

# PM lays foundation of flyover in city Saturday

UNB, Dhaka

To ease traffic congestion in city's Khilgaon rail-road intersection, a flyover will be constructed at a cost of Tk 39.76 crore.

This will be the country's first flyover to be built under the government's own funding under the supervision of the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED).

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will lay the foundation of the flyover on Saturday and the project is expected to be completed within 20 month.

The 1662-metre-long and 15-metre-wide flyover will have four lanes and a divider in the middle.

It will also have 277-metre bridge-and-ramp on the Syedabad end, 293-metre on the Malibagh end and 384-metre on the Rajarbagh end.

Vehicles, coming from any of the three sides will be able to ply on the flyover without any traffic signal as it will have 708-metre-long loops on both sides.

The flyover will be constructed on single pillars to facilitate movement of vehicles under it.

Local construction firm Development Construction Ltd and Chinese Wuhan General Municipal Engineering Corporation will jointly implement the project.

An agreement was signed here yesterday between the LGED and the two construction firms.

Executive Engineer of LGED Syed Mahbubur Rahman and Managing Director of Development Construction Ltd M Nurul Amin signed the agreement at the LGED conference room.

Local Government Minister Zillur Rahman, Commerce Minister M Abdul Jalil and Deputy Minister for LGRD Saber Hossain Chowdhury were present, among others, in the signing ceremony.

Upon completion of the project, road communication between the city's southeastern and western region will greatly improve, said an official handout.

# Hockey stick procession against toll collection

UNB, Kushtia

Exasperated with the rising toll collection, the businessmen here in town brought out a hockey stick procession on Tuesday issuing warning to terrorists and extortionists.

United Businessmen Welfare Association organised the stick procession to mark the first founding anniversary of the association.

Each of the members of the business community with a hockey stick in hand and a whistle in the mouth attended the procession spontaneously.

Parading different thoroughfares of the town, the agitating businessmen later held a rally at Rajab Ali market in the town demanding immediate arrest of the terrorists.

# SQ Chowdhury

**FROM PAGE 1**

The mourners who went to Mariamnagar in a long motorcade could not reach the grave as supporters of Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, equipped with arms took position around it, witnesses said.

In face of attack, BNP men returned to the port city without placing wreaths at the grave of Zia.

UNB adds: BNP central leader Abdullah Al Noman accused Giasuddin Quader Chowdhury MP, who was staying at their Khamarbari at Mariamnagar of launching attack on BNP leaders and activists.

In the afternoon, BNP and its front organisations brought out a procession in the port city protesting the attack on party men at Mariamnagar and the killing of JCD activist Shahidul Alam Nitol.

Nitol was gunned down on the road in front of the residence of Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury at about 4-30 pm on Tuesday.

# New frigate

**FROM PAGE 1**

Quamrul Huda of the Armed Forces Division and Captain Nowroze of the Director General, Defence Purchase, is now in Seoul in connection with signing the protocol and receiving the ship.

Earlier, the Chief of Naval Staff was present in Seoul during the launch of the ship which will pave the way for the Daewoo's entry into the global warship export market.

Daewoo won the bidding to build the frigate for the Bangladesh navy in 1997. The government of Bangladesh will pay for the ship from its revenue income.

A delegation of eight members of parliament also visited South Korea to see the making of the ship that has a maximum speed of 25.2 knots with a full load of 2320 tons.

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# Test-tube

**FROM PAGE 1**

work yesterday in a jubilant mood, his family said.

At the special care baby unit in one of Dhaka's top hospitals, the three new-borns, weighing just over a kilo each, slept in an incubator to ensure they had sufficient oxygen.

"They are fine, but since they were premature they are suffering from respiratory distress," said specialist Samia Ahmed.

Doctors said the country's first successful test-tube babies would give hope to many couples unable to have children, especially those who could not afford to travel to foreign countries for treatment.

Fatema said IVF costs around 80,000 Taka (1,400 dollars) and all the equipment had to be imported.



Lakhpah Dhiki, the proud mother (L) of the world's youngest conqueror to the summit of Mount Everest, schoolboy Temba Tsheri, 16 (R), embraces him on his return to Kathmandu yesterday. Temba Tsheri conquered the 8848 metre high Mount Everest, the world's tallest mountain, from the Tibet side on May 22. Earlier in the spring of 2000, he failed in an attempt to climb Everest from the Nepal side due to frost bite and lost his five fingers on both hands as a result.

# Tributes paid to Zia

**FROM PAGE 1**

nations of the world and helped it develop relations with all countries. Zia played a key-role in regional and global peace process. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is the brain-child of the late president.

On this day in 1981, Ziaur Rahman, the proclaimer of Bangladesh's independence, was assassinated at Chittagong Circuit House by a group of disgruntled army men.

To mark the day, BNP and its different front organisations and various other socio-cultural organisations chalked out elaborate programmes including hoisting of party flags at half-mast and black flags, laying of wreaths, Qurankhwani, milad mahfil, special prayers, feeding of the destitute, photo exhibition and discussion meetings. All city, district, thana, ward and union units of the main opposition party held similar programmes.

Former President Abdur Rahman Biswas placed wreath and

offered fateha at the mazaar of Zia at 10:15am.

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia along with party leaders and activists placed wreath at 10:30am. Top BNP leaders AQM Badrudozza Chowdhury, M Saifur Rahman, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Khandaker Delwar Hossain, Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Moudud Ahmed, Khandaker Mahbubuddin Ahmed, Mir Shawkat Ali, Sadeque Hossain Khoka and others were present.

Afterwards, BNP's different front organisations including Jubba Dal, Sramik Dal, Chhatra Dal, Mohila Dal, Krishak Dal, Jasas, Shechhashebak Dal, Tanti Dal and Ulema Dal also placed wreaths at the mazaar.

After the mazaar programme, Khaleda Zia along with senior party leaders distributed food among the poor and destitute at some 50 places in Argagao BNP Bazaar, Dhanmondi, Ramna, Motijheel, Tejgaon and Cantonment thana

areas.

BNP has taken up a 4-day destitute feeding programme beginning yesterday in some 400 places in the capital city.

It also arranged for special prayers and milad mahfil at 28 mosques in the city including Baitul Mukarram after Asr prayers.

Jasas, BNP's cultural wing, put up a huge gate at Naya Paltan road and decorated the entire road with miniature black flags, festoons and posters. It organised a film show on the life and works of Zia in front of party central office in the evening.

Earlier, many children under the banner of Zia Shishu Smriti Free Clinic began a daylong hunger strike in front of BNP central office demanding May 30 to be declared a National Mourning Day and a public holiday.

The children broke their fast at about 2:30pm at Khaleda Zia's request by taking sherbet from her hands.

# Construction of Rupsha Bridge

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fulfilling the long-cherished dream of the people of the southwestern region.

"The Rupsha Bridge project is yet another addition to the success story of the Awami League government," said Hasina amidst cheers and applause.

The prime minister said her government has not laid the foundation stone of or started any project without completing appropriate process and allocating necessary fund.

She also said that her government discussed the Rupsha Bridge project with the government of Japan and asked for funding. Accordingly, a credit agreement was signed on March 29 this year with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) to finance the project. The land acquisition formalities began after the agreement, she informed.

She said that her government will do everything to complete construction of the bridge within the stipulated time.

Hasina said the Japanese construction firm Shimizu-ITD joint venture has been appointed for the construction of the bridge.

"We have ensured longevity and effectiveness of the bridge over the mighty river Rupsha through application of developed and modern technology," said the prime minister.

She said through this bridge, Bagerhat and other southwestern districts will be brought under smooth road communication network.

Terming the development of communication system as one of the pre-requisite to the country's overall development, the prime minister reiterated her election pledge for massive, well-coordinated programmes to develop the communication system.

She said her government has spent about Tk 6,330 crore during the last four years and eleven months for development and maintenance of road network under the RHD. For 2000-2001 fiscal, Tk 1,743 crore has further been allocated for development and Tk 290 crore for maintenance.

"We have achieved economic growth of about six per cent over the last four years and recently we attained food autarky with a surplus of 1.58 million metric tons of foodgrains."

Earlier, the prime minister was

given standing ovation when she reached Labonchora at 11:15 am. Hundreds of men and women greeted her with applause and slogans, standing on either side of the one-way road under a scorching sun. She offered prayers after laying the foundation stone of the bridge and inaugurating the ground-breaking work.

Communications Minister Anwar Hossain, Health Minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, State Minister for Social Welfare Dr. Mozammel Hossain, State Minister for Planning Dr. Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, State Minister for Energy Prof. Rafiqul Islam, State Minister for Communications Anisul Huq Chowdhury, State Minister for Health Dr. Amanullah, State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Talukder Abdul Khaleque, Secretary to the Ministry of Communications Rezauul Hayat, Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh Jiro Kobayashi, Whip Mustafa Rashid Suja, Sheikh Helaluddin MP and Munnujan Sufian MP were present during the ceremony.

# Spl security to Hasina

**FROM PAGE 12**

series of hartals, BNP has already sought presidential intervention in stopping the government from going ahead with the planned law. A high-powered delegation of the party on Monday also urged him not to give his assent to the matter. The ruling Awami League, too, plans to discuss the matter with the president soon.

Observers say the moves by the opposing political camps are aimed at involving the Bangabhaban in the pre-election politics.

Meanwhile, the government is yet to divulge details of the proposed law though it has given rise to widespread controversy. Top government leaders including the prime minister are only defending the legal steps without focusing much on its provisions.

An influential minister said the government is determined to pass the law to ensure security to Sheikh Hasina who has survived a number of assassination attempts.

The minister, who would not be named, claimed that press reports did not speak of the basic nature of the planned law which is aimed to

provide security cover not only to Hasina, but to all former prime ministers, their spouses and children, as well.

The minister differed with the critics of the proposed law that it would enable the outgoing premier to continue enjoying official protocol, which, in turn, would help influence the election process. "It will only cover the official security by the SSF," the minister noted.

Agriculture Minister Matia Choudhury told The Daily Star last night that Hasina was among the world's top five security-risk leaders. "Therefore, she deserves special security."

Without offering any details of the proposed law, now being drafted, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Abdul Matin Khasru told Star that it would in no way go against the spirit of the caretaker government.

Food Minister Amir Hossain Amu, another senior AL leader, told BBC radio yesterday that his party might meet the president to discuss the proposed law.

# PM: Punish terrorists

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The Prime Minister said her government has institutionalised democracy which Khaleda Zia wants to destroy. Khaleda is conspiring against a democratic government to grab power through backdoor, She said.

The prime minister blamed late president Ziaur Rahman for rehabilitating anti-liberation forces.

She said Ziaur Rahman grabbed power at gunpoint with the help of killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. His wife Khaleda Zia is now conspiring to save killers of Bangabandhu with the help anti-liberation forces and a deposed president.

The Prime Minister said the next

general elections would be held under a neutral caretaker government. She called upon the people to remain alert so that none can rig the polls.

She asked her party workers to form anti-terrorism committee in every ward to face terrorists belonging particularly to opposition BNP.

Presided over by city AL president Advocate Manjurul Imam, the public meeting was addressed by the Health Minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, State Minister for Disaster Management Talukder Abdul Khaleque, Whip Mostafa Rashidi Shuja, MPs of Khulna district and leaders of city and district committees.

# Traffic problems

**FROM PAGE 12**

officials of the organisations about the problems and try to motivate them to take effective steps. The discussants suggested various other ways to bring about an immediate solution to the deteriorating traffic problems in the city.

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority Chairman Azizul Haque Bhuiyan, Chairman of Bangladesh Transport Foundation AKM Kamaluddin Chowdhury, former home secretary, Professor of Civil Engineering Department of BUET Mazhar Hoque and Assistant Chief Architect, Department of Architecture, Ministry of Public Works Kazi Golam Nasir were present at the meeting, among others.

Members of the scouts said they have 1.3 million scouts across the country and that they are ready to post some of them at different city points to reduce traffic woes.

Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam chaired the meeting.

They observed that a concerted

short-term inspection system involving all the relevant organisations need to be introduced immediately to minimise the traffic hazards.

They also felt the need for a separate and professional traffic management system for the capital.

There should be a separate traffic engineering system for finding solutions to traffic problems of the city, they said.

# Heated debate

**FROM PAGE 12**

by issuing work orders without tenders and through unauthorised selling of cotton.

The BNP lawmaker termed the hand-over of nine textile mills to the employees 'a politicised act' and wanted to see the copy of memorandum of articles of the association.

In reply, the state minister refused to make the memorandum public. "No member has the right to see the copy of the memorandum," the state minister was quoted as saying by the lawmaker.

Protesting these remarks, Milon walked out of the meeting.

The state minister termed the lawmaker's speech 'politically motivated' and 'an attempt to draw the press attention'.

Presided over by committee Chairman Shamsur Rahman Sarif, the meeting, held at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, was attended among others by Advocate Moslem Uddin and the officials concerned.

# CEC: President

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It is assumed that they discussed the whole gamut of electoral process, including voter list, and the EC preparations for the coming general election likely to be held at the end of September or early October.

Election Commission's current bid to modify the electoral rules by amending representation of People's Order also very likely to have been discussed at the meeting. The amendment is to be made either in Parliament or by a presidential ordinance.

As there is no possibility of placing a bill to amend the RPO in the last session of the current Parliament, beginning on June 6, observers say the amendments will have to be made by ordinance during the caretaker government.

However, the observers are doubtful about how much change can be brought in the RPO as President Shahabuddin will not go for any ordinance without consent of the major political parties who are not apparently keen to bring the changes in the law.

# SAARC body to meet

**FROM PAGE 1**

ments in South Asian region. We have already welcomed Indian Premier Atal Behari Vajpayee's invitation to Pakistan's Chief Executive General Pervez Mosharraf to visit India', Foreign Secretary Syed Muazzem Ali said yesterday.

Briefing newsmen at the foreign office, he termed it a positive development and hoped that India and Pakistan would be able to resolve their outstanding issues.

Ali, who will represent Bangladesh at the Colombo meet, said it will have its main thrust on full resumption of the official SAARC process and on the Summit at Kathmandu as soon as possible, he said.

The meeting will review the integrated programme of action, report of the group of eminent persons, progress and developments in economic cooperation, legal, social and communication

issues including promotion of people to people contact among the SAARC member countries.

He said it will also finalise the proposed SAARC meetings at ministerial and secretary levels, coordination of SAARC positions at multilateral fora and preparations for 22nd meeting of the council of ministers and next meeting of the standing committee.

# Mystery shrouds

**FROM PAGE 12**

about 9pm.

The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

The police inquest report said there were black marks around her neck. Police suspected that some one tried to strangle the minor girl.

When contacted, duty officer of Badda thana said no case was filed in this regard.

# Mamata: Rough road

**FROM PAGE 12**

enhance her credibility.

Indeed, a difficult road lies ahead of Mamata. Relations between her party and its new electoral ally Congress have already shown signs of strain following mutual recrimination over their failure to do well in West Bengal elections.

Only a couple of days ago, Congress Working Committee, the highest decision-making forum of Sonia Gandhi's party, attributed part of the blame for its debacle in the West Bengal poll to Mamata's whimsical decision to quit the NDA and her ambivalent stance to it even after that.

The Congress feels Mamata failed to adequately explain why she had quit NDA and refrained from attacking the BJP which put her credibility under cloud, especially among Muslim voters, sources said.

Besides, dissidence in Trinamool

Congress is brewing over her decision to quit the NDA. The dissident colour of Mamata's senior party colleague Ajit Kumar Panja is the brightest. There were reports of possible split in Trinamool following speculations that Panja and four fellow members of Lok Sabha might break ranks in return for berths in Vajpayee ministry.

Nevertheless, Vajpayee's declaration Monday that he is not going to expand his ministry could be good news to Mamata. BJP sources say reshuffle in the Vajpayee cabinet would have to wait till the prime minister's knee operation in June and his recovery from it for minimum two weeks. This will be followed by the high-profile visit to New Delhi by Pakistan's military ruler General Pervez Musharraf some time in early July. That gives Mamata more than a month's time to introspect and get her acts together.

# UP chairman shot

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slightly injured, when Kabir hit him with a stick. The gang fired in motorbikes towards Uttara, officer-in-charge (OC) of Savar thana said quoting the witnesses.

Asked whether any of the muggers could be arrested, the OC said they went to Uttara that is beyond his jurisdiction.

"We have already sent teams to several places to arrest the culprits" said the OC.

The critically injured Kabir was sent to the Suhrawardy Hospital and later shifted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The doctors said his condition is critical.

Kabir, who has been chairman of Ashulia Union Parishad for about 21 years, is a resident of Pargram at Ashulia.

When contacted, the duty officer at Savar police station said none came to file any case till last night.

# Probe body

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imported fabrics: NBR identifies 37 garment factories," the BGMEA said it would have no objection if actions were taken against a factory for involvement in sales of imported fabrics under bond license to the local market.

The BGMEA further said that it was aware of the image of the readymade garment sector and never supported factories, which were involved with such a corrupt practice.

The Daily Star thanks the Ministry of Environment and Forest, and the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) for their prompt action. The Editor.

# Indo-Bangla border talks

**FROM PAGE 1**

Barring these, demarcation of the 4002 km borders between the two countries has been completed during the past two years.

"We are optimistic that the talks will yield positive results. We want to identify the mechanisms of demarcations but if it is not resolved, it will go to Foreign Secretary level," Ali said.

On the adverse possessions, he said, "We still have to work out the modalities of exchange of adverse possessions which at some points have been changed because of changes in the course of rivers."

On the recent clashes between Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Indian Border Security Force (BSF) at Baraibari leaving 19 troops killed in two sides, 16 of them from BSF, the foreign secretary said investiga-

tions on how BSF intruded into Bangladesh are still going on. The Indian side has also undertaken investigation and its outcome is being awaited, he told a questioner.

Asked if Bangladesh is going to raise the issue of compensation because of the BSF attack at Baraibari at the meeting in New Delhi, Ali said the issues will be taken up at separate meetings between the two countries.

"I will meet Indian Foreign Secretary Ms Chokila Ayer in Colombo next month taking up the entire gamut of bilateral relations between the two countries and invite her to the next Foreign Secretary level in Dhaka", he said referring to the June 8-9 meeting of SAARC standing committee in the Sri Lankan capital.

# A tale of Mirpur

**FROM PAGE 12**

several times with no results.

Rather, they alleged, the commissioner refused to do any development work in Senpara Parbata because he thinks people of that area did not vote for him during the election.

When contacted Abdul Kader refuted the allegation saying that a special project worth nearly Tk 62 lakh under the Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP) has been taken up for the main roads around Senpara Parbata.

"The area under Ward No 14 is one of the largest in Dhaka. I believe, since I was elected in 1994, the volume of development work in my ward has been higher than any other in the city despite allocation of a limited budget," he claimed.

In its last budget the DCC allotted Tk 40 lakh for this ward.

There are no footbridges at two of the busiest places at Mirpur - the circle at Section 10 and the crossing at Section 1. However, the DUTP

has recently started constructing two footbridges at these two points.

Indiscriminate parking of buses, trucks, etc at Pallabi makes movement of other vehicles difficult on the road leading towards the Mirpur Cantonment.

Parked automobiles also occupy sizeable portion of the roads near Section 10 circle, Section 1 crossing and Muktiyoddah Supermarket. These roads have recently been developed and widened under the DUTP.

In the afternoon, waste containers of DCC occupy half of the Mazar Road and the passers-by are exposed to unbearable stench. Besides, solid waste is carelessly dumped at Barobagh, Shewrapara, Kazipara, Senpara and Block C of Section 10.

Almost half the Mazar road remains occupied by rickshaws, tempos, auto rickshaws, mini buses and street vendors throughout the day.

(Gonobhaban), he would not have been killed so easily," noted Sajeda.

AL leaders gave a detailed account of facilities the widow of former president Ziaur Rahman is enjoying now and said the BNP had no right to oppose special security measures being considered for Sheikh Hasina.

All the ministers on the delegation spoke separately at the briefing highlighting various past incidents to prove that life of Hasina became vulnerable and she had escaped narrowly many attempts on her life.

They also alleged that opposition leader's meeting with the convicted killers of Bangabandhu made Awami League all the more concerned now about the security of its leader.

They referred to the alleged ploy hatched in the Netherlands against Hasina and added that the Dutch government was now probing into the allegation.

The main opposition BNP, which has vehemently opposed the idea, requested the President on Monday last not to give assent to the bill for enactment of the special law.

The request was made when an 11-member BNP delegation met the President at the Bangabhaban and submitted a memorandum to him.

The delegation, led by Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Professor AQM Badrudozza Chowdhury, requested the President to advise the ruling party not to go for the special security law for the outgoing prime minister.

The memorandum said that BNP had come to know that the ruling Awami League would place the proposed law as a money bill in the parliament session beginning on June 6.

The BNP argued that the planned new law was contrary to the concept of caretaker government and it would mislead voters during the coming election.

The BNP-led opposition alliance also threatened to revive street agitation if the government went ahead with the planned legislation.

According to sources in the BNP, though the party has given a respite on calling hartal following repeated appeals by the business community, it might again give call for a series of shutdowns across the country if the new law was passed by the parliament.

On the other hand, the ruling party's student front - Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) - announced a march towards the Sangsad

Bhaban on June 11 to press the government to enact the planned law for the security of the outgoing prime minister. It also planned to march towards the Bangabhaban on June 13 to hammer on the same issue.

Ulema League, another front organisation of ruling Awami League, brought out a procession in the city yesterday demanding enactment of the planned security law. Thirty-four members of the Dhaka University Senate also issued a joint statement yesterday raising the same demand.

Despite a widespread controversy over the proposed law, the government has not yet divulged details of the law so far. Top government leaders including the PM have only defended the legal steps without focusing much on its provisions.

Observers think that rigid and opposing stands by AL and BNP on the planned security law has once again dragged the pre-polls politics to Bangabhaban despite the fact that under the parliamentary system of government, the President has his own limitations in effectively intervening into such a delicate issue.

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