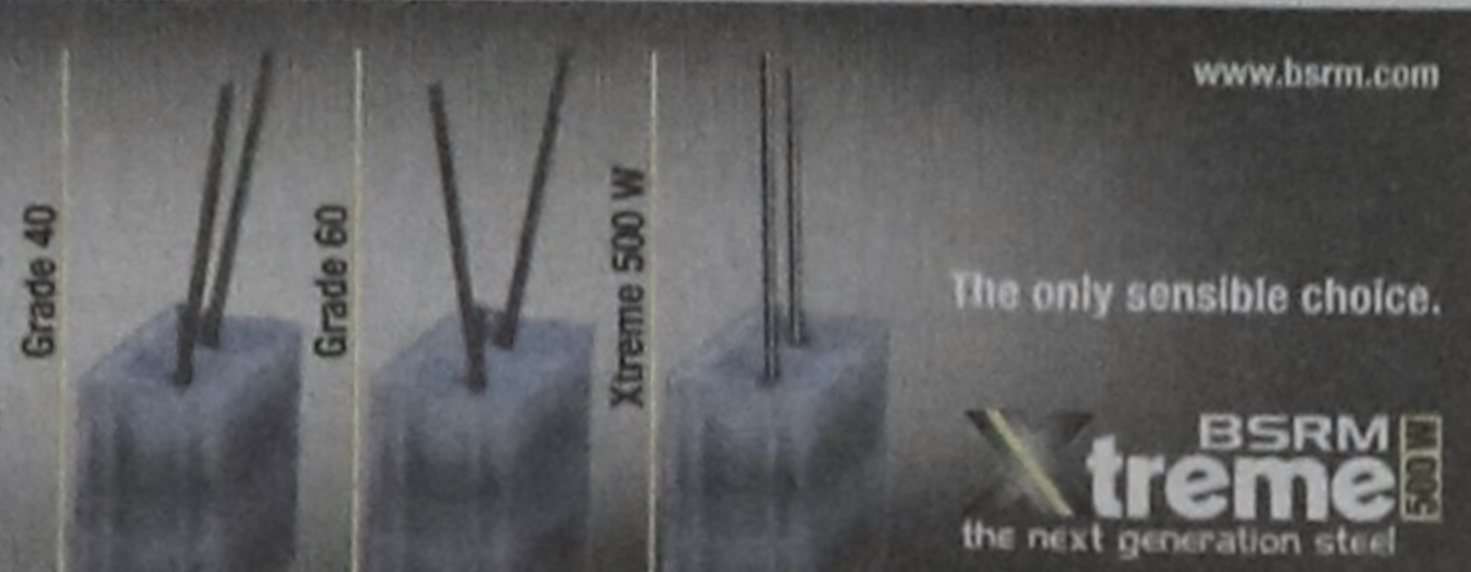


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BNP's amended charter makes way for Tarique

Post of senior joint secy general created; chairperson's tenure increased

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

BNP has incorporated in its amended constitution a new post of senior joint secretary general, which has been held by Tarique Rahman, son of Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Party insiders are considering the move as a manoeuvre for creating an opportunity for Tarique to be a councillor in the party's upcoming national council expected to be held on December 8 this year, after 16 long years.

The much talked about 'absolute

power of the chairperson' however was not curtailed in the amended constitution, rather the tenure of the chairperson was increased to three years from the previous two years.

"As the chief executive of the party, the chairperson will control, monitor, and coordinate all activities of the party and will control, oversee, and coordinate activities of all committees of the party," says the amended constitution.

The party however brought another amendment to its constitution, which empowers the national council to elect

members of the national standing committee, the highest policy making forum. Earlier, only the chairperson had the authority to nominate members to that committee.

Observers say the limits of the chairperson's authority still remain vague in the amended constitution.

On September 13 last year, following a standing committee meeting of the party, Tanbir Ahmed Siddiky, a former committee member who is now expelled from the party, told the media that the committee

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

Hasina, 3 others cleared of graft charges

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday cleared Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and three others of charges in a corruption case following an appeal by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

ACC Deputy Director Mohammad Moniruzzaman Khan, also investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted the final report on Sunday to the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court citing no instance of misuse of power by any of the accused.

The commission also appealed to the court to exempt the accused as their involvement in the incidents was not proved.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Slack coordination worsens traffic mess

Officials blame manpower shortage

TAWFIQUE ALI

High officials of half a dozen government agencies responsible for the city's traffic management have attributed their failure to control the perennial traffic mess to lack of manpower, logistic support and coordination.

However, the city dwellers allege that corrupt practices by the authorities are also working behind the failure. A top official wishing anonymity also said the government agencies cannot act accordingly because of corruption.

Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB), Traffic Department of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk), Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) are responsible for traffic

management of the mega city.

Transport experts say lack of a coordinated transport planning, negligence of authorities concerned, occupying roads and footpaths are among the main reasons behind the traffic gridlocks.

DTCB Additional Executive Director SM Salehuddin said, "It (DTCB) is a toothless agency in terms of authority and manpower." He said lack of proper coordination in traffic management system is undoubtedly a foremost reason behind the tailbacks.

BRTA Assistant Director Mohammad Shahidullah said one hundred vehicles on an average get registration every day in Dhaka meaning around 36,000 vehicles come on the city roads in a year.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Islami Andolan Bangladesh brings out a procession, heading towards the Indian High Commission, yesterday protesting the proposed Tipaimukh Dam on the Barak in India. The photo was taken near Shanti Nagar Bazar. Story on page 3.

PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

AL, Jubo League men fight for DCC contract: 5 hurt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Activists of ruling Awami League and its youth wing Jubo League yesterday clashed in front of Dhaka City Corporation office over submission of tenders, leaving at least five persons injured.

On the closing day for dropping tenders for a lease and three construction works involving over Tk 10 crore, situation in the Nagar Bhaban area was tense throughout the day.

Despite huge deployment of police, leaders and workers of AL, Jubo League, Swachhchasebak League and Chhatra League swarmed around the DCC office.

The contracts include construction of a community centre at a cost of Tk 8 crore in ward-70.

Sources said a scuffle broke out at around 1:00pm when some Jubo League men waylaid ward-56 unit AL leader Fazar Ali and his associates coming out of the DCC office after dropping tender for the lease of a parking space in front of the Shishu Park.

As the two groups brawled and chased each other, at least five of them were wounded. Police had to charge baton to disperse them.

The injured were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Talking to The Daily Star, Magistrate Khalilur Rahman of the DCC Estate Department said the incident did not hamper the tender submission as it took place out of the office and after the tender dropping period ended at 12:30pm.

He said as part of the cautionary measures, they had deployed police around the tender boxes on the third floor.

Rezaul Karim, officer-in-charge of Shabbagh Police Station, SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

FALSE CASES FILED Star's Bogra reporter held, freed on bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hasibur Rahman Bilu, The Daily Star's senior staff correspondent in Bogra, was arrested in two false cases and later released on bail yesterday.

Bogra Sadar police made the arrest at around 3:30pm and let him out on bail under section 494 of the penal code at around 7:00pm.

Bilu, who will have to seek bail from a court today, alleged that a powerful district administration official forced police to record two false cases on fraud charges and arrest him.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Correction

In a report headlined "Shrinking days seek timeout for day plan," run by The Daily Star on October 16, Hamida Ali's name erroneously appeared as the principal of South Breeze School. Actually, Hamida Ali is the principal of South Point School and College. We regret the inadvertent mistake.

Pak troops fight Taliban militants on 3 fronts

Jets keep on pounding bases close to Afghan border; 9 soldiers, 78 militants killed so far

AP, AFP, Dera Ismail Khan

Troops fought militants on three fronts and fighter jets bombed insurgent positions yesterday as Pakistan pressed ahead with its assault on an al-Qaeda and Taliban sanctuary close to the Afghan border.

Pakistan's military vowed Monday to target the Taliban leadership in the ground and air offensive launched against the Taliban in South Waziristan which it said had so far killed 78 militants.

"The last 24 hours, reportedly 18 terrorists have been killed in various incidents and secu-

rity forces losses are two soldiers and 12 injured," Major General Athar Abbas told the first news conference on the operation.

"The high-level targets are the leadership. We hope to get the leadership," Major General Athar Abbas told the first news conference since the military launched the offensive on Saturday.

He said the latest fatalities brought to nine the number of soldiers and 78 the number of militants killed since the operation began early Saturday.

The figures were impossible to confirm with

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

ATTACK ON REVOLUTIONARY GUARDS

Iran blames US, Britain, Pakistan

AFP, Tehran

An Iranian general on Monday accused Pakistan, Britain and the United States of aiding Sunni rebels behind a devastating suicide attack which killed 42 people, including seven military commanders.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, in a telephone conversation with his Pakistani counterpart Asif Ali Zardari, separately charged that those behind Sunday's bombing were in Pakistan and needed to be "quickly confronted."

The suicide bomber blew himself up at a meeting on Sunday of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards and local tribesmen in Iran's restive Sistan-Baluchestan province, a hotbed of Sunni insurgency.

Some of the dead who hailed from Zahedan, the capital of Sistan-Baluchestan, were being buried on Monday in the city, according to footage shown by state television.

Iranian officials said the attack at a gymnasium in the town of Pisheh near the Pakistan border was claimed by Sunni militant rebel leader Abdolmalek Rigi, whose Jundallah (Soldiers of God) group has for years been waging war against the Shia rule of Iran.

The head of the Revolutionary Guards Corps, General

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

OnlinePoll

Do you think NBR will be able to take action against the MPs who are not paying their income tax?

Yes (19.4%)
No (79.4%)
No Comments (1.3%)

Total votes: 1250

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think administration will be able to take legal actions against the land grabbers, river encroachers, no matter how influential they are following the PM's directive?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing

October 20		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-50	6-25
Zohr	1-45	2-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-36	6-39
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

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