

3 ex-ministers get bail in Bhawal land lease case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bails to three former BNP ministers in connection with a case filed against them for leasing illegally 13 acres of land of Bhawal National Park.

The accused are former forest and environment minister Tariqul Islam, former state minister for forest and environment Alhaj Farul Islam Chowdhury and former state minister for land Abdus Sattar Bhuiyan.

Judge Mohammad Abdul Majid of the Special Court for Dhaka Division passed the order upon a bond of Tk 50,000 each with two guarantors after they surrendered before it and sought bails in the case.

The court also fixed November 14 for next hearing of the case.

Another accused former jute minister Shahjahan Siraj did not turn up at the court yesterday while Giasuddin Al Mamun, also managing director of One Spinning Mills Ltd, now on bail in the case, was present during the hearing.

Two other accused Rajib Siraj, son of Shahjahan Siraj and Obaidul Karim, also managing director of Orion Mushroom Ltd, have been absconding since the case was filed against them.

Assistant Director Khairul Huda of ACC filed a corruption case with Joydevpur police station on May 20, 2008 accusing Obaidul Karim and three others.

The ACC pressed charges against Tariqul Islam, Shahjahan Siraj, Obaidul Karim, Mamun and three others on October 19 last year.

According to the prosecution, the forest and the land ministries illegally leased out 13 acres of land from the Bhawal National Park in the name of One Spinning Mills Ltd, of Mamun and Orion Mushroom Ltd, owned by Obaidul Karim.

CURRENCY SMUGGLING Bail for cabin crew rejected

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected a bail petition of Kamrunnahar Tutul, a cabin crew of Bangladesh Biman, in connection with a case filed for making an attempt to smuggle foreign currencies worth Tk 2.50 crore.

Metropolitan Magistrate Kamrunnahar Rumi passed the order after Tutul's lawyers submitted a petition seeking bail in the case.

Tutul was arrested from a Bangladesh Biman's Dubai-bound flight on September 29 when she was making an attempt to smuggle the currencies.

Tutul was carrying some of the currencies in pound, Saudi riyal and Dubai dirham strapping to her body and the rest in her luggage. A case was filed against her under the special powers act.

'Metro rail to affect 200 families'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 200 households and 2.75 acres of private land will be affected due to construction of metro rail from Uttara to Sayedabad in the city, said a preliminary findings of a survey.

Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB) revealed the finding at a shareholder meeting on Mass Rail Transit (MRT-Line-6 project) at Government Science College auditorium in the city yesterday.

CCDB resettlement expert Moniruzzaman said if the metro rail project is implemented, properties of home-steads, business establishments, schools, health centres and workshops etc will be affected.

He also suggested paying replacement value to the properties' holders and providing them with special assistance as well as alternative or similar works.

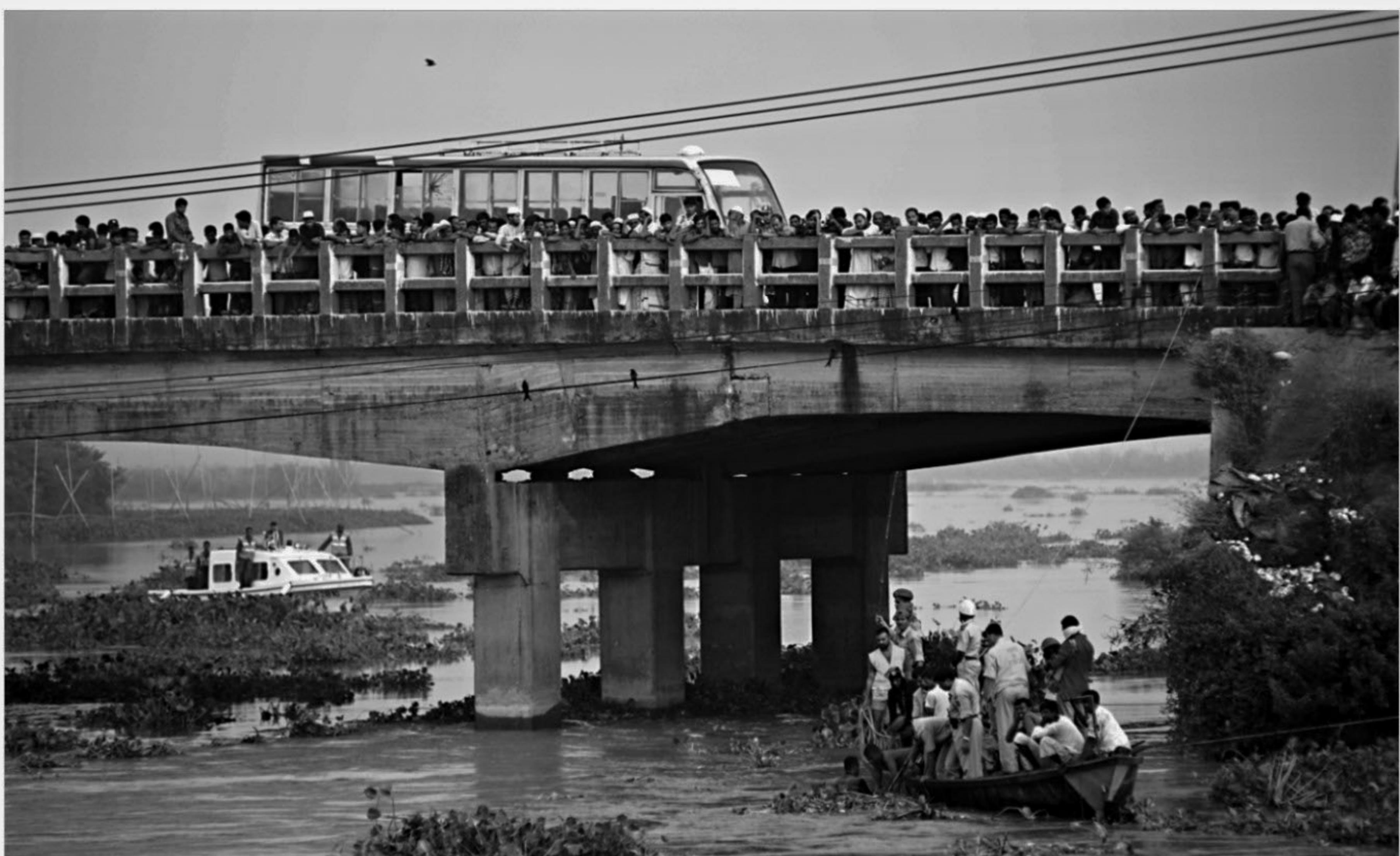
Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) Project Director Anisur Rahman said the government will certainly give compensation against the possible loss of the properties.

The metro rail will take 3.20 minute at each station as interval time and operation time will be from 5:00am to 11:00pm.

The government will start its construction work in 2014 to go for its operation in 2017, he said.

DTCB Executive Director GM Joynal Abedin said they will hold a total of 15 stakeholder meetings in the city.

Local MP Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and several hundreds of local inhabitants, DTCB officials, among others, were present.



A crowd of people on the bridge near Amin bazar are watching the rescue operation for the Savar-bound bus, which fell into the River Turag with about 50 passengers on Sunday. The Dhaka-Aricha Highway was barricaded. Most of the passengers remained missing till yesterday noon though the salvage work was carried out overnight. The family members and relatives awaiting for the victims with deep concern. (Story on Page 16)

PHOTO: STAR

Stop death penalty Urges EU

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Terming the death penalty "cruel and inhuman," the European Union (EU) urged the countries to stop use of the capital punishment.

"The European Union considers death penalty to be a cruel and inhuman punishment, which represents an unacceptable denial of human dignity and integrity," says a press release of EU Delegation to Bangladesh yesterday marking the World and European Day against Death Penalty observed on Sunday.

It says despite a marked trend towards abolition and restriction of the use of capital punishment in most countries, numbers and manner of death penalty application worldwide remain alarming.

While 139 countries - more than 2/3 of the

Death anniversary Metro Desk

METRO DESK

Today is the death anniversary of Prof Dr Nawab Ali Ahmad, pioneer of 'Surgery discipline' in Bangladesh, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at Ahmad Medical Centre of Dhanmondi in the city after Asr prayers.

Dr Nawab, first president of Bangladesh Society of Surgeons, is also remembered for his contributions to treating Shaheed Barkat in 1952. He was one of the first few who wrote books on primary healthcare in Bangla language.

Qulqhwani of Kaiser Thursday METRO DESK

Qulqhwani of Alhaj Ataur Rahman Khan Kaiser, a presidium member of Awami League, will be held at his residence at Bangshal Bari of Chandanpura in Chittagong at 4:30pm on Thursday, says a press release.

Ataur Rahman passed away at Chittagong Medical College Hospital on Saturday due to a cardiac arrest at the age of 70.

Ataur Rahman left behind his three daughters, sons-in-law and five grandchildren.

He was a valiant freedom fighter and an active organiser of the Liberation War. Being a close associate of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, he participated in all major political movements.

Ataur Rahman also served as Bangladesh's Ambassador to Russia and South Korea.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme.

Salahuddin's mother laid to rest

METRO DESK

Shimki Shafi, mother of Bangladesh Football Federation President Kazi Salahuddin, was laid to rest at the Banani Graveyard in the city yesterday, says a press release.

Earlier, her namaz-e-janaza was held at the Gulshan Azad Mosque after Zohr prayers. Relatives, friends and well-wishers attended the janaza.

Her qulqhwani will be held at Gulshan Azad Mosque in the city after Asr prayers on Friday.

She passed away due to kidney ailments at a city hospital on Saturday.

GAS PIPELINE LEAKAGE No gas supply for 4 hrs in some city areas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The residents of a vast area in the capital experienced severe sufferings yesterday due to stoppage of gas supply for about four hours, as a gas pipeline under a bridge near Salehpur Bazar in Amin Bazar leaked.

A rescue team accidentally leaked a 12-inch pipeline during the rescue operation of a passenger bus, which plunged into the Turag on Sunday morning, said Md Khalid Hasan, general manager (operation) of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited.

Gas was leaking in bubbles in the water since yesterday morning, witnesses said.

"We heard about the leakage in the morning and switched off the line at 11:30am which affected large areas, including Dhanmondi, Shyamoli, Mohammadpur, Mirpur, Lalmatia and Adabor," said the official, adding that supply of around 30 mmcf gas was stopped. The supply was being maintained through a 16-inch pipeline.

Sagar, a resident of Madrasa Road in Mohammadpur, said he came home at noon from university only to find the gas connection off and had to buy lunch from a restaurant after a three-hour wait.

A Mirpur resident, Jhuma said they have been suffering from gas crisis for the last 15 days as the supply almost halts at 10:00am. Yesterday it totally went off for about four hours since 11:30am, she added.

DHANMONDI AREA The residents in Dhanmondi neighbourhood, however, had to bear the brunt of supply stoppage of gas and electricity since yesterday morning.

The power supply at parts of Dhanmondi and Jhigatola was stopped since 9:30am.

A fire incident at a local sub-station resulted in the halt, said an official of Dhaka Power Distribution Company.

"We have been working on it and expecting to repair the glitch by 6:00pm," added the official.

Yahya, a resident of Road-4 in Dhanmondi, said they failed to cook their meal timely and had been suffering from a blackout since yesterday morning.

GAS RATIONING SYSTEM Auto-rickshaw drivers threaten agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Drivers of CNG-run auto-rickshaws yesterday threatened agitation from tomorrow unless the government keeps mass transports like the auto-rickshaws out of gas rationing system and provides them with daylong gas refill facility.

The transport workers said six-hour postponement of CNG services everyday takes away priceless hours and leaves fewer time for them to earn bread.

A transport workers leader, Md Golam Faruk, said they will stage protest rallies at different auto-rickshaw stands in the city from October 13 to 23, if the demands are not met. Further programmes will be announced on October 25.

Anthrax under control

Says IEDCR director

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The anthrax infection in humans is low now as no new case was reported in last three weeks, said director of Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) Dr Mahmudur Rahman yesterday.

"Awareness among people has helped a lot to keep the spread of anthrax under control," Dr Rahman told reporters at IEDCR in the capital referring to surveillance reports received from the civil surgeons and officials concerned from 471 upazilas.

"Now, there is no problem in slaughtering the fit cattle during the upcoming Eid-ul Azha," he said.

Dr Rahman said people should notice skin and other parts of cattle before slaughtering them as the symptoms of anthrax infection become visible within a few hours to four days before the animal dies.

IEDCR reported 607 people have been infected so far in the disease in 12 districts since August 18 while none died of the disease.

He recommended four-step measure to protect anthrax situation -- vaccination for the cattle, awareness among people, ensuring that infected cattle are not being slaughtered and seeing a doctor when a person gets infected.

Outlaw killed in 'shoot-off'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

An outlaw was killed in a "shoot-off" between his cohorts and law enforcers at Mohishkhola village in Gangni upazila of Meherpur early yesterday.

Aksed Ali, 39, son of Bakirul Islam of Arpara village in the upazila, was a member of Lal Pataka, a faction of banned outfit Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-ML), police said.

Acting on a tip-off, a joint team of Gangni police and Rapid Action Battalion raided a field of Mohishkhola where Aksed and his associates were holding a secret meeting around 3:15am, police said.

Sensing the presence of law enforcers, the gang opened fire on them. This triggered a gunfight.

The law enforcers found Aksed's body lying on the spot while his accomplices managed to flee, said Motiar Rahman, officer-in-charge of Gangni Police Station.

Aksed was accused in nine cases, including murders and had been involved with the banned outfit for the last five years, he said.

Shykh Seraj receives award in London

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Distinguished media personality, Shykh Seraj, was awarded Bangladesh Caterers Association (BCA) Golden Jubilee Awards for his contribution to rural agriculture and mass media.

The UK-based association presented the award to Seraj, director and head of news of Channel 1, at the channel's 50th anniversary at Park Plaza West Minister Hotel, London on Sunday night, says a press release.

The BCA also conferred the award to Bangladesh-born British MP Rushanara Ali; Anne Main, MP; and late Tara Mian Khan.

A total of 11 Bangladesh restaurant owners in Britain were awarded Caterers of the Year Award at the programme.

Khondoker Mosharraf Hossain, minister for employment and expatriates welfare; and Dr Modasser Ali, prime minister's health adviser; were present as the chief guests at the award giving ceremony.

Obituary

DU CORRESPONDENT

Prof Harun-or-Rashid, founder professor of the Archeology Department of Jahangirnagar University, passed away yesterday.

He was a team leader of digging historic archeological mission of Mohenjo Daro Takhasila in Pakistan and country's Mainamati and Mahastangar Buddha Bihar. He also served in the Archeology Department of Pakistan and Bangladesh for a long time.

Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique condoled his death.

Relatives, friends, students and well-wishers are requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Chittagong, Barisal, Khulna and Sylhet divisions in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:35pm today and rises at 5:55am tomorrow.

Table with 3 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius, Humidity in percentage. Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

DHAKA TODAY

Discussion

Mahanagar Sarbojanin Puja Committee will hold a discussion. Venue: Dhakeshwari Jatiya Mandir. Time: 11:30am.

Meeting International Organisation for Migration will organise a meeting. Venue: Lakeshore hotel, Time: 4:00pm.

Workshop Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute will organise a workshop. Venue: Agriculture Research Institute, Farmgate, Time: 9:00am.

Dhaka Christian Chhatra Kalyan Sangha will organise a six-day long education and cultural programme. Venue: 9, Tejgunipara, Tejgaon, Time: 9:00am.

Sit-in programme Green Belt Trust will hold a sit-in programme. Venue: Dhaka University, Time: 10:30am.