

\$7.5m WB loan for rehabilitation of rickshaw-pullers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank (WB) will give a \$7.5 million soft loan for a project to rehabilitate the evicted rickshaw-pullers from the city roads as part of a government plan to ease traffic congestion in the capital.

The two-year project is likely to

begin in May or June this year, Dhaka Transport Co-ordination Board (DTCB) Director (Admin) M Akhtar Hossain told a seminar on 'Livelihood status of rickshaw-pullers of Bangladesh' organised by The Good Earth, an NGO, at the city's IDB auditorium yesterday.

Already some 15,000 rickshaw-

pullers have been evicted from the Mirpur Road, DTCB officials said, adding rickshaws will also be withdrawn in phases from five other major roads of the city, keeping the non-motorised vehicles only on the feeder roads.

The communications ministry

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Outlaw, JCD cadre killed in 'crossfire'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A regional leader of outlawed Jashod Gono Bahini and an armed cadre, allegedly belonging to the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) were killed in 'crossfire' with police in Kushtia and Chittagong yesterday.

The Gono Bahini leader, Chomer Sheikh alias Choima, 42, was bullet-hit when his accomplices encountered with the police at village Salgharmadhua under Kumarkhali upazila in the district early yesterday.

He was accused in 11 cases including four of murder, police said.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

CTG ARMS HAUL Three accused surrender to court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Three accused in the sensational Chittagong arms haul case yesterday surrendered to a court, 11 months after the huge cache of arms and ammunition was seized on April 2 last year.

They are Ataur Rahman alias Rahman, owner of RA Enterprise, Md Fazal Ahmad Chowdhury, owner of M/s Five Star, and alleged smuggler Md Akbar Ali.

The accused surrendered to the Court of Metropolitan Sessions Judge at 1:30pm and prayed for bail. Judge (acting) Md Shahjahan decided to hear the bail prayers on the next hearing of the case on March 22 and sent the three to jail.

Earlier, Public Prosecutor Advocate Abdus Satter appealed to

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

NATURE PUTS ON NEW LEAVES: Locals collect the old leaves discarded by trees with the advent of Spring at the reserve forest in Chandra, Gazpur to use them as fuel.

JESSORE RAPE CASE 6-year-old boy gets bail

FROM STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six-year-old boy Imon was granted bail in the March 2 rape and riot case recorded with the Jessore Kotwali Police Station after his surrender on Tuesday to the court of First Class Magistrate Abdur Rob.

The minor boy was named as one of the accused of rape and riot in the First Information Report (FIR) lodged by local BNP leader Abul

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Kibria's chehlum tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

The chehlum of slain Awami League lawmaker and former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria will be held at his Dhanmondi house after Juma prayers tomorrow.

Awami League General Secretary

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Bus terminal operators owe DCC Tk 4.5cr

ABDUL KADER

Authorities of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) are in quagmire as the private operators of three city bus terminals, reportedly controlled by ruling party quarters, are showing utter reluctance to pay dues of several crore taka despite repeated reminders from the DCC.

After seventeen months into the new system from October 2003 to February 2005, private operators of bus terminals at Sayedabad, Mohakhali and Gabtoli owe about Tk 4 crore 50 lakh to the DCC including 15% VAT and 3% tax, DCC officials said.

In the last 17 months the operators paid about Tk 45 lakh and the DCC is apprehending to incur loss of the rest of the amount, according to DCC officials.

The operators said they are not able to pay the amount because they

do not get the total earning of the terminals adding that they have not yet got the full responsibility of the terminals as improvement works in the three terminals are still going on.

"We are paying the DCC partially as we are yet to get the full control of the total sources of earning at the terminals that include shops, ticket counters and by leasing toilets," said Moniruzzaman Chowdhury, proprietor of Panama Enterprise.

After taking responsibility of the three terminals--Sayedabad and Mohakhali terminals by Rora Enterprise and Gabtoli by Diba Enterprise--the operators have been collecting toll at Tk 30 per bus daily since October 1, 2003.

Rora Enterprise owes about Tk one crore ten lakh to the DCC for October 2003-March 2004 period while Diba Enterprise owes more than two crore taka for October 2003-February 2005 period, accord-

ing to DCC sources.

Meanwhile, the DCC appointed another private operator, Panama Enterprise, in June last year at Sayedabad and Mohakhali bus terminals after cancelling the contract with Rora Enterprise in March 2004 for violating conditions, and filed a case against the firm. The new operator also now owes nearly one crore to the DCC for June 2004-February 2005 period.

Earlier, when the DCC controlled the terminals, it earned Tk. 3.5 crore and Tk. 3 crore in the 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 fiscal years mainly from toll collection and also from shop rental and ticket counters, according to the sources.

As ruling BNP influential leaders, ward commissioners, transport leaders in connivance with the DCC's high-ups are actually behind the scene in the name of private

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



JCD and BCL activists deter photojournalists from taking pictures while they take away a Shibir member, in white dress, during yesterday's triangular clash at Jagannath University College.

PHOTO: STAR

Bigots besiege Ahmadiyya base tomorrow

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Activists of International Khatme Nabuwat Movement will besiege the Ahmadiyya base in Sutrapur in the town tomorrow in demand for declaring the community non-Muslim.

At least 20,00 people from the northern districts will gather at Altafunnessa playground before the programme, said Maulana Abdul Hoque Azad, district president of the Islamist outfit, yesterday.

He added that people from elsewhere will also join the besiege programme. At least 10,000 madrasa students will also attend the programme with their teachers.

The outfit will declare more

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

PREMIER BANK SCAM

BB for action against MD

STAR REPORT

A central bank investigation into the Premier Bank public floating scam strongly recommended taking legal action against the managing director and concerned branch managers of the bank under the Bank Company Act and Money Laundering Act (MLA).

The full report of the investigation finalised yesterday is likely to be submitted to the Bangladesh Bank (BB) Governor Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed today.

The investigation conducted by the Anti-Money Laundering Department found gross violation of banking rules in the opening of around 17,000 accounts with different branches of Premier Bank and found these accounts to be fake.

The concerned branch managers said they were forced to open these accounts at verbal instructions from Kazi Abdul Mazid, managing director, and Syed Nowsher Ali, manager of the Banani branch of the bank.

The investigators recommended taking action against the branch managers under the Clause 19.1 (a), (b) and (c) and Clause 4 of the MLA. Under these clauses, the accused may be fined between Tk 10000 and Tk one lakh.

These clauses dictate the banks that while opening accounts, the banks must obtain full identities and addresses of the clients and preserve the information for five years after the accounts are closed. The information is to be provided to the BB as and when needed. The banks are also to inform the BB if they

notice unusually high transactions that indicate links with money laundering.

"We have suggested action against the managers under the MLA. But to take action against the MD and other high officials involved, we recommended taking action under the Bank Company Act as the MLA cannot take action against an MD," said an investigation officer of the Anti-Money Laundering Department.

The Bank Regulation and Policy Department of the BB is the appropriate body in this regard. "All we can say is we found serious irregularities involving the MD. His crime is so serious that he can be removed from the bank and be given further punishment under the Bank

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

SUB-MARINE CABLE

PM, ministry differ on finishing date

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said Bangladesh will have submarine cable connection in July-August this year while the post and telecommunications ministry said setting up the cable will be completed in October.

About the BTTB (Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board) mobile phone service, the prime minister had earlier this month told parliament the service would be available in March.

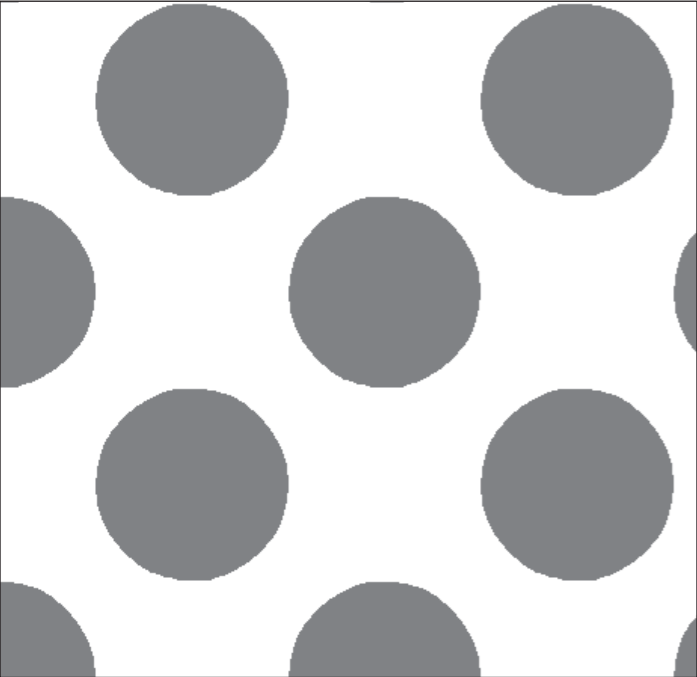
But a BTTB report submitted to a parliamentary body yesterday indicates it is unlikely to fulfil the prime minister's assurance.

The progress of work on BTTB

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4



Prayer Timing		
March 10		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-20	5-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-03	6-07
Esha	7-30	8-00
Source: Islamic Foundation		



India start strongly

REUTERS, Mohali

Opener Virender Sehwag hit a chancy 95 not out to lead India's strong response against Pakistan on a rain-hit second day of the first Test on Wednesday.

The Delhi opener, dropped on 15 and 82, punished Pakistan's inexperienced pace bowlers to be on the verge of his ninth Test hundred.

India were 184 for one wicket in reply to Pakistan's first innings 312 all out when play was called off due to bad light, the final session having been played with the stadium lights on.

Rahul Dravid was 39 not out, having added 71 runs for the sec-

ond wicket with Sehwag.

Play was delayed until one hour before tea due to steady drizzle since morning.

Sehwag, 26, played a typically rapid knock to quickly snatch the initiative, guiding India to 67 for no loss in the 11 overs before tea.

Sehwag shared in a 113-run opening partnership off 109 balls with Gautam Gambhir, who made 41.

Pakistan leg-spinner Danish Kaneria struck with his first delivery after tea by dismissing Gambhir. He hit seven fours in his 46-ball effort.

Dravid quickly settled down with some fluent drives to raise hopes of a huge Indian total.

