Kalyanpur to collect storm and waste water that would otherwise flood the city.

Sources in Dhaka WASA said the ECNEC has already approved a Tk 82 crore project to create a water retention point in the area. The "complicated" process of buying the land has begun.

"We sent an acquisition proposal to the LGRD Ministry more than a month ago, so the Land Ministry should start the process soon," said a WASA engineer.

Rapid urbanisation is consuming the city's low lying areas, making it difficult to control the huge storm and waste water that collects inside the Dhaka Flood Protection Embankment.

The water retention point would accommodate that water

and improve the environment in one of the most densely populated cities in the world.

Under the plan, the water would be collected and later removed by the Kalyanpur pump station. During the rainy season, the station's three machines pump about 10 cubic metres of water per second.

Once the land purchase is finalised the area will be ringed with barbed wire and eventually turned into a recreation park. WASA sources said even commercial activities, such as fish cultivation, could be built on the site. However, excavation would be necessary for that kind of scheme, said a WASA engineer.

However, Kalyanpur residents said the government might have trouble buying the land, since most low lying stretches have changed hands several times. A scarcity of

land inside the embankment has encouraged people to invest in property covered by nothing but water.

Munsur Ahmed, a man from a nearby village, said his family once owned several acres where the government plans to build the retention point.

"My family sold the land to people in the city who won't give up their rights so easily," said Ahmed.

Official sources said there are always touts who appear with forged deeds when the government announces plans for a new development. Some government officials and employees also join the land grab, they alleged.

"We have to cross these hurdles to save this vast stretch of low lying land for the sake of the city dwellers and future generations," said an official source.



Queen Sophia of Spain accompanied by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited the Ashrayan project at village Surabari in Gazipur yesterday. —PID photo

Hijack drama drags on, may continue 'for days'

STANSTED (England), Feb 8: British authorities negotiating with hijackers holding at least 150 hostages aboard an Afghan airliner settled in for a second day of negotiations today, warning the standoff could last "for days," reports AP.

Since landing Sunday at Stansted Airport outside London, the hijackers have requested only food, water, unspecified medical supplies and that the lavatories on the Ariana Airlines plane be emptied, police said.

More such supplies were delivered, including omelets for breakfast.

"Negotiations remain our favourite option," Joe Edwards, an assistant chief constable of the Essex Police, said Monday. "I will say it could be a very protracted technique. It could go on for days."

Exactly what the hijackers were negotiating for remained unclear. But a diplomat familiar with earlier negotiations when the airliner landed in Moscow said those holding the plane sought to free a prisoner held in the Afghan city of Kandahar.

Afghan media speculated the hijackers were dissidents seeking the release of Ismail Khan, a former regional governor who has been held since 1997 by Afghanistan's ruling Taliban movement. Khan is a member of Afghanistan's opposition alliance, which still rules roughly 10 per cent of the war-shattered country.

Afghan opposition leader and former president Burhanuddin Rabbani today denounced that speculation.

The legal government of Afghanistan categorically denies its involvement in the plane hijacking. Rabbani said in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. "Rumours that terrorists demand the release of the former governor of the Herat province Ismail Khan are groundless, and it's the Taliban itself that is spreading those rumours."

Edwards, who said police were in contact with the plane throughout the night and into the day, characterised both the hijackers and the hostages as remaining low-key.

"The people we are talking to are remarkably calm and that's really important," he said. "The atmosphere is one of control,

people behaving rationally. That's going to help an awful lot."

"The fact that people haven't been hurt, that there isn't a sense of panic on board the plane... these are really important points that allow us to press ahead with the negotiation option with some confidence," he said.

According to some of the 30 passengers released, the hijackers are eight young men, armed with pistols, grenades and daggers. They are believed to be still holding 157 hostages of unknown nationality.

"They were all young — around 25-30 years old, dressed in traditional Afghan costume — and to begin with they were threatening," Mohammad Bashir Mahal, one of 10 passengers set free in Moscow, said at a news conference Monday.

"But slowly, their aggression subsided and they treated us quite well. No one was beaten or insulted. Relations were good," he said.

The hijackers appeared to be Afghan because of their language and clothes, he said.

Two shot, 2 stabbed: Tk 50000 mugged

By Staff Correspondent

Two people were shot and two others stabbed in four separate incidents in the city yesterday.

Rabbi, 22, a trader, was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital after muggers attacked him on the Farmgate footbridge at about 8 a.m.

He was going to Chakbazaar to buy materials for his shop when the gang confronted him. They took away Tk 50,000 at gun point and then stabbed him in the head with a machete.

In the second incident, Jalil, an appliances dealer at Uttara, was shot at about 3 p.m. on Nawabpur Road. The 30-year-old was on his way to the wholesale electrical appliance market in the area when a gang of three muggers shot him in the hand and ran off with Tk 2,000. Local people rushed Jalil to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

In the third case, Zafar, 30, a spare part's dealer, was mugged at about 3 p.m. while riding in a rickshaw in Suritola. Police said a gang stopped the rickshaw and shot Zafar in the forehead and chest. The gang then fled with the victim's gold chain, wrist watch, and cash.

Zafar, who was returning home at the time of the attack, was rushed to DMCH by police, but the gang managed to escape.

Finally, an angry mob stabbed a man they believed to be a mugger near the Agargaon slum in Tejgaon.

Local people attacked Malek, 30, after they heard he was involved in a robbery at a nearby shop on Sunday. Sources said the mob attacked Malek when he tried to pass through the slum. At one stage during the assault, Malek was stabbed. The victim was taken to DMCH.

Ustad Vilayat Khan refuses to accept Padma Vibhusan

CALCUTTA, Jan 8: Sitar Maestro Ustad Vilayat Khan yesterday refused to accept this year's Padma Vibhusan on the ground that it was a belated decision of the recommending authorities, reports PTI.

The Septuagenarian sitar wizard regretted that his name figured in the list of awardees much later than some of his juniors in the world of Sitar players, who had been honoured with this civilian award years ago.

"This is an insult to me. If there is any award for Sitar in India, I must get it first," he said alleging that the Sangeet Natak Academy had been influenced by lobby, politics and favouritism while deciding the awardees.

There has always been a story of wrong time, wrong person and wrong award in this country a visibly enraged Khan said at a crowded press conference here.

Jet fuel price to be slashed

PM agrees to ministry's proposal

By Special Correspondent

The government has agreed in principle to a civil aviation ministry proposal to slash the price of jet fuel in order to reduce Bangladesh Biman's operational costs.

Mosharraf Hossain, the civil aviation and tourism minister, told a press briefing at Biman's headquarters that the proposal should be approved shortly.

"The prime minister has given consent to a ministry proposal in this regard," said Hossain. "It is going to be placed before the cabinet committee for energy."

Hossain said jet fuel prices are extremely high in Bangladesh, which cuts into Biman's bottom line, especially on its long-haul Dhaka-New York route. Foreign airlines also avoid refueling in Dhaka due to the high price, added Hossain.

Biman's said it sealed a deal with the British aviation authorities to use Heathrow airport in London for its flight to New York via Dubai.

The national airline currently uses New Delhi and Brussels for its New York flight.

Biman had been sustaining heavy losses due to high operational costs, estimated to be Tk

45 crore a year. One factor contributing to the losses is that Biman must pay a levy of 75 US dollars per passenger at New Delhi airport.

Hossain said Biman could break even or become profitable with the addition of the third flight.

However, Biman would not have the "fifth freedom" to carry passengers from London to New York. Under the new agreement, British Airways will operate two more flights to Dhaka.

The minister said the national carrier needs new, larger aircraft to replace its aging fleet of five DC-10s if it wants to compete with foreign airlines. Its fleet also includes three Airbus 310s, three F-28s, and two ATPs, which are for sale.

The minister said the airlines, which has been in the red since it bought the new Airbus in 1996-97, is improving its management structure.

He said Biman management hopes to sign New York's Citibank as its consultant to offload a 40 per cent stake in the airline under a World Bank-aided project and find a strategic partner.

Our New Address

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Shahjalal Varsity Election of teachers representatives to Senate March 1

From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET, Feb 8: Schedule for election of the 15 teachers representatives to the Senate of the Shahjalal University of Science & Technology was announced today.

According to the schedule, the election will be held on March 1. The final voters list will be published on February 10 and the last date for filing nomination papers is February 20. Scrutiny of the nomination papers will be held on February 22 and the last date for withdrawal of nomination papers is February 24.

The President who is also the Chancellor of the Shahjalal University asked the authorities concerned for constituting senate following the tense situation prevailing over naming of different halls and buildings of the university.

JUTA office-bearers elected unopposed

All the 15 office-bearers of the Jahangirnagar University Teachers' Association (JUTA) were elected unopposed yesterday, reports UNB.

Finding no other candidates against the 15 posts on the last day of withdrawal of candidature, Election Commissioner Prof Abu Taher Majumder of English Department declared Prof M A Matin of Statistics Department as president and M Ruhul Amin Selim of Economics Department as General Secretary.

Out of 15 posts, eight including President and Assistant General Secretary, went to Democratic, progressive and pro-liberation panel while seven posts, including general secretary and treasurer went to pro-BNP panel.

Meanwhile, Khandker Mustahidur Rahman of Economics Department, who leads a faction of pro-BNP teachers, at a

press conference at the Teachers' Lounge in noon termed the new committee as illegal as the election process violated the JUTA provision.

Another faction leader of pro-Awami League teachers Prof Nasiruddin also rejected the election.

Valuable documents looted from Ctg DC's office

CHITTAGONG, Feb 8: Dacoits took away valuable documents from Deputy Commissioner's office located barely 20 yards from the Chittagong police headquarters in the early hours of today, reports UNB.

A case filed with Kotwal police said armed dacoits entered the office by breaking open the door and took away some valuable documents. The dacoits ransacked the office.

Y'slav defence minister gunned down

BELGRADE, Feb 8: Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic joined other government figures today in a brief memorial service for the country's defence minister who was gunned down in Belgrade's latest gangland-style killing of a prominent figure, reports AP.

Three alleged terrorists held in Ctg

From Our Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Feb 8: An alleged terrorist was held along with his three accomplices from CDA market area under Pahartoli thana here today.

Pahartoli thana police arrested Md Rasel, 22, an accused in a murder case in a pre-dawn raid today.

ডেল্টা লাইফ এর পলিসি বোনাস!

১৯৯৮ সালের শেষে একচক্রীয় জন্মের ফলাফল অনুযায়ী সকল লভসহ পলিসিতে নিম্নোক্ত বোনাস জমা করা হয়েছে।

১। সম্পদিত (Paid-up) বিমা অর্কের উপর ৫% চক্রবর্তী হার

২। ১৯৯৭ ও ১৯৯৮ সালের প্রতি বছরে জন্ম বিমা অর্কের উপর নিম্নের ক্ষমতঃ

বীমার মেয়াদ	প্রতি বছরে বোনাসের হার
১৪ বছর পর্যন্ত	১ ১০
১৫ থেকে ১৯ বছর	১ ১৫
২০ বছর বা তার উপরে	১ ১৫

আসামী জন্মের সময় একই হার অর্জনকারী বোনাস দেয়া হবে।

উপরোক্ত হারে বোনাস জমা হলে ১৯৯৭ উত্তর লভসহ সকল বীমা পলিসির অধীনে ১ লক্ষ টাকার বীমা মেয়াদ শেষে সমস্ত বোনাসের মোট পরিমাণ হবে :-

বীমার মেয়াদ	সমস্ত মোট বোনাস
১০ বছর	১ ৪২,০০০
১৫ বছর	১ ৬৯,০০০
২০ বছর	১ ১,০০,৫০০

বোনাস বীমার ছাব্বি প্রদানকালে পরিশোধযোগ্য

প্রাশা করা যায়, ভবিষ্যতে বোনাসের হার আরও বৃদ্ধি পাবে।

ডেল্টা লাইফ শুধু বীমা নয়, চমৎকার বিনিয়োগও বটে।

ডেল্টা লাইফ ইনসিওরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
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