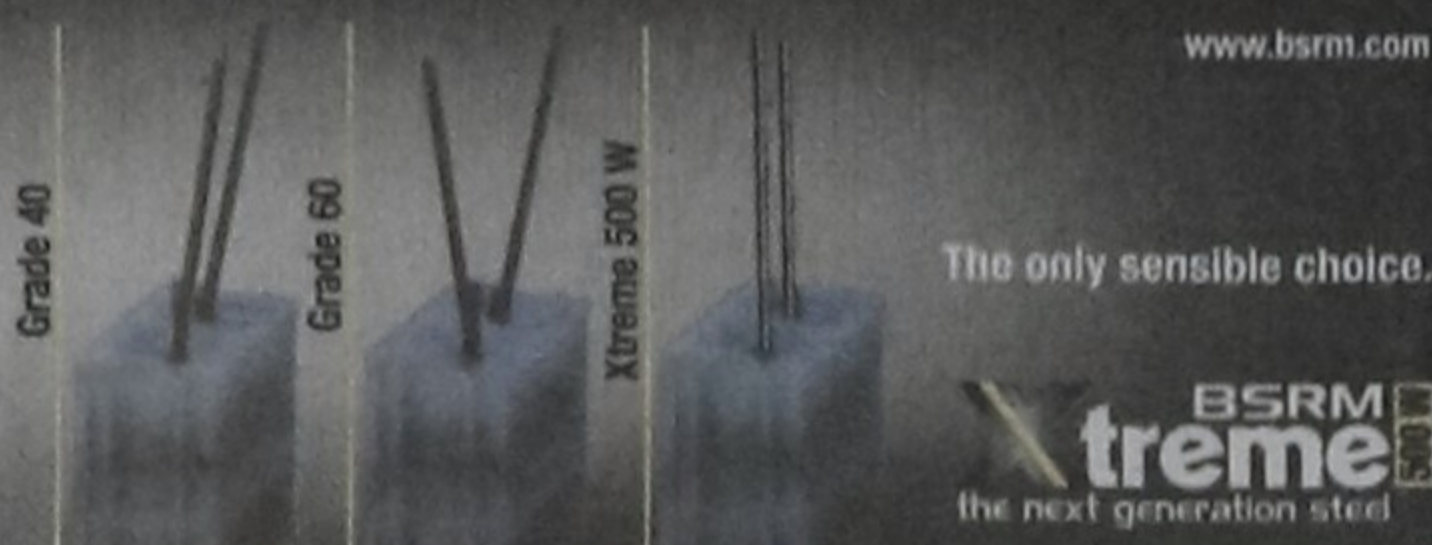


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## 6-hr hartal today on gas block issue

Sahara warns about anarchy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports enforces a half-day hartal today in Dhaka city to press their demand for scrapping the government decision to "lease out" offshore gas blocks to foreign companies.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Sahara Khatun yesterday warned that stern action would be taken if any chaos is created in the name of hartal.

To maintain law and order during hartal hours 1,650

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

## 2 top officials' services extended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ahead of their retirement, the government yesterday extended services of Cabinet Secretary M Abdul Aziz and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Md Abdul Karim for two years on contractual basis.

Both the senior most bureaucrats in the civil administration were to retire by the end of this month on completion of their 57 years in service.

According to official sources, Aziz was due to go on leave preparatory to retirement (LPR) on September 30

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



People aspiring to go home to celebrate Eid throng at Gabtali Bus Terminal in the city yesterday for advance tickets. PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

# Mega transport plans rolled out in JS

Underground railway in Dhaka, tunnels under Padma, Karnaphuli, 142 new bridges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has taken up massive plans including construction of underground railroad across Dhaka city to ease traffic jam and installation of tunnels under the Padma and Karnaphuli rivers.

It also plans to build a total of 142 bridges to expand country's road and railway network.

Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain presented the government plans

in parliament in reply to queries from several lawmakers.

Referring to the railway sector, he said the government has taken initiative to add 100 meter gauge coaches to Bangladesh railway.

He said the government is looking for foreign aid to implement 17 mega projects in the communications sector.

The minister told the House that the government has taken a set of measures to curb extortion in the transport sector.

The steps include engaging mobile courts and beefing up police patrol on highways.

In reply to a scripted question from BNP lawmaker Nilufar Chowdhury Moni, the communications minister said a process is underway to float tender for feasibility study for the underground railroad across Dhaka city.

He said the government has adopted plans to build flyovers at six level crossings in the city to ease tailbacks.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

## 2 outlaws killed in 'crossfire'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kustia

Two top outlawed party leaders were shot dead in separate incidents of "crossfire" between police and their gangs in Kustia early yesterday raising the number of such deaths to 21 in the district in last 17 days.

The dead were identified as Gono Bahini leader Marfat Hossain, 40, son of Ishaq Biswas of Ailchara in sadar upazila, and Gono Mukti Foj leader Biplob, 33, son of late Tofazzel Hossain of Katakhana area in Kustia district town.

A police team of sadar upazila conducted a raid in Ailchara village at around 3:30am when some Gono Bahini cadres led by Marfat were holding a meeting beneath the Ailchara Bara Bridge.

Police cordoned off the area and asked the outlaws to surrender but the operatives opened fire prompting the law enforcers to retaliate. The body of Marfat was found on the spot after his accomplices had escaped.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

## BDR now seeks speedy trial

Govt may finalise trial process today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After the Supreme Court's recent opinion against trying the BDR mutineers under the army act, Bangladesh Rifles yesterday requested the government to ensure a fast-track trial under any laws for the offences committed during the bloody mutiny on February 25-26.

The director general of the paramilitary force sent a letter to the home ministry about their latest thoughts and requests, says a source.

Meanwhile, the government is likely to decide about the trial process of the BDR mutiny today, as the law ministry yesterday received the SC opinion on the presidential reference on the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

## OnlinePoll

Do you think the deaths of the animals in the Zoo show sheer negligence and corruption of the Zoo administration and apathy of higher authorities about the captive animals?

- ☐ Yes (95.4%)  
☐ No (3.9%)  
☐ No Comments (0.7%)

Total votes: 1120

### TODAY'S POLL

Do you think the government's inability to control the prices of essentials is seriously harming its image?

Please cast your vote at [www.thedailystar.net](http://www.thedailystar.net)

### Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Sept	Sehri	Iftar
23	14		7-07
24	15	5-24	7-06
25	16	5-25	7-05

### Prayer Timing

September 14

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-24	5-34
Zohr	1-45	2-15
Asr	5-30	5-45
Maghrib	7-07	7-17
Esha	8-45	9-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

## 50 Taliban killed in Afghan clash, airstrikes

AFP, Herat

Up to 50 Taliban insurgents have been killed in Afghanistan's western Farah province after clashes that left seven Afghan and two US soldiers dead, government officials said yesterday.

Militants fired mortar rounds at a military-escorted convoy of humanitarian supplies in Farah province on Saturday, sparking clashes, explosions and an air strike by Nato forces helping fight a bloody Taliban insurgency here.

"The information we received from the ANA (Afghan National Army) is that in this clash seven ANA soldiers were killed and 12 were wounded," Farah governor Rohul Amin Amin told AFP.

"Around 40 to 50 Taliban were killed. Two American soldiers were killed. One Isaf vehicle was damaged," he said, referring to the Nato-led coalition, the International Security Assistance Force.

"Nato airplanes then bombed, and the information we have received was that the casualties were not significant from the airstrike. The Taliban who were killed were because of ground clashes with the ANA and Isaf."

The defence ministry said that "tens of terrorists" were killed in the incident, but added it had no reports of civilian casualties. An ANA spokesman had already confirmed their soldiers' deaths, while a US Forces spokesman said on Saturday their two service members died in a blast in Farah, which has seen increasing levels of militant-linked unrest.

Local officials have also said that two women were killed in the same incident when one of the mortars fired by the Taliban struck their house.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

## KHALEDA'S HOUSE Govt to go for legal battle

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The government will go for a legal fight with the High Court (HC) to establish that BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has been illegally occupying the cantonment residence, and the notice asking her to vacate the house has been issued lawfully.

The HC, on May 27 this year, following a writ petition

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

## Thugs snatch accomplice from Rab

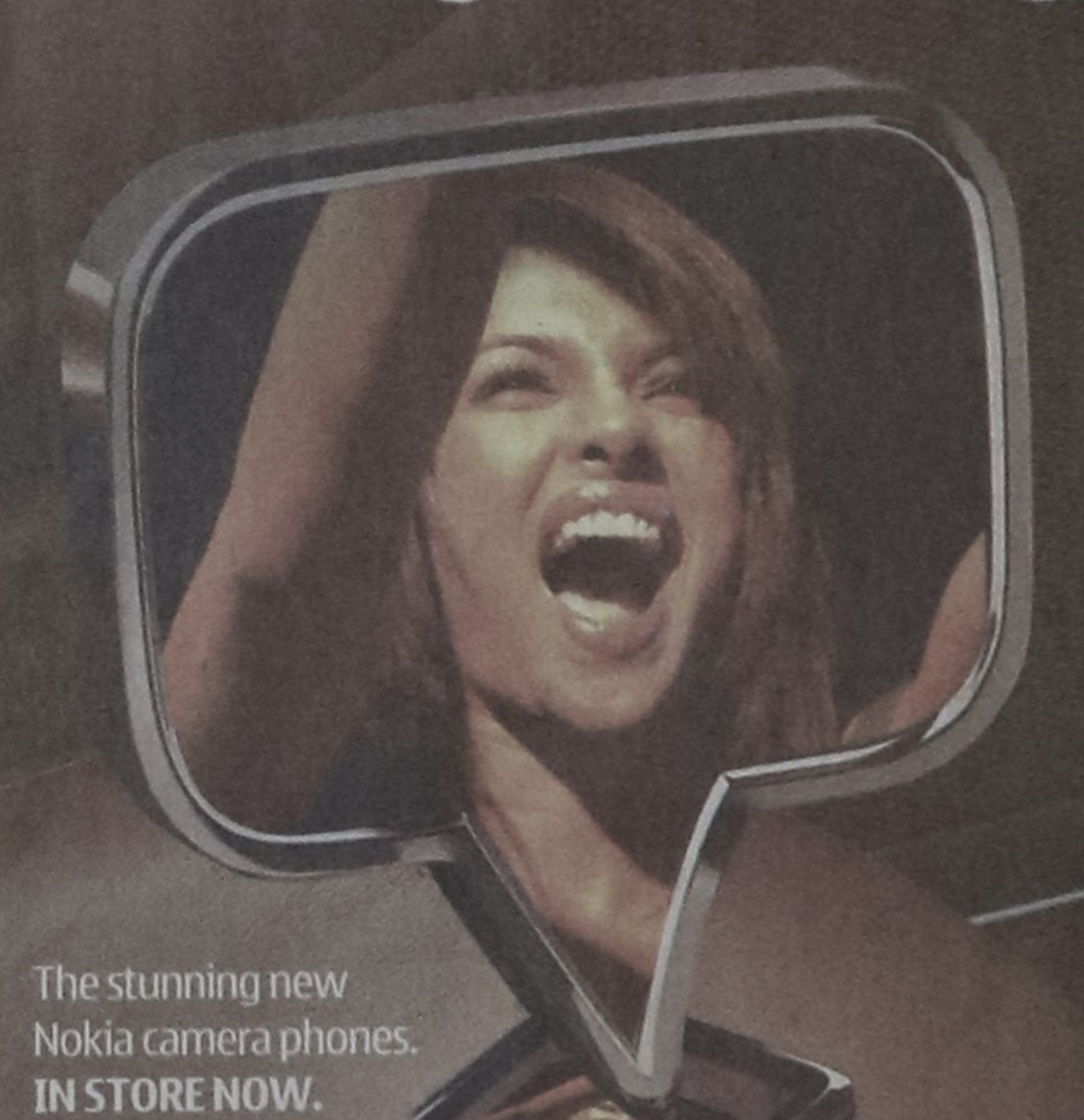
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of criminals snatched their accomplice from the members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in broad daylight yesterday afternoon, injuring a major of the elite force in the city's Mirpur.

Injured Major Khandaker Golam Sarwar was rushed to Combined Military Hospital with severe wounds in his head.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

## Pictures get us talking



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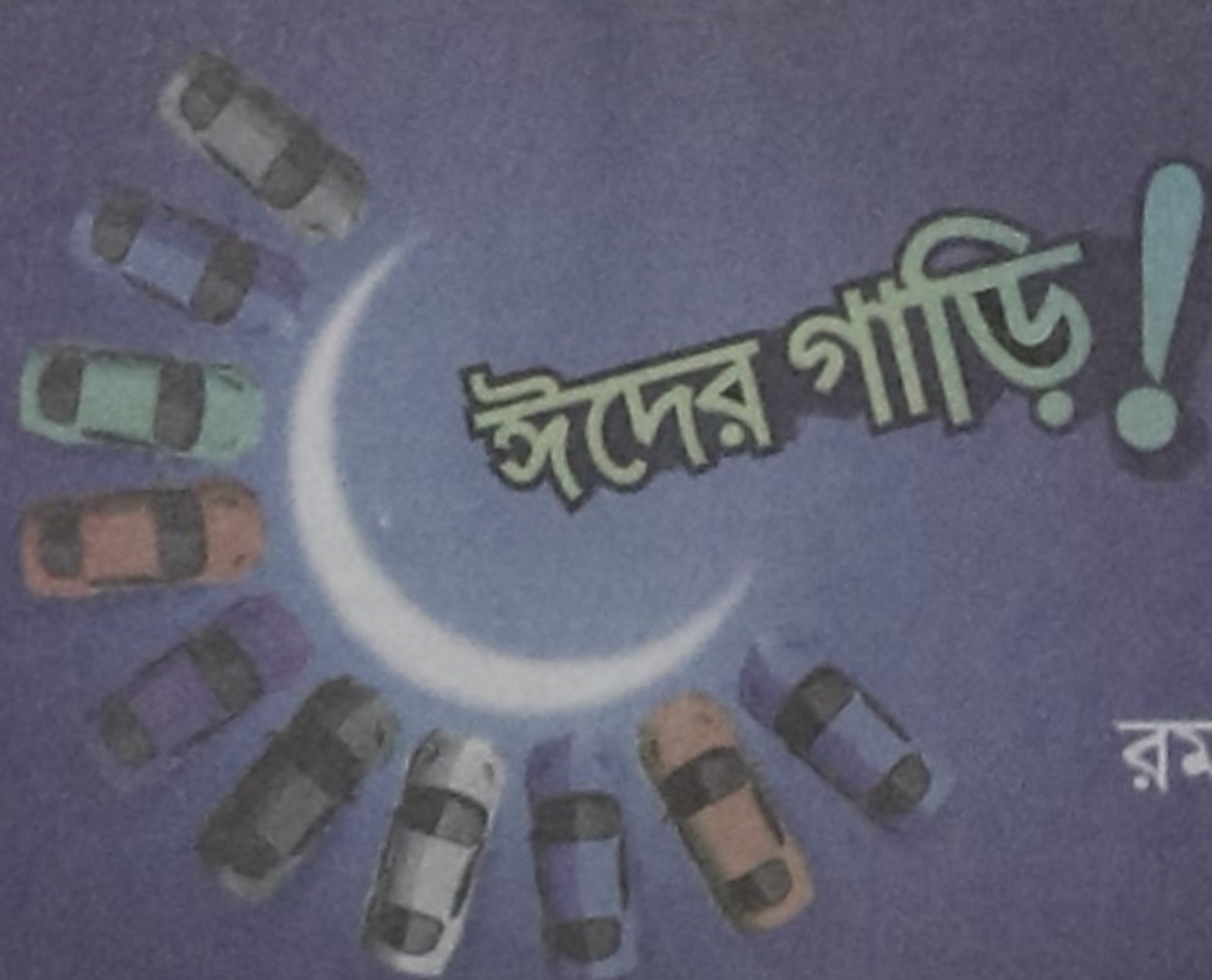
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