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Move to complete forgotten bridges

Tk 437cr project to target 65 bridges lying incomplete for years

SHAMIM ASHRAF

The government has embarked on a Tk 437.40 crore project to complete 65 bridges that have been lying incomplete for years for want of funds and proper attention of the authorities concerned causing acute public sufferings.

The task of completing these bridges, which are 7,563.90 metres in length, will take three years and will cost twice to thrice the amount

they would have required if completed in due time, communications ministry sources said.

Constructions of a few of these bridges started at the initiatives of local parliamentarians elected since 1990 at the fag end of their governance. Left incomplete, these bridges later saw the incumbent MPs' indifference and non-availability of fund.

The construction work of two such bridges—Mokorompur

Bridge on Rahanpur-Bholahat-BDR Camp Road in Chapainawabganj and Kachkair Bridge on Ahmedpur-Baroigram-Gurudaspur Road in Natore—started in 1995.

The Roads and Highways Department (RHD), which is responsible for constructing bridges, have identified 14 bridges in Dhaka zone, three in Comilla, 13 in Sylhet, five in Chittagong, six in Rajshahi, 11 in Rangpur, four in

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Upazila polls before JS elections: CA

UNB, Chandnaish, Chittagong

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday said elections to upazila parishads would be held before general elections and the government will help ensure that the polls are free from the influence of black money and muscle power.

"The Election Commission has decided to hold upazila elections ahead of the general election. We also want that, God willing, upazila elections will be held first," he told the 'National Dialogue on Democratic Transition' held at Kasheem Mahub High School Auditorium.

This is the first formal dialogue outside the capital under the caretaker government's regional dia-

logue initiative.

The chief adviser said his government would extend all cooperation to the Election Commission to ensure that the elections are free from the influence of black money and muscle power.

He said the interim government wants to hold free and fair general elections with participation of all political parties to make sure the next elected government further consolidate democracy, improve governance and enhance quality of livelihood through economic development.

"We're not opponents of political parties. I've already said my advisers and I will not contest the elections nor will we remain in the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

14-party men to use 'Nagorik Committee' banner in polls

UNB, Dhaka

The 14-party alliance led by Awami League (AL) might field candidates under the banner of "Nagorik Committee" to contest the forthcoming elections in a number of city corporations and municipalities.

Acting AL President Zillur Rahman spoke about this possibility yesterday, a day after his party decided to go for the much-debated local polls scheduled for August in four city corporations and nine municipalities.

But, the central body of the alliance would not nominate any candidate for the local elections

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

BNP grassroots press top leadership for joining elections

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP leadership appears to be under growing pressure from the grassroots to participate in the August 4 polls to city corporations and municipalities.

Archrival Awami League's (AL) decision to contest the local elections has complicated matters further. The prevalent view among the BNP ranks is the party would lose ground in local politics if it chooses to boycott the polls now, said insiders.

A group led by Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain however remains opposed

to taking part in the elections. Against this backdrop, the BNP-led four-party alliance meets today and a formal decision on the issue is likely to come out.

Some leaders of the coalition said the forthcoming elections will top the agenda for today's meeting to be held at Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP) Chairman Andalib Rahman Partha's Baridhara residence.

Release of all political leaders including Khaleda Zia and her two sons will also come up for discussion.

Talking to The Daily Star last

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Raina outdoes Kapali

India beat Bangladesh by 7 wkts

AGENCIES, Karachi

Alok Kapali's dazzling 115 gave Bangladesh a fighting chance, but their inability to hold on to catches meant that India breezed past another stiff target for a comfortable seven-wicket victory over the Tigers at the National Stadium in Karachi yesterday.

Two days after making mincemeat of 300 against Pakistan, they overhauled Bangladesh's 283 for six with 40 balls to spare in the Asia Cup Super League encounter by reaching 284 for the loss of three wickets.

Suresh Raina, with a century against Hong Kong and 84 against Pakistan earlier in the tournament, stroked a magnificent unbeaten 116, adding 139 for the third wicket with Gautam Gambhir to set up the

game for India. Gambhir's 90 spanned just 84 balls, and there was enough time for Yuvraj Singh to thrash a couple of mighty sixes before the curtain came down.

Shahadat Hossain, all lively pace and whole-hearted grunting, had hinted at an upset with two wickets in the first overplay, but the partnership between Raina and Gambhir upset Mohammad Ashraf's best-laid plans. Butter fingers didn't help.

Gambhir had made 56 when his attempt to muscle Mashrafe Bin Mortaza over the infield was sliced up in the air towards point. Farhad Reza made a mess of the catch. Soon after, still in the final overplay, Raina experienced his own adrenaline-rush moment, top-edging a pull. But again,

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PHOTO: STAR

Students of Dhaka College torch a multi-purpose vehicle bringing it inside their campus yesterday as the car was involved in a road mishap in which a student of the college was hurt.

Dhaka College students go for car bashing after accident

10 vehicles vandalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka College students yesterday went on the rampage and set fire to a microbus following a road accident that left one of their fellow students seriously injured.

At least 10 vehicles were vandalised during the angry protests.

Witnesses said the speeding microbus hit Saiful Islam, a first year student of Biology department, in front of the college while he was crossing the road at around 12:00noon.

The locals rushed him to nearby Central Hospital on Green Road and he was later admitted to Pongu

Hospital in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Saiful's legs have been fractured but he was out of danger, hospital sources said.

Police seized the microbus and detained its driver Idris Miah, officer-in-charge (OC) of New Market Police Station Anisur Rahman told The Daily Star.

Enraged at the incident, several hundred students of the college started damaging vehicles on the Mirpur Road and set the microbus ablaze.

Police rushed to the spot and tried to stop them leading to incidents of chase and counter chase

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

CG won't amend constitution

Says Chief Adviser

UNB, Chittagong

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday said the caretaker government is not taking any step to amend the constitution as doing so is not their business.

He made the remark when responding to questions and proposals put forward by participants at the first regional dialogue held in Chittagong.

Fakhruddin, however, noted that there are many issues which call for changes to the constitution.

Supporting the bid to hold local-body polls, especially elections to upazila parishads, before the general election, participants at the dialogue proposed government funding for honest but financially weak candidates.

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স্বপ্ন পূরণের সহযাত্রী হয়ে...

জীবনের নানা আয়োজনে আমরা ছিলাম, আমরা আছি

জীবনের নানা দিক ছুঁয়ে থাকে আমাদের সেবা। প্রতিদিনের প্রয়োজনে ক্রেডিট কার্ড, প্রিয়জনের পাঠানো রেমিট্যান্স, ভবিষ্যতের সঞ্চয় কিংবা ক্ষুদ্র ও মাঝারি উদ্যোক্তাদের সাহসী পদক্ষেপের অংশীদার - এমন হাজারো দিক ঘিরে আমরা আছি জীবনের কাছাকাছি। সময়ের দাবি মেনে আধুনিক প্রযুক্তির স্পর্শে দ্রুতগতি সম্পন্ন ব্যাংকিং সেবা দিতে আমরা ছিলাম তৎপর। প্রথম প্রজন্মের বেসরকারি ব্যাংক হিসেবে আপনাকে স্বাচ্ছন্দ্য দিতে, সাহস যোগাতে আমাদের কেটেছে প্রতিষ্ঠতির ২৫ বছর। সেই সাহসে ভর করেই আমরা আজ পা দিলাম ২৬-এ। এই উৎসবের অনিবার্য সঙ্গী আপনি, আপনারা। এই দিনের মতোই আগামীর প্রতিটি দিন আমরা থাকতে চাই আপনার স্বপ্ন পূরণের সহযাত্রী হয়ে।

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