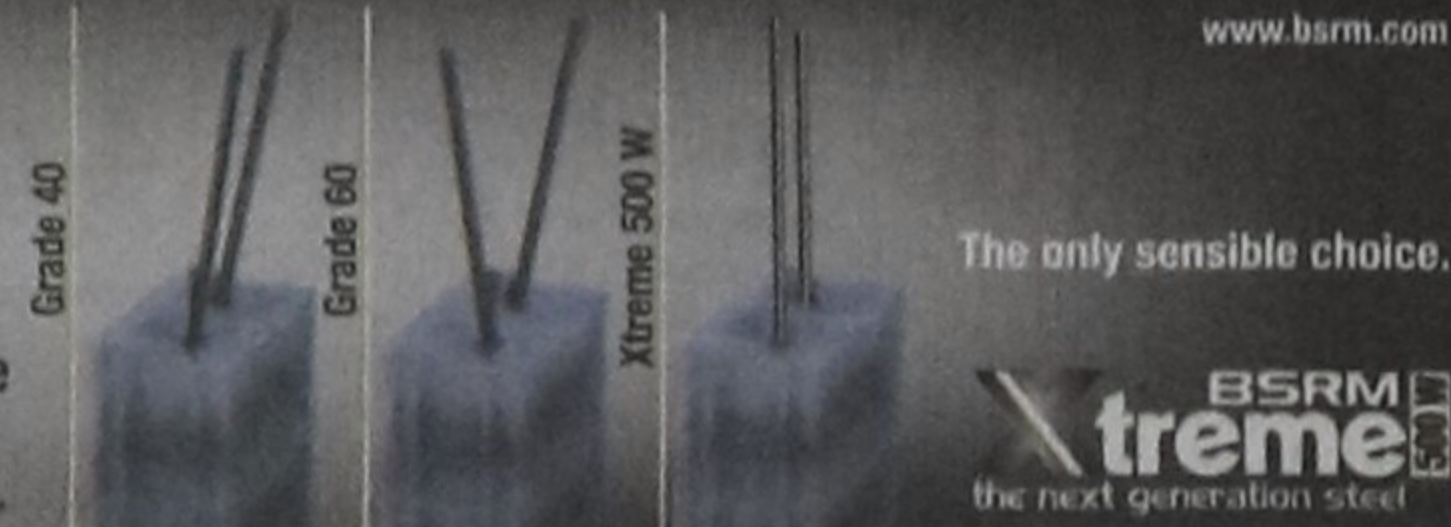


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Baldha Garden gasps for air

Billboards, high-rises, pollution push botanical wonder to peril

SHAHNAZ PARVEEN

Over a hundred year has elapsed since the country's botanical treasure trove Baldha Garden came into being which has remained uncared and unattended for long with its rare collection of exotic plants facing the onslaught of billboards, high-rise buildings, pollution and water logging.

The plants are gasping for sunlight as several high-rise buildings have encompassed it from three sides over the years hindering the natural growth of the plants. On top of that, billboards are adding woe to their misery.

Water logging in the garden following a slight rainfall during monsoon is the cause of another major concern.

Pollution from adjacent streets is damaging the rare plants and flowers so much so that they are now in the danger of extinction.

Baldha Garden, now a satellite unit of the National Botanical Garden, has no separate budgetary allocation and provision for manpower. The garden is run with the money spared from the budget of the Botanical Garden and its staff.

Zayed Hossain Bhuiyan, director of National Botanical Garden said, "The garden is deprived of sunlight throughout the year because of the buildings around. The situation worsens during winter. The soil remains moist especially in the Cybele section of the garden."

"As the garden is below the level of storm water drainage line, SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



PHOTO: SHAFIQUL ALAM

Several high-rise buildings have blocked three sides of Baldha Garden, obstructing the natural growth of the plants in the country's botanical treasure trove.

MONEY LAUNDERING Court accepts charge sheet against Koko

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday accepted a charge sheet of the money laundering case against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's younger son Arafat Rahman Koko and Ismail Hossain Saimon, son of former shipping minister late Akbar Hossain.

After scrutinising the case documents, Judge ANM Basir Ullah of Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order.

The court also issued an arrest warrant against Saimon as he has been hiding.

The court fixed November 23 for hearing of the case.

On November 12, Assistant Director of Anti-Corruption Commission Mohammad Abu Syed submitted the charge sheet to Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka, showing 23 people as prosecution witnesses.

It charged Koko and Saimon with siphoning off \$28.84 lakh and \$9.32 lakh out of the country.

Saimon, whose name was SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

MPs vs LOCAL GOVT MEN

Conflicts arise out of self-interest: Speaker

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The conflicts between the local government representatives and the members of parliament (MP) arise out of self-interests, not of people's welfare, Speaker Abdul Hamid said yesterday.

"If there are no issues of personal interests, there is no conflict between them, because we all want people's welfare where there is no scope of clashes," he said while addressing a seminar as the chief guest at the city's Cirdap auditorium.

The Municipal Association of Bangladesh

(MAB) organised the seminar on the role of municipalities in reducing poverty with support from United States Agency for International Development and Progoti, an NGO. Lawmakers, mayors of municipalities and local government experts attended it.

Experts say MPs want to get engaged in the development activities in their constituencies to make their political base stronger, but the local government bodies oppose any interference by the lawmakers. Such conflicts have been persisting for long.

"I was elected MP eight times, but there was SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

NARAYANGANJ BLAST

Salam Pintu to be quizzed

BNP leader Arif remanded again in Aug 21 attack case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

BNP leader and former deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu was placed on a five-day remand in a case filed for the bomb attack on Awami League office at Chashara in Narayanganj in 2001.

Chief Judicial Magistrate of Narayanganj Arifur Rahman passed the remand order after Criminal Investigation Department (CID) produced him before the court seeking a 10-day remand.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

SAJEDA'S SON Home clarifies waiver of punishment

BSS, Dhaka

The home ministry yesterday clarified a news item published in a section of newspapers on waiver of punishment of Shahadab Akbar Chowdhury alias Labu, son of Deputy Leader of the House Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury.

The ministry in a clarification said Labu applied before the president through the home ministry on waiving his punishment and fine charged on him in a case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

2 outlaws killed in 'shootout,' mob beating

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Two regional leaders of outlawed parties were killed in separate incidents of 'shootout' and mob beating yesterday in Kushtia and Meherpur districts respectively.

Ilias Hossain Mamun, 38, of Meherpur's Gangni upazila, who was a leader of outlawed Janajuddho, a faction of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-ML), was killed in a 'shootout' between police and his cohorts at Khalishakundi village under Daulatpur upazila in Kushtia.

Police sources said a team from Detective Branch and Daulatpur police raided the village around 4:00am on information that Mamun was holding a meeting with his accomplices. Being surrounded by police, the operatives opened fire

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

BNP CHARTER 40 proposals submitted to standing body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The national standing committee of the BNP last night discussed party men's proposals for bringing amendments to the party's constitution that will be placed before the national council slated for December 8.

The BNP's constitution and declaration amendment sub-committee placed about 40 proposals including the "one leader, one post"

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Criminals shoot 2

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two persons, including a pedestrian, sustained bullet injuries as a gang of criminals opened fire on their rivals at Ambagan in the capital's Moghbazar yesterday.

The injured pedestrian is Abul Kalam, 55, and Mohammad Swapan, 27, is a local goon. They are residents of the area. Locals rushed them to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Swapan said Sentu, also a local goon, and his two accomplices chased him while he was crossing the area around 1:00am. At one stage

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Prayer Timing		
November 16		
Fajr	6:00	6:35
Zohr	1:45	2:15
Asr	4:45	5:00
Maghrib	6:22	6:25
Esha	8:00	8:30

Source: Islamic Foundation



A high-profile delegation of the UAE government receives Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as she arrives at the Dubai International Airport yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Ctg Port suspends 4 officers for graft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Four high officials of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA), including its director (traffic) were suspended here yesterday on different charges of irregularities.

CPA Director (Traffic) Ehsanul Kabir, Deputy Traffic Manager (DTM) Golam Sarwar, Deputy Chief Mechanical Engineer Ferdous Ahmed and Workshop Manager Mohammad Shahjahan were suspended following a shipping ministry's order sent through a fax message on Wednesday.

Confirming the suspension, CPA Chairman Commodore RU Ahmed said the officials have been suspended on different charges of irregularities following a directive from the shipping ministry.

Sources concerned said the director (traffic) and the DTM have been suspended for involvement in the reported irregularities in awarding tender for handling operation at Chittagong

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

German minister shot at during Afghan visit

AFP, AP, Berlin/ Tagab Valley

A helicopter convoy carrying German Defence Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg came under fire from the ground during a recent surprise visit to troops in the area, several media reported yesterday.

None of the three helicopters in the convoy were hit during the attack, which happened on Friday morning after the minister visited German soldiers in the northern area of Kunduz, the Frankfurter Allgemeine

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Apec leaders douse hopes on climate pact

AFP, Singapore

Asia-Pacific leaders yesterday buried hopes a key UN meeting next month would forge a binding pact to combat climate change, saying talks would drag on well past the Copenhagen meeting.

Instead they backed a face-saving proposal from Danish Prime Minister Lars Loeke Rasmussen -- who jetted in for hastily arranged talks in Singapore -- aimed at forging a political statement of intent at the December meeting.

Complex negotiations towards a legally enforceable successor to the Kyoto Protocol on climate change, which expires in 2012, would

then continue to work out differences between rich nations and developing countries including China.

At Sunday's talks attended by leaders including US President Barack Obama and China's Hu Jintao on the sidelines of an Asia-Pacific summit, there was broad consensus this was the best option for the climate negotiations, officials said.

"There was an assessment by the leaders that it was unrealistic to expect a full, internationally legally-binding agreement to be negotiated between now and when Copenhagen starts in 22 days," US Deputy National Security

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Explain changes in CrPC rules

HC asks govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain within three weeks why the amended rules of Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) empowering the executive magistrates to perform judicial functions should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench of Justice Syed Rezaat Ahmed and Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury issued the rule after hearing a writ petition filed by the Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB), a human rights organisation.

Earlier in the day, a Supreme Court (SC) lawyer and also the president of HRPB, advocate Manzill Murshid filed the petition as a public interest litigation seeking a directive upon the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

OnlinePoll

Do you think factory owners' indifference toward the government's food-rationing programme for RMG workers shows their absolute negligence to workers wellbeing?

Yes (85.0%)
No (11.5%)
No Comments (3.5%)

Total votes: 654

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think Bangladesh will be economically benefited from rail transit to Nepal as per a new agreement with India?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net