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Mega plan to ease traffic jam in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has taken various steps, including introduction of bus route franchise (BRF) with auto ticketing system, to solve traffic congestion in the capital, Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain told the House yesterday.

"Applying the BRF system, a bus service would be introduced from city's Uttara to Azimpur within a few days," he said.

Replying to a query of ruling party lawmaker Kazi Keramat Ali, the minister said 40 air-conditioned (AC) and 60 non-AC buses will operate every day on the route.

Abul Hossain said survey of building the first line of subway (from Uttara to Jatrabari) will start soon and tender would be floated to construct the subway after completion of the survey.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Metro rail scheme stuck in red tape

Contractor asks for removing bottlenecks to help start work in 6 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The private company that was awarded the contract to build the capital's metro rail scheme has urged the government to clear soon the bureaucratic bottleneck, so it may begin construction within six months.

In a presentation yesterday at the Ministry of Communications, the company representatives said they already found a financier, and want to complete the details of the design and the negotiations with the government within six months.

The fate of much talked about metro rail in Dhaka city has been entangled in bureaucratic red tapes as the ministry has yet to form a metro rail authority for monitoring, controlling and supervising the project.

Contech Ltd, the lowest bidder in the tender, yesterday informed the communications minister that it already struck a deal with a

Japanese company, Itochu Corporation, which agreed to provide 60 percent of funding as a soft loan. Yusuku Morinaga, the representative of the Japanese company yesterday handed over the letter of commitment at the meeting.

The Army Welfare Trust will invest the remaining 40 percent of the capital raising it from the local capital market, he said, while the engineering corps of the Bangladesh Army is to provide technical support for the project. Representatives of the army engineering corps were also present at the meeting.

"The first phase of the work will be done within three to four years using cut and cover (CC) method, once they get the work permit from the government. It will cost around 10 to 12 thousand crore taka, the exact amount of which we will be able to tell after the design is finalised," said Masud Reza, managing director of Contech Ltd.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Fugitive BDR men to lose job: Faruk

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commerce Minister Faruk Khan yesterday said those BDR members who still remain absconding would be considered deserters and would lose their jobs automatically after 60 days' absence from the duty as per the BDR rules.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

BDR MUTINY

5 jawans make confession, 24 remanded

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Five more Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) jawans yesterday confessed to magistrates that they were involved in the February 25-26 mutiny in the BDR headquarters.

Meantime, a Dhaka court

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

2 bidi factories evade Tk 36 lakh tax a month

One running without environmental clearance

HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU, Bogra

The owners of Jainal and Amena bidi factories are allegedly evading at least Tk 36 lakh taxes a month showing fake production statements in the last five years, according to a preliminary investigation.

A senior official of the Customs, Excise and VAT Bogra Division said Alhaj Jainal and his wife Amena Khatun are paying on average Tk 8 lakh per month in the last five years. They should have paid estimated government revenue of Tk 44 lakh a month in supplementary tax and VAT, the official added.

The factories should pay at least Tk 1.73 lakh a day in VAT and other taxes but is paying only Tk 36,000 against the produce of 7.5 lakh piece of bidi a day.

Alhaj Jainal and his family own at least 12 multi-storey buildings worth Tk 15 crore in Bogra town and adjacent areas including Katnarpara and Kalitolahat.

During an investigation it was learned that Amena bidi factory is running without any environmental clearance since its launch in 2004.

Md Mahabubur Rahman, assistant commissioner, Customs, Excise and VAT Bogra Division, said their department seized over 35 lakh pieces of Amena bidi on November 13, 2007 for evading supplementary taxes and filed cases against Amena Khatun.

The factory was fined more than Tk 4 lakh for evading taxes, said AC Mahabubur over phone.

Alhaj Jainal admitted that he has been paying taxes less than the exact amount to be paid but claimed the figure is not as high as Tk 1.39 lakh a day.

"Our two factories -- Jainal and Amena -- produce 7.5 lakh pieces of bidi a day," he said.

In reply to a question, he said, "Sometimes we evaded some revenue to fulfil the demand of some people including the government officials.

In presence of his employees and local journalists at his office Jainal on March 20 said he is running the Amena factory without any environmental clearance since its establishment.

Asked about environmental clearance of the other factory, he avoided the question but said it was set up just after the Liberation War.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

BRTC to procure 400 more buses

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) has taken an initiative to procure 400 CNG-run buses in a bid to expand the state-run transport service, communications ministry sources said yesterday.

The corporation will procure 100 CNG buses with the funding from the Nordic Development Fund. Another 300 CNG buses will be procured on credit from the Economic Development Cooperation Fund.

"Besides a Bus Route

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

ADMISSION FEE HIKE Students block road for 3hrs

DU CORRESPONDENT

Students of Home Economics College yesterday staged demonstrations and blocked the road in front of the college in the city for three hours protesting hike in their admission fees.

Several hundred female students of the institution sat on Nilkhet-Azimpur road around 10:00 am and demanded immediate cancellation of the increased fees.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Prayer Timing

April 6

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-40	5-15
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-21	6-24
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation



Anika, 12, who just had her appendix removed, is being taken down the staircase from the operating theatre of Dhaka National Hospital in the capital yesterday. Frequent power cuts render the elevators of the hospital useless most of the time.

PHOTO: SHAFIQUL ALAM

N Korea launches rocket defying world pressure

AP, Seoul

North Korea fired a rocket over Japan yesterday, defying Washington, Tokyo and others who suspect the launch was cover for a test of its long-range missile technology.

President Barack Obama warned the move would further isolate the communist nation.

Liftoff took place at 11:30 am (0230 GMT) from the coastal Musudan-ri launch pad in northeastern North Korea, the South Korean and US governments said. The multistage rocket hurtled toward the Pacific, reaching Japanese airspace within seven minutes, but no debris appeared to hit its territory, officials in Tokyo said.

Four hours after the launch, North Korea declared it a success. An experimental commu-

nications satellite reached outer space in just over nine minutes and is orbiting, the state-run Korean Central News Agency said in a dispatch from Pyongyang.

"The satellite is transmitting the melodies 'Song of Gen. Kim Il Sung' and 'Song of Gen Kim Jong Il' as well as measurement data back to Earth," it said, referring to the country's late founder and his son, its current leader.

Sunday's move was a bold act of defiance against Obama, Japanese leader Taro Aso, Hu Jintao of China and others who pressed Pyongyang in the days leading up to liftoff to cancel a launch they said would threaten peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

The UN Security Council approved an emergency session for Sunday afternoon in New

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Suicide bomber kills 22 in Pak mosque

AP, AFP, Islamabad/ Peshawar

A suicide bomber attacked a crowded Shia mosque south of the Pakistani capital yesterday, killing 22 people and wounding dozens more, officials said.

Pakistan has been plagued by rising violence outside the dangerous Afghan border region, including a suicide bombing in Islamabad on Saturday that killed eight paramilitary personnel and a deadly commando-style attack against a police academy last week in Lahore.

The suicide bomber set off

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Scrap UZ law or face movement

Threaten upazila chairmen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of upazila parishad chairmen yesterday threatened to go for movement if the government does not cancel the proposed Upazila Parishad Act, 2009 that allows lawmakers to meddle in the affairs of upazila parishads.

The upazila chairmen hinted this at a press briefing at Jatiya Press Club.

They said the upazila parishad must be an independent body and free from interference by the lawmakers for strengthening the local government bodies.

Termining the proposed act 'illegal and unconstitutional', speakers also said if the government passes the proposed act, it would be suicidal for it.

"If the bill is passed, it would be suicidal for the government. We have pledged before the voters to bring a change through the elections. We must have independence in local government," said Abul Kalam Azad Badal, Uzirpur upazila parishad chairman from Barisal district.

"I hope the government would not do anything which will be illegal and unconstitutional," Justice Golam Rabbani said.

"Making local government absolutely independent is one of the foundations of our constitution. And independence does not mean ensuring franchise. Direct participation of people in policy making is ensured by the constitution and there is no other rule to go beyond it," he added.

"This is a bill to empower the lawmakers but no fresh word or sentence was included during scrutiny of the bill to empower people," said Harun-Or-Rashid Hawlader, upazila chairman of Dumki upazila under Patuakhali district.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Tk 10 LAKH TENDER BCL men beat up DU contractors

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) allegedly beat up some listed contractors of Dhaka University yesterday over tender for two development works worth Tk 10 lakh on the campus.

Sources said some BCL

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

BHOLA MADRASA Russell gives confessional statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bhola

Arrestee Maulana Mohammad Russell of Green Crescent Orphanage and Madrasa yesterday in a confessional statement said one Hasan Saifuddin Badal and Humayun Ahmed used to hold meetings at Green Crescent.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

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Ms Lubna Choudhury Principal

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DEATH ANNIVERSARY

AS THE FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF (LATE) NAZIUR RAHMAN MONJUR, FOUNDER CHAIRMAN OF BANGLADESH JATYA PARTY (BJP), FORMER LGRD MINISTER OF PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH, FORMER MAYOR OF DHAKA CITY CORPORATION, MILAD MAHFIL HAVE BEEN ARRANGED ON 6TH APRIL 2009 AT (BHOLA) AND ON 10TH APRIL 2009 ON FRIDAY AFTER THE ASAR PRAYER AT (LATE) NAZIUR RAHMAN MONJUR'S BARIDHARAS RESIDENCE.

ALL RELATIVES, FRIENDS AND WELL WISHERS ARE KINDLY REQUESTED TO ATTEND THE MILAD MAHFIL AND PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY ALLAH TO GRANT ETERNAL PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL.

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