

DRIVE AGAINST DRIVING LICENCE BROKERS

## Thirty-one jailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court sentenced a retired police constable to one month's imprisonment for cheating and harassing people on the BRTA office premises at Mirpur in the city yesterday, just three days after he came out of jail after serving 10 days on the same charges.

The retired constable, Kabir Hossain, 45, was arrested along with 30 others from the BRTA office area when the mobile court led by two executive magistrates Tofayel Islam and Mashur Rahman in cooperation with the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) conducted a drive at 11:00am.

The other arrestees were sentenced to imprisonment for up to 15 days, but only Kabir was jailed for one month, as he committed the same crime soon after coming out of jail, BRTA and Rab sources said.

During preliminary interrogation, Kabir admitted that he was forced to retire from the police department due to his misdeeds and later he became a broker at the BRTA office, Rab officials said.

According to BRTA officials, the arrestees were engaged in cheating people who came to the BRTA office to obtain driving licences or register their vehicles.

The arrestees were also linked to different gangs providing fake driving licences to drivers and fake registrations to car lifters and they often extorted money from the drivers and vehicle owners.

Sources said over 100 brokers were arrested in the last two months from BRTA office areas. "The special drives by the mobile courts will continue with a view to making the BRTA office area free from brokers," BRTA Director (enforcement) Tapan Kumar Sarker said. "Each of the arrestees were also fined up to 1,500."

## 'Audacious behaviour' of Shah Alam condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some eminent citizens yesterday condemned the 'audacious behaviour' of Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan alias Shah Alam with State Minister for Housing Abdul Mannan Khan at a meeting on Sunday.

In a statement under the banner of Sammilito Samajik Andolon, they said, "The way the newly rich people have been crossing the lines of decency would not bring any good to the country."

They also called on the countrymen to register their protest against such audacious behaviour.

The signatories to the statement are Sammilito Samajik Andolon president Ajoy Roy, vice president Dr Hayat Mamud, Pankaj Bhattacharya, Ziauddin Tarek Ali, Advocate SMA Sabur and Tobarok Hossain.



Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) starts dismantling three upper floors of four-storey tin-shed houses at North Begunbari in the city yesterday for safety reasons.

## 'Formulate coal policy to end energy crisis'

DU CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday urged the government to extract coal from four mines in the Rangpur division and produce coal-fired electricity to ensure adequate power supply to the region.

It is not possible to achieve expected development in the region because of power crisis, he told reporters on the sidelines of a seminar at a function at Cirdap auditorium in the capital.

At the seminar, Ershad said the government should formulate coal policy soon to resolve the energy crisis across the country.

The vision 2021 of the government

cannot be fulfilled without adequate supply of gas and electricity to the place where it is needed, he added.

Rangpur Division Unnayan Parishad organised the seminar titled 'Electricity and energy sector of Bangladesh: Proposal of Rangpur division'.

"We [the people of Rangpur region] are lagging behind others, as we do not get adequate supply of energy... We need gas and electricity for development," Ershad told reporters.

"If we get gas supply and can generate electricity, we would not need to depend on others," he said.

"We want to know from the government when the people of Rangpur will

receive gas supply," he said, adding that the financial conditions of farmers in the region have changed, as a number of roads and bridges were constructed to facilitate communications.

About the government's target to eliminate power outages by 2012, Ershad said, "It would be a tough job, but it is possible."

At the beginning of the seminar, a gala reception was accorded to Musa Ibrahim, the first Bangladeshi Everest conqueror. Ershad presented a crest to Musa, who hails from Rangpur division.

State Minister for Land Advocate Mostafizur Rahman, Engineer Md Fazlul Haque, Md Nazrul Islam, lawmaker Tipu Munshi attended the programme.

DEFAMATION CASE AGAINST MOEEN

## Hearing on Tuku's petition adjourned

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday for the third time adjourned till July 8 the hearing on a petition seeking attachment of properties of former army chief General (Retd) Moeen U Ahmed in a Tk 100 crore defamation case.

Former state minister for energy Iqbal Hassan Mahmood Tuku filed the petition.

Judge SM Saiful Islam of the Third Joint District Judge's Court passed the order following a time petition submitted by Moeen's lawyers seeking adjournment of the hearing.

In the petition, one of the lawyers for Moeen said senior advocate Kamrul Islam Siddique who would move the petition, could not appear before it yesterday due to his illness. So, they prayed for adjournment of the hearing.

On the other hand, lawyers for Tuku were ready for hearing on the petition.

After the hearing, the judge gave the defence counsels last chance to move the petition on the scheduled date.

Earlier on January 10, the trial court rejected General Moeen's petition seeking dismissal of Tuku's Tk 100 crore defamation case.

Tuku filed the defamation suit on July 12 last year accusing the former army chief of making derogatory remarks that damaged his reputation.

After the hearing, the court issued a notice asking Moeen to explain within three weeks

why his properties would not be attached.

On March 27, 2007 General Moeen at a tea party in honour of the freedom fighters at National Parade Square said corrupt politicians had siphoned off at least Tk 20,000 crore from the energy sector during the four-party rule reads the complaint.

## 'Allow Jamuna TV to air programmes'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Journalists, technicians and employees of Jamuna Television yesterday formed a human chain in front of National Press Club in the city yesterday demanding that the government immediately allow the satellite television channel to broadcast its programmes.

Leaders of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) also took part in the human chain to express solidarity.

Speaking at the programme, the union leaders criticised the government for shutting down the transmission of Jamuna Television.

Closing any media house is tantamount to disrupting democracy, they said.

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