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COMMOTION OVER 'NO PROMOTION'

DCC hamstrung by lawsuits

Arms-wielding engineer arrested; engineers blame it on officers on deputation

TAWFIQUE ALI

Regular promotions and service confirmation of a number of engineers at Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) remain stalled due to lawsuits filed by themselves or department proceedings.

Besides, most of the key positions of DCC are being held by the officials on deputation from army and civil service hampering services of the important local government body.

Meanwhile, DCC's Superintendent Engineer Md Farukh Aziz was arrested

from Sheikhertek Mohammadpur area last night on charge of brandishing fire-arms before his boss for promotion.

Captain Taifur Mahbub of Rab-3 said they held Farukh at 8:00 pm following a general diary filed with Shahbagh Police Station on Sunday by the DCC chief engineer's staff officer.

Farukh on Sunday threatened DCC Chief Engineer Brig General Md Abdul Quadir showing off a pistol during a negotiation on promotion on September 27.

After receiving a complaint from the chief engineer, DCC Mayor Sadeque

Hossain Khoka suspended Farukh from his job.

Quadir would be handed over to the Shahbagh police within few hours, Captain Taifur told The Daily Star till filing the report at 10:00pm last night.

Farukh is the president of the Diploma Engineers' Association of DCC.

Authorities could not confirm Farukh as a SE because two departmental proceedings brought during the term of mayor Hanif are still pending, said the mayor.

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PHOTO: STAR

Gridlock reappears on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue yesterday as the capital starts to be its usual self after Eid and Puja holidays.

PM receives eye, ear treatment

BSS, New York

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina received treatment for her ears and eyes at Baltimore's John Hopkins Hospital in Washington DC on Monday.

A group of expert physicians examined her ears and eyes from 8:00am to 2:00pm (local time).

Hasina's ears were badly damaged in the August 21, 2004 grenade attack during a rally in Dhaka.

The PM has been receiving treatment at John Hopkins Hospital since then.

She left New York for Washington DC by road on the same day. Earlier, the members of her entourage greeted her with wreaths on the

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Robbers reign supreme at night on Ashulia road

MUKHLESUR RAHMAN

If you plan to take a trip through Ashulia road at night, think at least twice. Because you may be risking your life at the hands of robbers who waylay cars just as Nadim Uddin Nadim, a resident of Mohammadpur in the city, experienced on the Eid night. There are many more to tell similar stories.

Nadim and two other friends were taking the Ashulia road on the way home from Uttara around 8:30pm.

"Suddenly we heard a bang as an object hit our speeding private car in Mirpur Beribadh area," Nadim told The Daily Star.

They stopped the car and got down to inspect what went wrong. And in a flash, a gang of 10 to 12 robbers who were hiding behind the roadside bushes jumped on them.

"The criminals were all naked except for a loin cloth and carrying sharp weapons," Nadim says. "They were making blood curdling cries

and they rushed towards us and started chopping us before we could realise what was happening," he adds.

"One of us luckily got free and ran away. He then waved at the passing cars. But no one stopped," Nadim went on.

Luckily a microbus stopped and the passengers agreed to help them. As they came to the spot of robbery, the bandits melted into the dark again. He added that the muggers tried to get into the car perhaps to snatch it.

Nadim said no police patrol team was available near the spot to help them.

Nadim's story is not an exceptional one. Such incidents are happening on Dhaka-Ashulia road almost every day.

Every day soon after nightfall several gangs of muggers become active at over 10 points on the road making commuter movement in small vehicles like private car and microbus risky.

Many commuters allege the muggers snatch

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Ctg tea-stall owner beaten to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A tea-stall owner was beaten to death by security guards and labourers of a shipping agency at Agrabad in the port city yesterday.

The 16-year old boy was identified as Parvez, of Debar Par area under Double Mooring Police Station.

He used to run the stall beside the office of Birds Bangladesh Agencies Limited, witnesses and the victim's family members said. When he was asked to remove the stall from the place, he implored the authorities

saying he will remove it after Eid-ul-Fitr.

"As Parvez went today to

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6 motorbikers killed in crashes

OUR CORRESPONDENTS, Faridpur & Comilla

Six motorbike riders were killed in two separate road accidents in Faridpur and Comilla districts yesterday, which suspended the traffic movement for a few hours in the areas.

Our Faridpur correspondent reports, three motorbike riders were killed as a bus rammed their motorbike on Dhaka-Khulna highway at Bagattabazar under Modhukhali upazila of Faridpur.

The dead were identified as motorbike rider Salam Sheikh alias Salaudhin, 35, hailed from Gowlpara village of Bagat union and pillion passengers Zahid Sheikh, 30, and Maruf Kazi, 25, both from Ramkantapur village under Modhukhali upazila of the district.

Police said, a Dhaka-bound bus of 'Meghna Enterprise' from Magura hit the motorbike at about 10:00am, leaving Salam dead on the spot and two others seriously injured.

Later, the injured died on their way to Modhukhali Upazila Health Complex.

Agitating locals blockaded the road protesting the accident. A good number of vehicles remained stranded on both sides of the road and caused troubles to the passengers.

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Troops kill 157 protesters in Guinea

AFP, Conakry

At least 157 people were killed and 1,253 wounded when Guinea junta troops broke up a huge demonstration in Conakry on Monday, the Guinean Human Rights Organisation told AFP yesterday.

"Up until now we have counted 157 dead and 1,253 wounded. Our people have been all around Conakry and in hospitals but they haven't been able to see everything," said rights group head Thierno Maadjou Sow said.

Guinean opposition parties previously said 128 people were killed in the quelling of the protest.

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UN scrutinises Gaza 'war crimes'

BBC ONLINE

The UN's main human rights watchdog has begun a debate on a damning report into Israel's military operation against Gaza eight months ago.

It is seen as a test of US engagement with the Human Rights Council, which was shunned by President George W Bush.

The US, which is Israel's main ally, has criticised elements of the report.

The report, widely lauded by human rights groups, accuses both Israel and its militant Palestinian adversary Hamas of war crimes in the campaign.

Presenting the full version of the report, lead investigator Richard Goldstone told delegates that a lack of accountability for war crimes had reached "crisis point" in the Middle East and undermined any hope for peace in the region.

He rejected what he called a "barrage of criticism" about his findings and public attacks against the members of his mission.

"We will not address these attacks as we believe that the answers to those who have criticised us are in the findings of the report," he said.

'Careful review' The Human Rights Council was founded three years ago, after criticism of its predecessor that it turned a blind eye to

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Prayer Timing		
September 30		
Fajr	Azan	Jamaat
5:35	6:10	
Zohr	1:45	2:15
Asr	5:15	5:30
Maghrib	7:00	7:05
Esha	8:30	9:00

Source: Islamic Foundation



A gaping hole on an alley in Rajabazar. A manhole used to be there, which broke, but the authorities concerned are yet to fix it keeping people in constant danger of accidents.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Rajabazar roads not in kingly state

Open manholes, badly repaired roads pose severe risk

HELEMUL ALAM

Uncovered manholes coupled with battered roads and poor drainage system in the capital's Rajabazar cause untold sufferings to hundreds of residents in the area.

Very often, especially at night, vehicles and rickshaws are trapped into the manholes leaving passengers injured and creating traffic chaos in the locality.

A few days back locals on their own initiatives filled up the potholes on some of the roads with rubbish to prevent accidents and make driving safer.

Locals said even a light shower results in water-logging on the roads that have remained out of repair for years.

Many roads at West Rajabazar, Tollabagh and Sukrabad are in a very poor condition, said Sultan Khan, a resident of Tollabagh.

Water and Sewerage Authority set up a storm sewerage line in the area about six months ago but it proved ineffective in solving the problem of water-logging, he said.

Dhaka City Corporation, responsible for maintenance of the roads, is yet to repair the dug-up roads making a ride on them very risky, said Sher Ali, a resident at West Rajabazar.

Shahid, owner of a small tea stall, said water gets stagnated on the roads if it rains even a little in the area.

"My shop went under four feet water after a heavy downpour a month back causing me a loss of Tk 30,000," he said.

Moreover, three manholes remain without lids in front of

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Govt dispels fear about rice price

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdur Razzaque has termed 'expected' the recent rise in rice price by Tk 1 or 2 a kg, and said the government is ready to launch various social safety net programmes to check further price hike.

"Price hike of rice in many cases is beneficial to farmers," he told journalists at his office yesterday.

The government is closely monitoring the market situation and would do everything to keep rice price within the common man's reach, he said.

Under the social safety net programmes, the minister said, they would introduce an income generating programme for the hardcore poor in Sidr, Aila and monga affected areas. "First

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

ACC opens port grab probe

UNB, Chittagong

A three-member team of the Anti-Corruption Commission started investigation yesterday into corruption charges against former adviser Maj Gen (rtd) MA Matin with questioning of five officials of Chittagong port at its office.

ACC formed the committee at the behest of the shipping ministry following recommendation by its parliamentary

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30 Afghan civilians die as bus hits mine

40 Taliban men killed in western region

AP, AFP, Kandahar/ Kabul

A roadside bomb blast in southern Afghanistan has killed 30 civilians yesterday while 40 Taliban militants were killed in joint operation in western Monday.

The civilians were killed when their bus hit an improvised explosive device in Kandahar province in southern Afghanistan yesterday, the interior ministry said.

The dead included 10 children and seven

women, the ministry said, revising an earlier toll from the local governor's office.

"Thirty people were killed," the ministry said in a statement, adding that 39 others were wounded.

Officials blamed the blast on Taliban insurgents, whose weapon of choice is the improvised bombs that have claimed hundreds of lives in Afghanistan.

"A bus travelling between Herat and

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OnlinePoll

Do you think the government should immediately amend the VAT Act 1991 to make health bill cheaper for patients?

Yes (87.4%) No (7.5%) No Comments (5.1%)

Total votes: 878

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina that Abdul Jalil should have resigned as a lawmaker before raising any question about the ninth parliamentary election?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net