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Down to Earth

City's Slow Expansion Across Buriganga

By ASM Nurunnabi

Dhaka city has been expanding steadily on its northern side in the absence of any natural obstruction. But as river Buriganga lies to the south, the city's southward expansion could not take place at the same pace. Due to lack of proper and adequate communication system, places like Jinjira, Keraniganj situated on the other side of the river Buriganga have remained somewhat less developed as compared with the north side of the river. Every day, more than half a million of people used to cross the river Buriganga by boats from the surrounding areas to come to Dhaka city for work. A considerable amount of time would be wasted in this way. As the road sub-sector became increasingly important, government adopted the policy of building bridges over important rivers linking national and regional highways with thana roads network.

The completion of the 847-metre long Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge over Buriganga in February, 1989 opened a new horizon in communication infrastructure of the country. Of the total construction cost of Tk 108 crore, Tk 58 crore was provided by China and the balance of Tk 50 crore was borne by the Bangladesh government. The bridge was a long-felt necessity for extending the Dhaka city on to the other side of the river Buriganga and for improving the road link with the southern and eastern parts of the country.

The bridge contributed to the opening of the Dhaka-Khulna highway and also has a considerable impact on the development of areas adjoin the highway, such as Sreenagar, Jinjira, Nawabganj, and Dohar. The potentialities of the bridge in the development of the areas served by the new highway are yet to be fully realised. Yet the importance of the first bridge over Buriganga can not be over-emphasised.

With a view of reaping greater benefits from communication with the southern side of the Buriganga river, construction of a second Buriganga Bridge at Babubazar has been undertaken and is expected to be completed soon.

The main objective of the second bridge under construction is to provide better road communication for the people living on the other side of the river Buriganga, establishing an easy link between Dhaka city and Jinjira and Keraniganj. The Jinjira end approach road of this bridge will be linked with

the Dhaka-Mawa road and Jinjira-Keraniganj-Dohar road. Thus the transportation cost of agricultural products from these areas to the Dhaka city will be reduced. Temporary employment opportunity will be created for the poor sections of the society. As a result, the socio-economic condition of people living in these areas will be improved. It all depends on the early completion of the second Buriganga Bridge.

Among the factors causing slow expansion of the city on the opposite side of the Buriganga river is the large-scale encroachments on both sides of the Buriganga river. Though notices for removal of encroachments in these areas have been served by the Department of Environment, no progress in this respect has yet been reported.

Another factor for the slow progress of expansion is the existence of mostly low-lying agricultural lands in these areas requiring heavy cost for development to the required level which is why real estate investors in the private housing sector are not keen to put in money in housing schemes in these areas.

RAJUK has a project in this area, namely, Jheelmeel township project, covering 450 acres of land along Mawa road. It will have 200 residential plots of 5 and 3 kathas. It is understood that application for allotment of plots under this project will be invited in the middle of next year and a time limit of five years has been fixed for completion of the project.

An enclave in the Buriganga named as Kamrangirchar is rapidly developing in a slum-like fashion. In the interest of proper development of this area in a planned manner, it is desirable that RAJUK and the Dhaka City Corporation take up development of this area in a planned manner with suitable civic amenities.

Not only in Kamrangirchar but also in other low-lying areas on the other side of the river Buriganga, private land owners may be tempted to erect makeshift structures on account of their low cost, paving the way for large-scale growth of slums attracting poor sections of people. The authorities concerned, it is felt, need be vigilant against these harmful eventualities so that they do not cast a dark shadow on the healthy growth of urbanisation in these new areas.

UP chairmen threaten to 'smash hands & legs of journalists'

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Nov 3: Union Parishad chairmen of Satkhira district at a rally there have threatened to "smash hands and legs of journalists and destroy everything in Satkhira town" if the case against Asadul Huq and his son is not withdrawn unconditionally within seven days.

Asadul Huq, president of Satkhira District UP Chairmen's Association, is one of the accused in a case filed recently with the Sadar thana under PSA for the armed attack on the Dainik Satkhira Chitra office on October 26. Its editor Anisur Rahim and some others were seriously injured in the attack.

Asadul is chairman of Kulla Union Parishad in Debhata upazila.

The rally, held on Thursday at Shaheed Abdur Razaque Park, was presided over by Abul Khair, chairman of Phingri Union Parishad.

The rally was addressed by 78 people including the UP chairmen while Asadul Huq looked on sitting on a chair on the roof of a three-storied building few yards from the well-guarded meeting venue.

The rally over, the UP chairmen and their supporters brought out a militant procession that paraded the thoroughfares of Satkhira town, creating panic among residents.

According to witnesses and sources in Satkhira district police, the speakers included six UP chairmen who are wanted in several criminal cases including those filed for stealing relief materials.

The absconding chairman of Helatalla UP in Kalaroa upazila boasted fully said that both the hands of journalists would be cut off if they publish any report in newspapers against any chairman.

The Satkhira town will be turned into debris as an earth quake does, said the UP chairmen who are evading arrest.

Terming the allegation of attack by Asadul Huq on the newspaper office and its editor as false and fabricated, the speakers also demanded cancellation of its declaration immediately to avert "serious consequences".

Security measures have been stepped up after the threat. Satkhira Press Club has been placed under tight security by police. Additional forces have been deployed at all vulnerable points at Satkhira town.

According to a top official of the district administration, some police officials and local leaders of the ruling party are instigating the UP chairmen to create a law and order situation in Satkhira town.

Army personnel beaten by bus staff

By Staff Correspondent

An army personnel was beaten up by the staff of a passenger bus at Mirpur section 12 following a brawl over bus fare yesterday morning.

The incident took place when Mohammad Najimur Rahman, gunner of Seven Field regiment Artillery, Mirpur cantonment, was travelling in a bus from Mirpur 10 to Mirpur 12 at about 7:30 am, police quoting the FIR said.

Rahman had an altercation with conductor Kamal over the fare. At one stage, Kamal and other staff of the bus started beating him, police said.

As Rahman screamed out, his colleagues appeared at the scene and rescued him, sources said.

Rahman filed a case with Pallabi thana in this regard. Pallabi police arrested conductor Kamal for his alleged involvement with the beating.

Illegal arms factory found in Chittagong

CHITTAGONG, Nov 3: Members of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in a special drive unearthed a clandestine arms manufacturing unit and recovered arms, ammunition and accessories at Brick Field Road, Patharghata under Kotwali Police station here last night, reports BSS.

The team led by Assistant Police Super MA Quader Khan conducted the raid on a rented house of one Shamsu Mia and recovered four country made pipeguns, two light guns, four live cartridges, seven iron made pipes, two cocktails, and one lathe machine, CID sources said.

However, none was arrested as the miscreants fled the scene sensing the presence of CID personnel.



Notre Dame College yesterday gave a reception to the students who secured positions in the merit list in this year's HSC examinations. The reception was part of a day-long programme organised to celebrate the college's founding anniversary Millennium Jubilee and Club Day. Archbishop of Bangladesh and Chairman of the college's governing body Michael Rozario (sitting 2nd from left) and Notre Dame College Principal Fr. Benjamin Costa (sitting extreme left) are seen, among others, with the meritorious students. — Star photo

20 hurt in West Bank clashes despite call for restraint

JERUSALEM, Nov 3: Israeli and Palestinian leaders both urged restraint today in hopes the latest cease-fire effort would take hold, but clashes erupted in several West Bank towns following Muslim midday prayers, reports AP.

One Palestinian was shot dead by Israeli troops in the town of Tulkarem, doctors said, and confrontations also broke out in Hebron, Ramallah and Jenin, with at least 20 Palestinians injured. Also, a homemade grenade was tossed at police outside the Old City in Jerusalem, but no one was injured, police said.

"The cease-fire doesn't apply to us," said Ali, a 17-year-old rock

thrower in Hebron. Overall, the clashes weren't as intense as the past few days, but demonstrated that many young Palestinians were still prepared to take to the streets.

A Thursday car bomb that killed two Israelis in Jerusalem and firefights in Palestinian territories came only hours after a cease-fire was reached and threatened to destroy the agreement. During the past five weeks of fighting, such outbursts have often touched off retaliatory violence.

Yet Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak struck a conciliatory note today.

"We will persevere in our efforts

for peace and we will devote all our strength to it," the prime minister said. "We are strong enough to stand on both fronts: the battle for peace and the struggle against violence and terror."

Over the past two days, both sides have taken steps to implement the truce. Israel has pulled back tanks from Palestinian cities, and Palestinian police have restrained rock-throwing youths.

"We're doing our best," Nabil Shaath, a senior Palestinian negotiator, told CNN. "It's much calmer today (in the Gaza Strip) than any day before."

Three Israeli soldiers were killed in fighting Wednesday in See page 11 col 6

10 hurt in Ctg as gunmen open fire on procession

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Nov 3: At least 10 people were injured, three by bullets, when some gunmen, reportedly BCL cadres, opened fire on a joint procession of BNP and JCD at Mirzapur under Hathazari thana in the district this afternoon.

Police and witnesses said the procession brought out by local units of BNP and its front organisation after a rally held at Sarkererhat School ground came under attack when it reached Mirzapur at around 5.30 am.

Of the injured, Nurul Huda and Mostafa Alam Masud of JCD and Shahidul Alam of BNP were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

College student, shopkeeper shot in city

By Staff Correspondent

A college student and a shopkeeper were shot in separate incidents in the city yesterday.

Jalitan, a first year student of Notre Dame College, was hit in his leg when two members of a local gang fired at each other near Arambagh Club in the afternoon.

He was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

In another incident, shopkeeper Suntu was shot by extortionists in Hossaini Dalan area.

The gang appeared in front of his shop in the afternoon and demanded toll from him. On refusal, they dragged him to a nearby place and shot him in his leg.

The victim was sent to DMCH.

Filing of case against 2 RCC commissioners condemned

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Nov 3: Twenty-two ward commissioners of Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) in a joint statement today condemned filing of a case against two ward commissioners under Public Safety Act (PSA).

One Shamsul Haque of Fudkipara filed the case on October 24 accusing Shariul Islam Bubu and Abdul Hamid Sarker, commissioners of ward no 12 and 22 respectively of demolishing his house.

Flood situation in Satkhira improves

BAGERHAT, Nov 3: Despite onrush of water through Khaitala cross-dam, the overall flood situation in Satkhira district improved today, reports UNB.

Executive Engineer of Water Development Board Nurunnabi said repair work on the dam would take one more week.

However, he said stagnant water would be drained out cutting shrimp enclosures, if necessary.

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Clash over land in Pabna: One killed, 4 hurt

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Nov 3: One person was killed and four others injured in a clash between two rival groups of villagers at Char Nabipur under Chatmohar Upazila in Pabna district yesterday.

The dead was identified as Afsar Ali, 43.

Police and witnesses said the clash was a sequel to previous enmity between the two groups over possession of a land in the char area.

When Afsar and his two brothers Akkas Ali, 45 and Yunus Ali, 32 went to a paddy field, their opponents led by Muktar Hossain attacked them with lethal weapons.

On receiving the news, supporters of Afsar rushed to the scene and locked in clash with Muktar's men.

Afsar was hit by sharp weapons and died on the spot.

Police later arrested Muktar and three others. A case has been lodged with Chatmohar thana in this connection.

20 hurt as rival groups clash in Sunamganj

SYLHET, Nov 3: At least 20 people were injured, four by bullets, in a clash between two rival groups at Ishaqupur village in Jagannathpur upazila of Sunamganj district today, reports UNB.

Police said the clash erupted at about 10 am between the supporters of Faizul member and Badrul Islam as a sequel to previous enmity. About 14 rounds of gunshots were fired during the clash. Nine of the injured were admitted to Osmani Medical College Hospital at Sylhet.

Road accidents kill two BCL leaders, six others

By Staff Correspondent

At least eight people including two student leaders were killed and 40 injured in separate road accidents in Mymensingh, Jhenidah and Munshiganj yesterday.

Of them, four were killed in Jhenidah, two in town Mymensingh and the rest in Munshiganj.

Our Mymensingh Correspondent reports: Two leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) were killed in a road accident on Mymensingh-Haluaghat road in Phulpur upazila yesterday evening.

They were identified as Sabbir, 25, General Secretary of BCL Phulpur upazila unit and Shahidul, 22, General Secretary of Phulpur Degree College Students Union.

Police and witnesses said they

met with the accident at around 5 pm when a motorbike they were riding was crushed under the wheels of a truck coming from opposite side. The student leaders were overtaking a bus.

Local people caught the truck and set fire to it. They also put up a barricade on the road and damaged at least 10 vehicles.

Both the drivers (bus and truck) fled the scene soon after the accident.

Our Jhenidah correspondent writes: Four people were killed and 25 others injured in a road accident in Jhenidah yesterday.

The accident occurred when a bus hit a roadside tree on Jessore-Kaliganj road. The bus fell into a ditch, killing four on the spot and injuring 25 others.

The dead were identified as See page 11 col 8

Boral Muder Case Four-member team to interrogate Quddus

From Quazi Amanullah

KHULNA, Nov 3: A four-member team has been formed to interrogate Abdul Quddus alias Kala Quddus, one of the most wanted terrorists of Bagerhat district and chargesheeted accused in Kalidas Boral murder case.

He was arrested on Wednesday evening from the second floor of a five-storied building at Pirbagh under Mirpur thana, Dhaka.

He was brought to Bagerhat on Thursday amid tight security and

placed on a three-day remand by first class magistrate court here the same day.

President of ward no 3 unit of Bagerhat sadar thana Jubo League and most faithful associate of district Jubo League president Alamgir Siddiqui, Kala Quddus is one of the 22 chargesheeted accused in Kalidas Boral murder case.

He was also wanted in 13 cases including murder, rape, extortion See page 11 col 7



Maintaining status quo... as is the case with many other city roads, construction materials occupy part of the VIP road in front of Hotel Sheraton, creating traffic jam and inconvenience to pedestrians. — Star photo