



The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

Plus Star Lifestyle



COMMITTED TO People's Right to Know

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XX No. 47

DHAKA TUESDAY MARCH 2, 2010

www.thedailystar.net

FALGUN 18, 1416 BS

RABIUL AWAL 15, 1431 HJRI

24 PAGES PLUS STAR LIFESTYLE PRICE: Tk 10.00

Deep-sea port likely by 2015

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first phase work for construction of the deep-sea port in Sonadia Island is likely to be completed by 2015 with an estimated cost of Tk 15,000 crore, Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan told the House yesterday.

"Bangladesh will earn over Tk 1,000 crore in 2016 as revenue from the port and it will be double in 2020," he said in scripted answer to lawmakers' queries.

He said exploration of foreign fund and preparation of detailed design for construction of the seaport are underway.

The government has taken a master plan to bring back navigability in 53 waterways and almost dying rivers at a cost of Tk 11,500 crore, the minister said adding the project is likely to be completed by 2018.

He said Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority has moved to procure three dredgers and other water vessels and equipments for carrying out dredging in 53 waterways and nearly dead rivers.

"Seventeen more dredgers will also be purchased by 2015," he added.

The shipping minister said works for extraction of waste from the bed of Turag River would be completed by the end of next year.



SILENT WHALE ASSASSIN

This series of shots taken at the Swatch of No Ground, a canyon in the Bay of Bengal and an ideal place for watching whales and dolphins, shows a whale's tail caught in the line of a fishing net, almost severing the tail. Loss of tail causes these mammals to die. Reckless fishing in the area where these magnificent creatures are so playful runs the risk of driving them away.

PHOTO: COURTESY INDRANIL KISHOR

TENSE BORDER BDR chief goes to Sylhet today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The company commander level flag meeting between the BDR and BSF at zero line near the border pillar number 1,285 ended yesterday without resolving the dispute over the ownership of a swamp near Dibir haor.

Camp Commander of BSF's Muktapur camp Harinath and BDR's Jaintapur camp-in-charge Subeder Zahirul Haque attended the company commander level flag meeting.

BDR chief Major General Mainul Islam would visit the troubled Indo-Bangla border in Sylhet today to calm the

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NBR sues Koko, Patal

Court issues arrest warrants against them for tax dodging; Tarique, Mamun also face warrant after bail cancellation

COURT CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's younger son Arafat Rahman Koko and former BNP state minister Fazlur Rahman Patal were yesterday sued for dodging income tax.

Another Dhaka court yesterday cancelled bails of Khaleda Zia's elder son BNP Senior Vice-Chairman Tarique Rahman and his business partner Giasuddin Al Mamun and issued arrest warrants against them in a Tk 10-crore extortion case.

Judge ANM Bashir Ullah of the Senior Special Judge's Court issued arrest warrants against Koko and Fazlur Rahman after the National Board of Revenue filed the cases against them in connection with evading income tax in different fiscal years. The court also directed Cantonment, Natore and Rampura police stations to submit reports by March 10 and 11 on the execution of the arrest warrants.

In the complaint against Koko, Deputy Tax Commissioner of the NBR Shahin Akhter Hossain said Koko evaded income tax on his income of Tk 52.39 lakh between 2002-2003 and 2006-2007 fiscal years.

Koko, who was earlier released on parole and is now abroad



Tarique

Koko

Patal

for treatment, repeatedly provided false information about his real income and expenditure, alleged the NBR statement.

Koko along with his mother was arrested on September 2, 2007 in connection with the Gatco graft case and later he was placed on remand for interrogation.

Four other cases, including a money laundering and an extortion case, were also filed against him during the time when he was in jail.

CASE AGAINST FAZLUR

In the case statement against Fazlur Rahman, NBR Deputy Tax

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Expat's car hijacked

Tk 1 lakh snatched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Armed muggers took away Tk 1 lakh and a private car at gunpoint from a Bangladeshi expatriate in the city's Banani on Sunday night.

Koiser Ahmed, 37, a London-based businessman who came here for business purposes, fell victim to the muggers around 11:45pm while he was entering his Banani residence.

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Mutiny-accused BDR member dies in jail

UNB, Gazipur

BDR Havildar Enamul Huq, 52, an accused in the BDR mutiny case, died at Kashipur Jail yesterday morning, jail and hospital sources said.

The jail sources said Huq fell sick after taking breakfast in the morning. He was brought to Gazipur Sadar Hospital where attending doctors declared him dead.

Huq, son of Luthful Huq,

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Primary edn in 'leave' problem

Govt to create pool of 20,000 primary teachers for filling in leave vacancies

WASIM BIN HABIB

The government plans to create a pool of 20,000 primary school teachers to tackle teacher shortages due to leaves of absence.

A vast number of teaching posts fall vacant for a temporary but significant amount of time due to maternity leave, professional training and medical leave.

Secretary in Charge of the Primary and Mass Education Ministry, Abu Alam Mohammad Shahid Khan, said, "In each primary school there is an average of three to four teachers.

"If a teacher attends training, falls sick or goes on leave for some other reason, the teacher's classes may be cancelled for months and this is hugely disruptive to the children's education."

Officials from the ministry said that every year, an average of 18,950 teachers from government, registered and community primary schools take part in the year-long C-in-Ed training.

Over 5,500 female teachers take maternity leave each year and around 5,500 teachers take leave for medical reasons, or to attend religious festivals such as the hajj.

Between 5,000 and 6,000 teaching assistant posts and headmasters of government primary schools also fall vacant and it can take several months to fill the posts on a temporary basis.

Around 40 teachers in each of the 481 upazilas will be appointed on the basis of "No work no pay".

Officials from the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education said teachers will receive a monthly salary of Tk 1,500.

Ministry officials said that a policy regarding the pool will be sent to the establishment ministry shortly.

The appointment process will begin after receiving approval

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ARREST OF JEM MILITANTS

Local aides had Pak link for 5yrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Absconding Mohiuddin and his brother Salahuddin had a link for at least five years with Pakistani national and suspected coordinator of Pakistan-based militant group Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) in Bangladesh Rezwan Ahmed before his arrest on February 24.

Both the brothers were in Pakistan till 2005. Salahuddin worked at a garment factory in Karachi for around five years, while Mohiuddin used to visit Pakistan and India on business purposes, Mohiuddin's wife told The Daily Star yesterday.

She said around four months ago Salahuddin brought Rezwan to their flat at

Sukanya Tower opposite Dhaka College saying the Pakistani guest would stay with them.

Salahuddin told the family Rezwan had come to Bangladesh to sell goods like dates and cloths at the Dhaka International Trade Fair.

The Rapid Action Battalion, which arrested Rezwan along with his four local associates, claims Mohiuddin and Salahuddin sheltered the militants in both Dhaka and their village home in Hajiganj in Chandpur.

Sources say several Rab teams have started a hunt for Mohiuddin, a Jamaat leader-turned union level BNP president, and his brother. Mohiuddin's wife however claims her husband was never involved in Jamaat politics.

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BORDER GUARDS LAW

Cabinet okays bill with death penalty clause

6-member body to submit report after detailed analysis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved in principle the Border Guard Bangladesh Bill 2010, keeping a provision of death penalty for offences like mutiny, killing, and arson within the country's frontier security force.

It also formed a six-member high-powered committee for a detailed analysis of the bill, and asked the committee to submit a report in the next cabinet meeting, with suggestions for modifications in the bill if necessary.

The committee comprises prime minister's advisers HT Imam and Moshir Rahman, Cabinet Secretary Abdul Aziz, the premier's Principal Secretary Abdul Karim, Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder, and Law Secretary Anwarul Haque.

The cabinet meeting was a regular one held in Bangladesh Secretariat with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Highly placed sources in the government told The Daily Star that the bill will be submitted to the parliament in the current session, for making it into a law which will also change the name of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) to Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB).

Meanwhile, the home ministry sent the bill to the law ministry for vetting, and the newly formed committee will send its recommendations to the law ministry before it starts the vetting, the sources added.

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