

## PROTECTION OF VVIPs

## Process underway to form elite police unit

BSS, Dhaka

The government plans to raise an elite police unit to be called Bureau of Crisis Response and Protection (BCR), for protection of the very very important persons (VVIPs), including the president and prime minister, to supplement the Special Security Force (SSF), officials said here yesterday.

"We have forwarded a police headquarters proposal to the Prime Minister's Office for raising the specialised unit," a senior home ministry official told the news agency, adding that the proposal was prepared in line with a government directive.

He said the proposed unit would also provide security to visiting foreign heads of states and governments and any person designated as VVIP by the government.

Officials familiar with the development said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina earlier on two occasions told senior police officials about the plan to raise the unit with strength of over 32,000 specially

trained and equipped policemen in next three years.

They said the police HQ proposed 3,730 posts for the unit to be headed by an officer to the rank of inspector general of police (IGP), who will be assisted by two additional inspectors general, two deputy inspectors general, seven additional deputy inspectors general and 14 police super-level officers.

The elite Special Security Force (SSF) was formed in 1997 as the successor to Presidential Security Force (PSF). It is manned by specially trained officers from army, navy, air force and police and it works in collaboration with traditional President Guard Regiment.

SSF takes necessary measures in coordination with civil administration, security and intelligence organisations to protect VIPs from any threat at any place, including their residences.

But a police official familiar with the situation said SSF needed the police support for "middle and outer circles" of the country's two top VIPs, the president

and the prime minister, as with their limited number of officials they could directly guard inner circles within a close proximity only.

"The route protection of the VVIPs and VIPs under the existing system is very difficult particularly as they go outside the capital by road when the ordinary district police units struggle to familiarise with the security arrangements and follow or escort them with their old vehicles," Hassan-ul-Haider, an assistant inspector general (AIG) of the police HQ, said.

He said district policemen are also tasked with the job of ground sweeping and control people in VVIPs public meetings alongside gathering intelligence about their exposure to terrorist attacks or subversive activities of criminal gangs.

Another senior officer claimed that with their limited resources under the current structure, police needed to shoulder the major chunk of responsibilities of VVIP security and the situation demanded the development of a specialised unit for the job.



Media analyst Muhammad Jahangir speaks at a press conference on the Citizens' Media Forum in the city recently.



Dhaka District Four-Stroke Autorickshaw (CNG) Drivers' Union forms a human chain at Muktangan in the city yesterday with a call to end their harassment by autorickshaw owners and police.

## Road crashes kill five

METRO DESK

Five people were killed in separate road accidents in Gaibandha, Comilla and Narail yesterday.

Our correspondent in Gaibandha reports: Two women were killed and five others injured in separate road accidents at Gobindnagar on Bogra-Rangpur highway yesterday. The dead were identified as

Momena Khatun, 60, of Bakchar village under Gobindnagar upazila and Anowara Begum, 22.

Momena was crushed under the wheels of a speeding truck while crossing the road.

In another incident, Anowara, an expecting mother, was killed on the spot when a speeding truck knocked her rickshaw from behind.

A correspondent in Comilla

adds: Two people were killed in a road accident at Amtoli on Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Comilla Sadar Dakshin upazila yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Md Syed, 32, and Md Bacchu, 30.

Police said the accident occurred when a Comilla-bound passenger bus collided head-on with their motorcycle, leaving them dead on the spot.

Our correspondent in Narail adds: A motorcyclist was killed in a road accident and another injured on Narail-Kulna road near Agdia Bazar under Narail Sadar upazila yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Hasibur Rahman, 28, of Bhadulidanga village under Narail Sadar upazila.

Police and locals said the accident occurred at about 4.00pm when a Narail-bound truck hit their motorbike, leaving Hasibur dead on the spot.

## 'Stop harassing CNG drivers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Dhaka District Four-Stroke Autorickshaw (CNG) Drivers' Union yesterday demanded end of their harassment by owners and on-duty police.

Speaking at a human chain in the city they also demanded allocation of 5000 new CNG autorickshaws to drivers as planned by the government.

They said owners are still forcing them to pay more than Tk 450 daily deposit fixed by the government and charging Tk 700 to Tk 750 daily.

They also said, on-duty police officials also harass them in the name of routine inspection of papers.

They also demanded separate parking lot for autorickshaws in the city and prevent auto rickshaw hijacking.

Saiful Haque, general secretary of Biplobi Workers Party, Md Rafiqul Islam, president of the union, Nazimuddin Rana, among others, addressed the gathering.

Others addressed the gathering.

Iranian Ambassador in Dhaka Hassan Farazandeh here yesterday expressed his country's eagerness to invest in the fuel oil refinery sector in Bangladesh as well as to import medicine.

He said Iran is eager to strengthen the bilateral relations existing between the two countries through expanding businesses, as there are many similarities in the both countries, including the colours of the national flags, religious practice and beliefs.

The Iranian envoy said this at a view exchange meeting with the leaders of Chittagong Press Club (CPC) while visiting the club in the afternoon.

Iran initiated to set up a fuel oil refinery in Chittagong in 1994, but the project was later shifted to Sri Lanka, he mentioned.

They also said, on-duty police officials also harass them in the name of routine inspection of papers.

But the country is reconsidering its investment in the industrial sector and other business in Bangladesh, Hassan said.

The Iranian envoy said there is a good market of Iranian food in Bangladesh,

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

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Welcoming the envoy for visiting the press club for the first time, CPC President Abu Sufian urged him to take the advantage of investment-friendly environment exists in the port city.

He stressed the need for exchanging cultural diversities of both the countries to intensify the existing brotherly relations between the two nations.

CPC Senior Vice President Faruk Iqbal, Vice President Asif Siraj, General Secretary Rashed Rouf, Joint Secretary Mohsin Chowdhury, Library Secretary SM Ibrahim, Cultural Secretary Manjur Kader Manju and Sports Secretary Morshed Alam also spoke.

adding that his country wants to import medicine from here.

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## Citizens' Media Forum formed

METRO DESK

A group of media enthusiasts have formed a forum styled 'Citizens' Media Forum', which will act as a bridge among the newspaper readers, TV and feature film viewers, and radio listeners, says a press release.

A convening committee has recently been formed with well-known media analyst Muhammad Jahangir as its chair.

The committee has already started inviting membership subscriptions. Newspaper readers, TV/feature film viewers and radio listeners can be members of the forum.

The primary goal of the forum is to arrange seminars and discussions on media content and media-related issues, conduct opinion polls and media-related research, and disseminate the findings to media outlets. The forum will also have branches outside Dhaka.

The forum is primarily supported by Unesco.

For membership and further queries, interested persons can contact the Media Nagorik Forum, Hall Mars, 6/D, 66 Outer Circular Road, Moghbazar (6th Floor). Phone and Fax: 9334656. Email: cdc@ctech.net.

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**Job Location :** Any Office of BRAC International.

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**Experience :** At least one year experience in relevant field.

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Outgoing German Ambassador in Dhaka Frank Meyke speaks at a meet the press programme, organised by Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU), in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

## 3rd Karnaphuli bridge opens to traffic in October

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain has said the much-awaited 3rd Karnaphuli bridge would be opened to traffic in October next on completion of the construction work within the scheduled time.

He hoped that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the bridge to be completed at a cost of Tk 590 crore.

The construction of 3rd Karnaphuli bridge started in August 2006 with the financial assistance

of Kuwait.

Syed Abul Hossain was talking to journalists after visiting the bridge in the port city yesterday.

He said the government is also actively considering construction of a tunnel under the Asian Highway and the government would choose the best one attaching top most priority to the interest of the country.

The minister said the government is making efforts to see Bangladesh connected with the Asian Highway.

He said if Bangladesh is not connected with the Asian

Highway it will remain detached from other countries.

The minister said there are different options for getting the country connected with the Asian Highway and the government would choose the best one attaching top most priority to the interest of the country.

MA Latif MP, Project Director Md Mohiuddin, former PD Muktadir Belal and representative of the construction firm China Major Bridge were present on the occasion.

ICRC and DRU wish them the very best for their future endeavours

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