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## PARTY COMMITTEES OF BNP Confusion clouds formation process

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

BNP leaders and workers are in the dark over the process of formation of party committees including national standing committee and central executive committee, as it is not clearly stated in the party constitution.

The party men even don't know whether the committees would be formed during or after the council. The council is only two days away.

Meanwhile division in the party rank and file is becoming obvious centring the post of secretary general; the chairperson is yet to discuss the issue with party's top-level leaders.

A number of leaders and party lawmakers said they are expecting a 'surprise appointment' to this vital post in the council.

The preparation for the national council slated for December 8 is now going on in full swing under the direct supervision of party

Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Party Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday at a meeting with all the conveners of sub-committees, formed to make the national council a success, reviewed the progress of the council preparation.

The meeting was held at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, the council venue.

According to the party constitution (amended till August 16, 2009) the national council will elect the members of standing committee and office bearers of the central executive committee.

As for the national executive committee and national standing committee, the constitution, however, said the chairperson will nominate officials of the executive committee and members of the standing committee.

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## India edge past Afghanistan

Nepal hold Maldives to 1-1 draw

SPORTS REPORTER

Three-time champions India made a winning start in the Sixth SAFF Championship with a last-gasp goal over Afghanistan in Group A at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Substitute Je Je Lalphekhula struck the all-important goal five minutes from time in a dull and insipid



match after a spirited Nepal held holders Maldives to a 1-1 draw in the day's first fixture at the same venue.

The goal apart, India, who sent their second string side in a bid to give the senior team more time to prepare for the

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## Teesta tops river talks with India

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The issue of Teesta water sharing figured prominently on the second day yesterday of the talks of the technical committee of Bangladesh-India Joint Rivers Commission (JRC).

The meeting also discussed dredging the Ichhamoti river and implementing irrigation and drinking water projects along the Feni river.

The three-day talks that

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## Underage drivers behind most of city deaths

14 arrested in drive against road devils

MUKHLESUR RAHMAN

Twenty-eight road accidents on average occur in the capital every day and underage drivers of public transport are mostly responsible.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) launched a special drive against the underage drivers from Friday and 14 minor boys were arrested at the wheel on the first day.

The DMP authorities since December 1 also intensified the ongoing drive against fake driving licences and on Friday arrested 135 drivers for the offence.

These were revealed by DMP Commissioner AKM Shahidul Haque at an Eid reunion programme for journalists arranged by his office at Rajarbagh Police Lines in the capital yesterday.

He added, in the first phase the law enforcers will arrest the underage drivers as a warning to their employers and later the DMP will take steps against them (employers).

"Over 70 percent drivers of the public vehicles carry fake licences in the capital and they are the most irresponsible and inefficient," he said.

DMP Joint Commissioner (Traffic) Shafiqur Rahman told The Daily Star underage drivers cannot maintain balance due to physical and mental immaturity, resulting in frequent accidents.

He said the DMP commissioner himself nearly fell victim to an underage driver and narrowly escaped accident at an intersection near the High Court on Friday.

Underage drivers mainly run most of the human haulers and minibuses on different routes in the capital, DMP sources say.

However, the DMP sources could not give the number of the underage drivers running vehicles in the capital.

On the newly introduced three-lane system and reintroduced signal lights in place of manual controlling, Shahidul said, "We know the systems will not reduce or remove nagging traffic congestion completely, but it will ease jam to a great extent."

He added the trend of violating rules by pedestrians and drivers tarnish the image of the country abroad as many foreigners live or visit the city regularly.

The DMP authorities launched a weeklong campaign on December 1 in a bid to develop a habit of observance of the traffic rules among the motorists.

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PHOTO: SHAFIQUL ALAM

The photo, taken at the city's Hare Road yesterday, shows a woman with a child cross the road while an auto-rickshaw speeds past without bothering to slow down at zebra crossing.

## Low spending on high targets

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Implementation of both the revenue budget and development budget was far short of their targets in the first three months of the current fiscal year (FY).

In previous years, implementation of development budget usually fell short of the target while that of revenue budget exceeded target.

Revenue expenditure was 5.5 percentage point lower during July-September this year than that in the corresponding period of last FY.

Though an ambitious annual development programme (ADP) of Tk 30,500 crore was taken up this FY, only 10.4 percent of the total allocation could be used in the first three months.

Finance ministry sources said revenue expenditure was low due to delay in implementation of the national pay commission award, and because spending of funds for social safety net programme was yet to begin.

The government did not borrow from the banking system, rather repaid previous loans since implementation of both development and revenue budgets was slow, the source said.

It repaid Tk 2,313 crore while the target for borrowing from banks was Tk 16,755 crore.

In the current FY, revenue expenditure is supposed to be Tk 83,319 crore. Of the amount, Tk 17,829 crore or 21.4 percent was spent during July-September period.

During the corresponding period in last FY, revenue expenditure was Tk 20,025 crore, which was 26.9 percent of the total allocation.

The new pay scale would come into effect fully from July 1 this year, and Tk around 3,500 crore has been set aside for the purpose in the budget.

In the first three months of last FY, Tk 1,500 crore was given to Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) for procuring fuel oil and Tk 1,200 crore was released to the agriculture ministry for providing subsidy on fertiliser.

In the current FY, no such expenditure has yet been made.

Finance ministry officials said the finance division has released about Tk 2,200 crore for export subsidy and safety net programme but it has not yet been spent.

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## Ulfa chief remanded

He rejects surrender reports

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

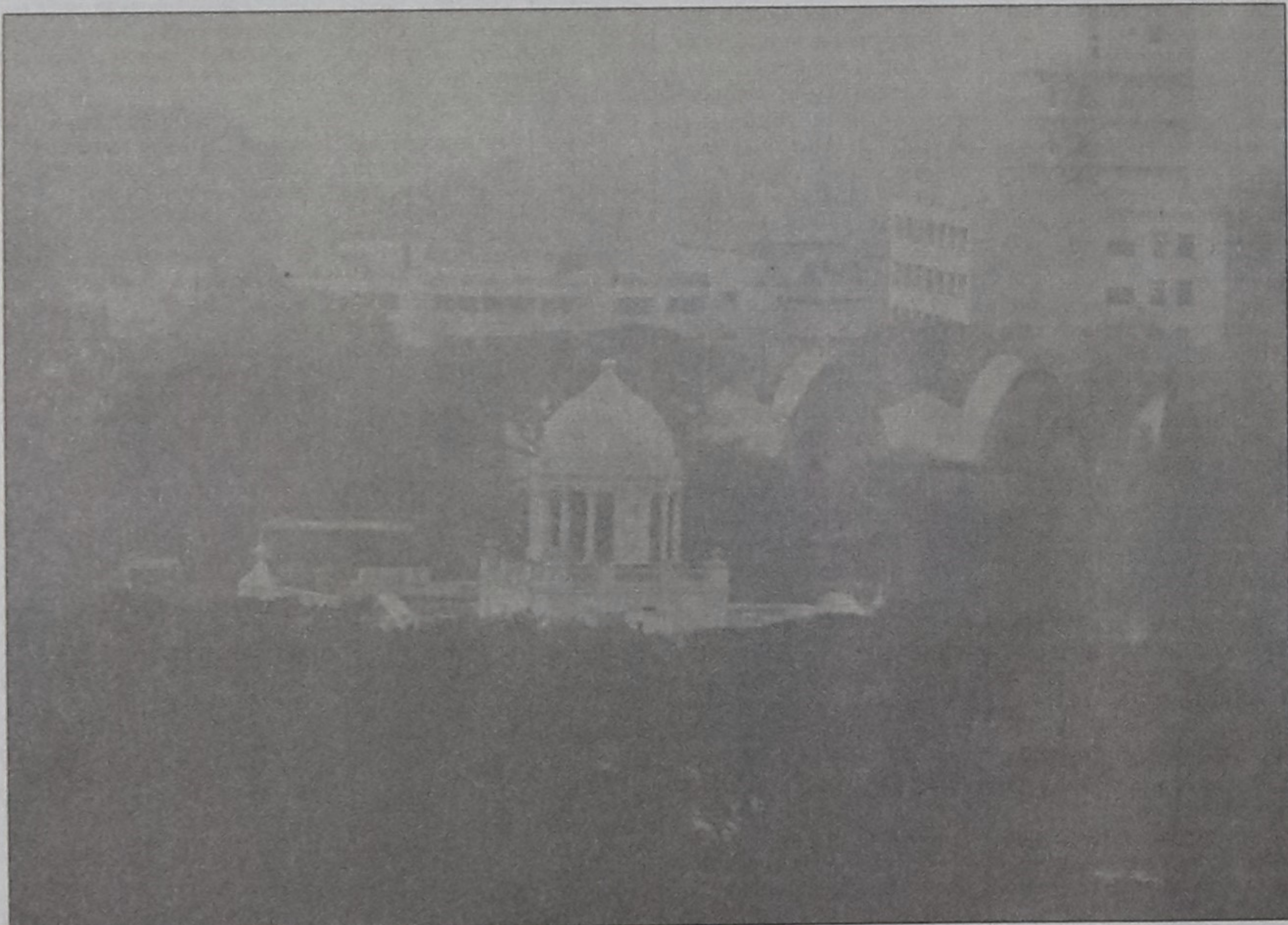
Top leader of United Liberation Front of Asom Arabinda Rajkhowa was taken on 12 days' remand for interrogation yesterday even as his elusive colleague Paresw Baruah said he was ready for dialogues with Indian government if "sovereignty" for Assam was on the agenda.

A court in Guwahati, Assam, sent Rajkhowa, his bodyguard Raja Bora and deputy Raju Baruah on 12 days' police remand, a day after they "surrendered" to Indian authorities in Meghalaya.

The three were produced before Kamrup Chief Judicial Magistrate Robin Phukan.

The Assam police had asked for a 14-day custody

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It was a sunny day of autumn yesterday until a sudden spell of thick fog started wrapping up Dhaka at noon as seen in this photo taken in the High Court area around 3:14pm.

PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

## Body of boy found floating

Boat capsized toll rises to 48

A CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Body of a ten-year-old boy -- found floating yesterday in the river Daira at Mithamoin in the district -- took the death toll of the Friday boat-capsize to 48.

The boy was identified as Sourav Chowdhury, son of Basir Chowdhury of Buruburi village under Mithamoin upazila.

Meanwhile, a five-member investigation committee led by Joint Secretary (commerce) of shipping ministry Md Abdul Kuddus was formed, a ministry handout said. The committee will submit its report within three days.

The committee told the local newsmen each of the

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## Russian nightclub blast, fire kill 109

AP, Moscow

An explosion and fire blamed on fireworks tore through a nightclub in the Russian city of Perm early yesterday, killing 109 people, Russian officials said.

The Investigative Committee says 98 died on the spot and 11 others later died in hospitals.

Video from inside the Lane Horse club, broadcast on the state-run Vesti news channel, showed the ceiling starting to burn and the club filling with smoke as young, stylishly dressed patrons gradually realise what is happening and mob an exit.

News footage shot later outside the nightclub showed charred bodies lying in rows on the ground amid a light snowfall. Rescue workers carried bodies on stretchers into waiting vans.

Vesti reported that the blaze started when a performer juggling fireworks accidentally set the plastic suspended ceiling on fire.

The federal Emergency Situations Ministry said in a statement on its Web site that 109 people were killed and 131 injured. Perm region security officials said 80 of the injured were in critical condition.

Ministry spokesman Oleg Popov told the media the victims died from smoke inhalation and injuries sustained in the crush at the club's exit.

Firefighters were on the scene one minute after the alarm was called in, the ministry said, and they took less than an hour to put the fire out.

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## 4 of a family killed in road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Six persons, including four of a schoolteacher's family, were killed and 20 others were injured in a road accident yesterday on the Dhaka-Sylhet highway at Karnogop area under Ruppaganj upazila in the district.

Md Ripon, 40, a teacher of Ghorasal in Narsingdi district, his wife Chhaba Begum, 30, their two sons Abid and Jishan, baby taxi driver Rabiul and an unidentified bus passenger were killed when a passenger bus of Meghla Paribahan and a CNG-run baby taxi collided head on around 6:30pm.

Traffic movement on the highway remained suspended for about half an hour following the accident creating severe traffic jam in the area.

The injured were sent to different hospitals in Dhaka

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**OnlinePoll**

Would you support if BNP creates a whole new post of co-chairperson or senior-vice president for Tarique Rahman?

Yes (28.2%)  
No (68.8%)  
No Comments (3.0%)

Total votes: 1068

**TODAY'S POLL**

Do you think country's farmers will be benefitted from the "Krishi Card"?

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

**Prayer Timing**

December 6

|         | Azan | Jamaat |
|---------|------|--------|
| Fajr    | 6-15 | 6-50   |
| Zohr    | 1-45 | 2-15   |
| Asr     | 4-45 | 5-00   |
| Maghrib | 6-19 | 6-22   |
| Esha    | 8-00 | 8-30   |

Source: Islamic Foundation

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