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RRC for online registration of investors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Regulatory Reforms Commission (RRC) yesterday recommended introducing 'online registration' system in the Board of Investment (BoI) to enable investors to register their companies without any hassle.

The commission also asked the government to make arrangements for approval of applications for registration within 24 hours after submission.

The RRC further recommended that the BoI fix an integrated registration fee.

The commission made the recommendations at a meeting in the capital with its Chairman Dr Akbar Ali Khan in the chair.

After the meeting, Akbar told the reporters that the government has directed the establishment ministry to implement the commission's recommendations on putting information about all the rules and regulations on a website

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AUGUST 21 GRENADE ATTACK CID records statements of three witnesses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) yesterday recorded statements of three witnesses to the August 21 grenade attacks on an Awami League rally in 2004.

Meanwhile, letters have been sent to the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) commissioner, deputy commissioners of the detective branch (DC-DB) and special branch (SB), asking for the list of those who were on duty during the blasts that left 24 AL leaders and workers dead and over 300 others injured.

Talking to The Daily Star last

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Detained KCC mayor moved to Dhaka as his health condition worsens

UNB, Khulna

Detained Khulna City Corporation (KCC) Mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman was moved to the capital for treatment as his health condition deteriorated yesterday.

Khulna Jail Super Soloman Ali said the mayor has been suffering from chest pain, diabetes and arthritis and cold for the last few days. As his condition worsened, he was shifted to Dhaka yesterday evening.

He was likely to be admitted to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital.

Tayebur was arrested at his Gulshan residence in the capital on November 2, a day after a KCC officer filed an extortion case against him with Khulna Sadar Police Station.

So far, eight cases including six for corruption have been filed against him.

Boy scout saves Gayoom from assassination

AFP, Colombo

The president of the Maldives, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, escaped an assassination attempt yesterday while on a tour of the Indian Ocean archipelago, a senior minister told AFP.

Officials said a 20-year-old unemployed man tried to plunge a knife into Gayoom's stomach, but that Asia's longest serving president was unhurt thanks to a boy scout who wrestled with the attacker before he was detained.

"The president was greeting people when a young boy pulled out a knife and tried to stab him in the stomach," Information Minister Mohamed Nasheed said by telephone from the island capital of Male.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Prayer Timing		
January 8		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-30	5-35
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

CASES AGAINST PHONE BILL DEFAULTERS

Govt losing revenue on BTTB's callousness

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

The government is losing a huge amount of revenue due to carelessness of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) in filing cases for realisation of telephone bills pending for years.

The proceedings of over 400 such cases have been stayed by court without realisation of pending bills as the BTTB authorities failed to provide the court with correct addresses of the defaulter subscribers.

In the last two months the courts disposed of only eight cases and realised a total of Tk 1,80,102 from the defendants. Over 3,747 cases are now pending with only two Dhaka courts for trial.

Court sources said the government is losing around Tk 3 crore as

such a large number of cases remains stayed or pending, mainly due to the neglect of BTTB accounts officials in providing necessary information.

After scrutinising the case statements, Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Al-Mamun had earlier directed the authorities concerned to file fresh cases providing required information of the telephone bill defaulters, such as their names, fathers' names and correct addresses.

The BTTB, however, failed to submit any lists of correct names despite repeated directions by the court. They also did not implement any attachment orders.

According to a case statement, the BTTB had filed a case with the CMM's Court against three subscribers on November 26, 1990 for

realising Tk 83,956.65 in phone bills from July 1984 to April 1989.

The court had fixed 57 dates for the last 18 years, but there was no development in realising the bills from the clients, as the BTTB had filed the case using only the business addresses of the subscribers.

It is not that the BTTB does not have the permanent and present addresses of its subscribers, since one has to fill in the subscription form with all these information while taking a telephone connection.

The BTTB had filed a number of cases against several former lawmakers for the last two years for realising pending telephone bills and in those cases, they had mentioned the subscribers' full names and addresses, court sources said.



PHOTO: STAR

Farmers, who lost the Aman harvest to successive floods this year, dive all-out into cultivation early in the Boro season, at Binsara village in Chalan Beel area under Tarash upazila of Sirajganj yesterday noon.

Benazir's son warns of Pakistan's disintegration

Calls for UN probe, Scotland Yard investigators meet Musharraf

AFP, London

Benazir Bhutto's son Bilawal warned yesterday that Pakistan could face disintegration unless free and fair elections are held, as he defended his appointment as his assassinated mother's successor.

In his first full press conference since taking over as head of the

Pakistan People's Party, the 19-year-old renewed a call Tuesday for a UN-backed probe into her death, casting doubt on the Pakistani government investigation.

He also said the threat of violence did not stop him from taking over as party chief.

"How many Bhuttos can you kill? From every house a Bhutto will come," he said.

"The family's and party's request is for a UN sponsored investigation, because we do not believe that an investigation under the authority of the Pakistan government has the necessary transparency," he said in London.

"It is our belief that had she been given adequate protection she would be alive today," he told

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OSMANI UDYAN Govt urged to take steps to recover grabbed parkland

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists yesterday urged the government to take effective measures to recover the illegally grabbed 2.81 acres of land of Osmani Udyan.

They said common property especially open fields are being grabbed by some vested quarters.

"Cabinet division handed over 23 acres of land to Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) in 1989 for Osmani Udyan. How could a woman grab 2.81 acres of Osmani Udyan submitting false documents?" said Prof Muzaffer Ahmed, president of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa), while addressing a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU).

He also said children in the capital cannot play due to lack of sufficient number of open spaces.

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Proceedings of case against Ctg mayor's wife stayed

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday stayed the proceedings of a corruption case against Hasina Mohiuddin, wife of detained Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury.

Passing the stay order upon a writ petition, a division bench comprising Justice ABM Khairul Haque and Justice Abdul Awal issued a rule asking the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to explain why the initiation of the case should not be declared without lawful authority.

On December 2 last year, the ACC filed the case accusing Hasina Mohiuddin along with her husband of hiding information in her wealth statement and amassing wealth worth Tk 3,83,55,004 illegally.

Advocate AKM Faiz, assisted by HS Deb Brahman, appeared for the petitioner.

YABA Nikita released on court order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Zannatul Ferdousi alias Nikita, arrested on charges of possessing yaba pills, was released on bail from Dhaka Central Jail yesterday evening.

On receiving a court order, the jail authorities released Nikita at around 6:45pm.

A team of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Nikita and her friend Mahbubur Rahman Joyal, managing director of Hotel Purbani International, in the capital on November 4.

Jail sources said Nikita's brother-in-law MNH Bulu, director of Baishakhi Television, and her



PHOTO: STAR

Amnesty International Secretary General Irene Khan speaks at a seminar titled 'Overcoming Disappointments of Democracy' organised jointly by The Daily Star and the Prothom Alo in Cirdap Auditorium in the capital yesterday.

Tamil Tigers' roadside bomb kills Lanka minister

AFP, Colombo

A Sri Lankan government minister was killed yesterday in a powerful roadside bomb attack by suspected Tamil Tiger rebels near the island's capital and international airport, officials said.

DM Dassanayake, the 51-year-old minister for nation building, suffered severe head injuries and died while undergoing surgery, said doctor Lalini Gunasekera at the Ragama hospital, just outside Colombo.

The defence ministry said the minister's personal bodyguard was also killed and 10 others were wounded in the attack, the second roadside bombing since the government abandoned a ceasefire with the rebels last week.

Fighting has also been escalating in the north of the island, with government jets carrying out fresh raids against the Tigers' mini-state.

Police said a Claymore mine -- a device packed with explosives and ball bearings -- was detonated as the minister's convoy passed the town of Ja-Ela.

"The minister was on his way to parliament when his white Toyota Land Cruiser vehicle was hit by a Claymore... his vehicle has been badly damaged," military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Dassanayake was notorious for his alleged underworld links and once attended parliament in handcuffs, having been allowed out of a remand prison to take part in a key debate.

It was not immediately clear if the minister was specifically targeted, or if the attackers may have tried to get a more senior politician using the same highway to travel to the capital, an official involved in the probe said.

"There are lots of theories on the

possible target, but what is clear is that it is the work of the Tigers," the official said, asking not to be named.

Sri Lankan police and security forces have been on high alert for Tamil Tiger attacks after the government announced last week it was pulling out of a tattered ceasefire agreement.

The bombing came as the air force carried out another bombing raid inside territory controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The military said that security forces killed at least another 15 rebels in clashes since Monday, bringing to around 130 the number of rebels said to have been killed since the start of the month.

Independent verification of casualty figures is not possible as journalists are not allowed into rebel-held areas. Both sides are

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

CA asks cops not to harass people seeking help

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday asked the members of police to make sure that service seekers are not harassed at police stations, police outposts and investigation centres.

The head of the caretaker government gave the directive while formally inaugurating the Police Week 2008 at Rajarbagh Police Lines parade ground in the capital.

Intense monitoring and supervision over operation at a police station, police box or outpost and investigation centre will have to be ensured, he said in his directive.

"The chief executive of the country will be to provide desired service for the people and earn their confidence through it," the CA told the rank and file of the police attending the function.

He said as one of the major law-enforcement agencies of the country, the police will have to ensure honesty, efficiency, neutrality, transparency and accountability in discharging their duties.

The head of the caretaker government asked the police to get updated to prevent cyber crime, money laundering and other contemporary crimes.

"Instead of traditional system application of modern know-how and technology will have to increase in investigation into crime," he said, as new dimensions in the criminal underworld are getting unveiled nowadays.

The chief executive of the country in the interim period, whose military-supported government is carrying out a massive purge, asked the police to get tougher in curbing militancy and extremism and

various crimes in socio-economic arena.

Terming the role of police very important in establishing the rule of law, the CA said in the context of present reality the cops will have to be turned into a service-oriented institution in the light of human rights and democratic values.

He said the present government in its limited tenure is taking steps to establish justice and good governance in society alongside holding a free, fair, neutral and acceptable election.

Earlier, a guard of honour was accorded to the CA by a smartly turned-out parade squad drawn from Rab, Armed Police Battalion (APBN), police of Dhaka and Rajshahi Ranges, combined range police, DMP, combined metropolitan police, women police,

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US, Iraq launch anti-extremist operation

AP, Washington

US and Iraqi forces launched a major operation to strike against al-Qaida in Iraq and other extremists, the US military said yesterday, hoping to build on a recent reduction of violence and push militants from their strongholds.

The division and brigade-level operation, dubbed Phantom Phoenix, will cover the entire country, the military said.

US and Iraqi forces will "continue to pursue al-Qaida and other extremists wherever they attempt to take sanctuary," Lt. Gen. Ray Odierno, the No. 2 commander in Iraq, said in a statement announcing the start of the joint operation. "We are determined not to allow these brutal elements to have respite anywhere in Iraq."

Violence across Iraq has fallen

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যক্ষা বিষয়ক সাংবাদিকতায় সম্মাননা ২০০৭

ব্র্যাক যক্ষা বিষয়ক সাংবাদিকতাকে উৎসাহিত করার লক্ষ্যে প্রিন্ট এবং ইলেকট্রনিক মিডিয়ায় মোট ২১ জন সাংবাদিককে সম্মাননা দিতে যাচ্ছে। এ সম্মাননার জন্য দেশের সকল জাতীয় ও স্থানীয় পর্যায়ের অগ্রহী সাংবাদিকদের কাছ থেকে যক্ষা বিষয়ক প্রতিবেদন সংগ্রহের কাজ চলছে। অগ্রহী সাংবাদিকগণ জানুয়ারি ২০০৬ থেকে ডিসেম্বর ২০০৭ পর্যন্ত সারাদেশের পত্রপত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত যক্ষা বিষয়ক অনুসন্ধানী প্রতিবেদন/ফিচার/কলাম/কেস স্টাডি ইত্যাদি এবং বিভিন্ন টিভি চ্যানেলে তার নিজের তৈরি প্রচারিত যক্ষা বিষয়ক সরেজমিন প্রতিবেদন থেকে নিজ বিবেচনায় সবচেয়ে সেরা লেখা বা প্রতিবেদনটি সম্মাননার জন্য পাঠাবেন। বিভিন্ন টিভি চ্যানেলের জাতীয় ও স্থানীয় পর্যায়ের প্রতিবেদকগণ তাদের নিজের তৈরি প্রচারিত যক্ষা বিষয়ক প্রতিবেদনটির ভিসিডি কপি পাঠাবেন।

লেখা/প্রতিবেদন পাঠানোর বর্ধিত সময়সীমা: ৩০ জানুয়ারি ২০০৮

লেখা/প্রতিবেদন পাঠানোর ঠিকানা: ইনাচার্জ, ব্র্যাক এডভোকেসি এন্ড হিউম্যান রাইটস ইউনিট, ব্র্যাক সেন্টার (চতুর্থ তলা), ৭৫ মহাখালী, ঢাকা-১২১২

লেখা পাঠানোর সময় খামের ওপরে 'যক্ষা বিষয়ক সাংবাদিকতায় সম্মাননা ২০০৭' কথাটি অবশ্যই লিখতে হবে।

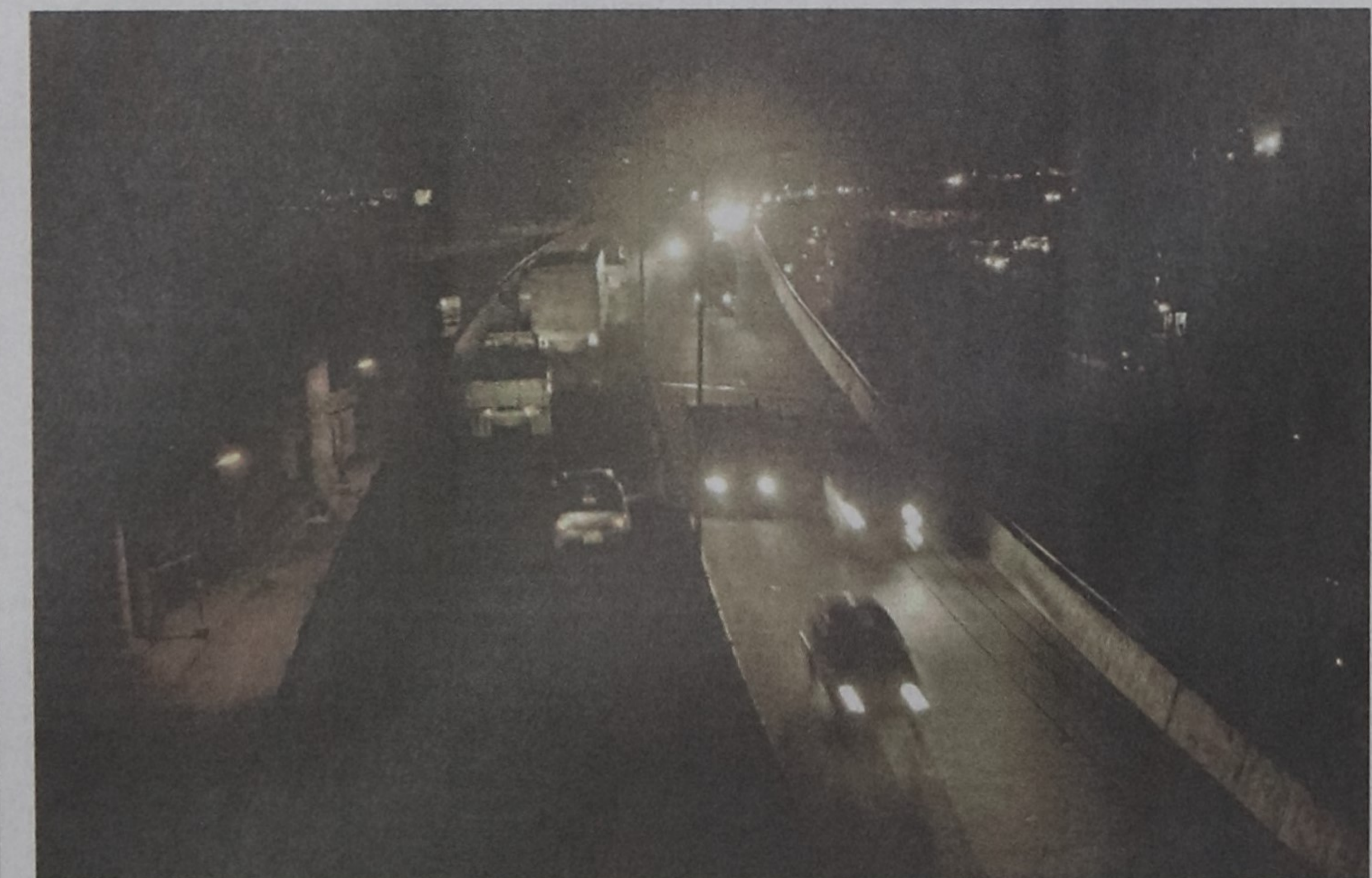


PHOTO: STAR

The photo taken yesterday evening shows the busy Khilgaon flyover in the capital in darkness as it has long been without lights.