

## Gridlocks, potholes

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district who had to sweat their guts out to ensure a road free from traffic jam.

The officials of the Narayanganj district administration and law enforcers were put on alert on either side of the Jatrabari-Kanchpur road for hours to maintain the traffic, especially on the Kanchpur Bridge.

Either side of the bridge usually witness heavy traffic gridlock round the clock, said locals.

Vehicles were not allowed to pull over on the road even for a moment causing immense suffering to passengers as they couldn't get off the vehicles at their designated places while commuters waiting for the bus had to undergo the same experience.

Even the trucks and other modes of vehicles parked at the roadside everyday were not allowed to move on to the street as the minister was scheduled to visit the area.

The Jatrabari-Kanchpur road, which has been in dilapidated condition for the last several years causing tremendous sufferings to commuters and locals, were repaired for the minister to enjoy a good ride.

At a view-exchange meeting with reporters and the locals at the Roads and Highways Department's Kanchpur office, the minister said he came to pay a visit to Kanchpur Bridge area to see whether there is any traffic congestion after he has read a report in the daily Prothom Alo's Friday edition.

"Where the traffic jam is! I haven't seen any traffic jam here. I went over the bridge several times, but I haven't seen any gridlock about which the newspaper ran a report," he exclaimed with surprise.

He suggested that the media should let him know about any traffic jam instead of writing or broadcasting it, as it would mislead people and spread panic. "Being a minister I myself was panicked after reading the news report in the Prothom Alo,"

he said.

"I went to Chittagong during the BNP-Jamaat four-party coalition government but I did not see any jam then too," he said, adding that if the matter of traffic jam is everyday affair at Kanchpur he would have to arrange a ferry service to ease traffic jam.

As the minister wanted to know whether the jam is an everyday phenomenon there, Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Shamsur Rahman and Superintendent of Police Biswas Afzal Hossain informed him that goods-laden vehicles ply through the bridge very slowly and very often unfit vehicles go out of order causing frequent traffic jam.

Meanwhile, locals as well as law enforcers alleged that some officials of the local administration in collusion with the ruling party men collect tolls from vehicles on either side of the bridge contributing to slow pace of vehicular movement.

Asked what measure his ministry would take to ease traffic jam, Abul Hossain said he could not do anything overnight.

"It will take time. We need a eight-lane road but we have a two-lane road instead," he said, adding that the government would float tender for the construction of a four-lane Dhaka-Chittagong highway in December.

If the proposed road is constructed it will reduce the gridlock significantly, he added.

He said the second bridge over the river Shitalakkhya was scheduled to be inaugurated next January, which would also help reduce at least fifty percent traffic movements on the Kanchpur Bridge.

The construction work of the bridge linking Demra-Sylhet road would be completed by December this year, he added.

He also said that third Shitalakkhya bridge would also be constructed in Madanganj area to ease traffic jam.

## Aman gets bail in murder attempt case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to former BNP state minister Amanullah Aman in an attempt-to-murder case filed with Mohammadpur Police Station in May this year.

Judge ANM Bashir Ullah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order upon a bond of Tk 30,000 with two guarantors following a criminal appeal filed by Aman's lawyers against the lower court's rejection order.

Moving the bail petition, defense lawyers told the court their client was implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy. Moreover, his name was in the first information report. So, they prayed for granting their client bail, the lawyers added.

On the contrary, the prosecution said Aman was arrested after three arrestees provided confessional statements on different dates. So, his bail should not be granted.

Earlier on October 12, a Dhaka court directed the investigation officer to interrogate Aman at the jail gate in connection with the case filed by one of his party colleagues.

The court also rejected a remand prayer sought by the police to interrogate Aman and the bail petition filed by his lawyers.

On September 29, the Detective Branch of Police arrested him at Zia International Airport.

Osman Gani, a BNP leader and businessman from Aman's constituency, filed the case on May 31 stating he came under a gun attack at Salimullah Road in Mohammadpur on May 29.

## Fire fighters

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close to an exhaust-fan duct between two stacks of paper in the warehouse.

He said tests would be done to determine what it is.

Slag of burnt and wet paper is obstructing firemen from removing the stacks of paper inside the warehouse, he said. Besides, the heavily stuffed warehouse has made it difficult to bring out the un-burnt paper, even with forklifts, he added.

Razia Begum, chief of the enquiry committee formed to investigate the cause of the fire and to ascertain the extent of the damage, also had a look at the chemical and said it certainly would be sent for examination.

The committee was supposed to submit its preliminary report to the education ministry by yesterday midnight but the committee chief said they were preparing the report and if the people supposed to receive the report were not available late in the night, they would submit it today.

Meanwhile, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, who visited the spot twice yesterday, told The Daily Star last night on the spot that the chemical could be evidence of sabotage.

He had earlier said the warehouse indeed suffered extensive damage.

"Hundreds of tonnes of paper were gutted and damaged in the fire, smoke and the water used to douse the fire. The warehouse also got damaged," he said adding that they are yet to assess the extent of damage caused by the fire.

The minister, who stayed there for over three hours during his first visit yesterday, said it must be an act of sabotage and those who do not want success of the government might have done this.

"We are going to distribute free textbooks for the first time and there are many people who do not want big successes of the government," he said.

Asked whether the fire would hamper government's free textbook distribution programme, the minister said, "It is obviously hampered it and will make the task tough but we are determined to distribute free books by overcoming such obstacles."

"We work considering that such kind of obstacles would be in our way," he added.

"I do not want to say anything on assumption," he said, adding, "We are devastated as it has been done to obstruct our programme. But we will overcome."

NCTB chairman yesterday failed to say how much paper was in the warehouse, how much of it got damaged or destroyed and how much is still useable.

The fire fighters and NCTB officials said around 67,000 reams of paper were stocked in the depot and over two-thirds of it seems to have been damaged or destroyed.

Over half of the warehouse has already been cleared of paper. Ashes and damaged paper were being taken away by Dhaka City Corporation garbage trucks.

## PM reaches

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Earlier, Sheikh Hasina left Dhaka for Doha, Qatar, enroute to Stockholm on Tuesday night by a Qatar Airways flight, which reached Doha International Airport the same night at 11:25 pm (local time).

Sheikh Hasina had a bilateral meeting with Director of Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) General Anders Nordstrom yesterday at her hotel suite at 4:00pm (local time).

During her four-day stay here, Hasina will attend the opening ceremony of the 4th edition of the European Development Days today (Thursday).

As per the programme schedule, the Bangladesh premier will address the plenary session of the EU Development Days titled "Climate Change: The Road to Copenhagen and Beyond" on Saturday morning.

In her speech Sheikh Hasina is expected to reiterate her call for united efforts of the developing and developed hemispheres to face the challenges of the global climate change.

Besides, the premier will have bilateral talks with Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, European Parliament President Jerzy Buzek, European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, Ericsson President Carl-Henric Svanberg and Swedish Minister for International Development Gunilla Carlsson.

She will have a meeting with the Speaker and MPs of

## Liberation War

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the foreign diplomats to remind their governments about the genocide that happened in Bangladesh during liberation war," Asaduzzaman Noor MP, one of the trustees, told The Daily Star.

He said they took the initiative to facilitate the government's move to try the war criminals.

"I hope the world community will know about the war crime and eventually help Bangladesh to hold the trial of war criminals," He added.

A copy of the book will also be sent to all foreign embassies in the capital, said a press release.

The press release states that the foreign diplomats sincerely heard speeches given by the trustees and expressed their moral support to the urge of holding trial of war criminals on the basis of accountability, transparency and international standard.

## Another rapist

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Contacted, Anwar said the girl was not raped but there were some "symptoms" to that end. One the fine money, he said he kept it to manage different sections including the police.

Ishaq Ali, officer-in-charge of Kalapara police, said he had sent an officer to the spot and would comment only after his return.

Superintendent of Police Shaibal Kanti Chowdhury told The Daily Star, "We will take necessary action after running a proper investigation into this matter."

This is the second such arbitration in Kalapara within a month in which local arbitrators gave verdict in a punishable offence in a manner which itself is a cognizable offence.

Earlier on September 27, 16 alleged rapists were summoned to a local high school

and handed down a fine of Tk 10,000 each after they allegedly picked up a girl and gang-raped her.

In Galachipa, a 12-year girl was gang-raped Tuesday night when the victim was going to her uncle's house.

The victim's uncle said three youths -- Liton, Manik and Yusuf -- picked up her from Goudown Road, took her to a nearby rice mill and raped her.

Locals hearing her cry for help rushed to the spot and caught Liton, but the other two alleged rapists managed to escape.

The victim was admitted to Galachipa Upazila Health Complex but was shifted to Patuakhali General Hospital later as her condition deteriorated.

Police arrested Liton, 27, in this connection.

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## JCD leader

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He was shown arrested in the Pikhana carnage case yesterday and was placed on a three-day remand for interrogation. The CID had sought a seven-day remand.

In the forwarding report, CID's Additional Superintendent of Police Abdul Kahar Akond, also the investigation officer, said the arrestee was involved in making provocative statements against the government while a procession was brought out at the city's Hazaribagh area during the incident. He needs to be placed on remand to find out clues about the carnage, the investigation officer said.

The carnage that took place at Bangladesh Rifles headquarters on February 25-26 left a number of BDR high officials including its director general dead.

Earlier, former BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu was arrested in this connection and later he was placed on remand for several days. He is now in jail and his bail was earlier rejected by the High Court.

Awami League leader Torab Ali was also arrested for allegedly helping the BDR mutineers. He later gave confessional statements.

A total of 2,025 BDR jawans and 30 civilians have been shown arrested for their alleged involvement in the incidents.

The CID has so far taken 1,685 BDR jawans and civilians on remand and 421 have so far given confessional statements before magistrates.

## Delwar urges

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among the parties. He was addressing a roundtable discussion organised by a pro-BNP-Jamat organisation Nagorik Forum on 'Cancelling the Fifth Amendment and Caretaker Government System: Future Bangladesh' at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

The president can hold meeting on poverty reduction, food security, increasing per capita income issues with all political parties," Delwar said.

He also alleged the ruling Awami League (AL) wants to regain power through election manipulation and so they want to scrap the caretaker government system. "The government also has no right to scrap the Fifth Amendment," he added.

He questioned the mandate of then AL government to formulate the constitution in 1972. "The then government was elected in 1970 election which elected members for Pakistan's National Assembly and East Pakistan provincial assembly, how could they formulate the country's constitution," said the BNP lawmaker who also participated in the 1970 election and lost to an AL candidate.

He also said people would not accept any military treaty with other country.

Former Chairman of Transparency International Bangladesh Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, opposition Chief Whip Jainal Abdin Faruk, BNP Chairperson's adviser Brig (ret) ASM Hannan Shah, Joint Secretary General of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami Barrister Abdur Razzak, BNP leader Moazzem Hossain Alal, among others spoke at the meeting.

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## ACC paid Tk 10cr

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parliamentary committee, told reporters after its meeting in Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

He said the accused paid the lawyers the excess amount of money violating laws, so they are responsible for financial damage.

The committee chief said the district administration could issue notifications to recover the money from the persons responsible.

He said the erstwhile ACC also wasted over Tk 6 crore to conduct 'so-called intelligence activities'.

Talking to The Daily Star after the meeting, committee member Mayeen Uddin Khan Badal said the money was paid to the intelligence agencies as 'incentives for their work'.

"We examined the special report of the Comptroller and Auditor General that detected the irregularities in payments of money to lawyers and intelligence agencies," Alamgir said.

During the anti-graft drive, the immediate past ACC appointed a number of lawyers with high remunerations for defending its cases in courts.

The Cabinet Division on June 2 in a report placed to the parliamentary body also said it was not correct ethically to keep expensive lawyers appointed for a long time instead of taking steps to have a permanent prosecution team for the ACC.

Alamgir yesterday said the parliamentary committee also recommended taking actions against those who were responsible for taking foreign assistance violating government rules.

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ACC did not pay value added tax to the government for purchasing vehicles and computers, without floating invitations for tenders.

"We asked the ACC to look into the matter, so such incidents cannot occur again," he added.

He said the incumbent ACC had to replace 100 officials, appointed by its predecessor, who had been getting paid without doing anything. "Public money was wasted that way. We asked the Cabinet Division to take action against the persons who were responsible for making such idle appointments," he added.

The parliamentary body in June this year summoned former ACC chief Lt Gen (ret) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury, and the incumbent two commissioners -- M Habibur Rahman and Abul Hasan Manzur Mannan -- to appear before the committee to discuss the activities of the immediate past commission.

Following their refusal to appear before the committee, the parliamentary body on June 2 met Speaker Abdul Hamid and requested him to take steps to ensure the trio's appearance. But the speaker has yet to resolve the matter.

Asked about a follow up on the matter, Alamgir said the committee's decision regarding the summons remains unchanged and the three must appear before it.

The committee yesterday also discussed the status of implementation of its recommendations on Wasa, Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation, and Rajuk for making the government agencies more dynamic and service oriented.

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## Nasaka rejects

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Mozammel Hossain, commanding officer of 42 Rifles Battalion, who led the 10-member Bangladesh team.

The Myanmar side, led by Lt Col Me U, Maungdaw unit commander of Nasaka, however said the current deployment of forces was made as part of a routine exercise.

The meeting was initiated in the wake of heightened tension following Myanmar's military build-up along the border with Bangladesh about two weeks ago.

The Bangladesh team reached the border town of Maungdaw in the morning and discussed with the Myanmar side various issues including barbed wire fencing by Nasaka, push-in of Rohingya into Bangladesh, cross-border smuggling and exchange of prisoners.

The Nasaka team at the meeting said they are putting up fences in line with the international laws.

Later, Lt Colonel Mozammel told reporters that the meeting was fruitful.

Nine Bangladeshis nationals, captured by Nasaka, were handed over to the BDR delegation.

A friendly volleyball match was organised between the two border forces on Tumbuk ground in West Arakan after the flag meeting.

Meanwhile, Foreign