

BRTC services

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demanding withdrawal of BRTC buses.

Sources in the BRTC said most private bus operators are in league with the ruling party. Many MPs and party leaders, who back private operators' demand, themselves own buses.

Moreover, it is impossible to extort BRTC authorities, as is generally the case in transport sector. This might be another reason why a section of operators want BRTC to withdraw from different districts, they added.

Members of private bus association, however, blame BRTC for the situation saying that it operates without maintaining any guidelines.

"BRTC doesn't follow either any guidelines or its ordinance formulated in 1961 during Pakistan era. It [the ordinance] is too old for today's transport sector, and that is the reason of the dispute," said Khandakar Enaytullah, secretary general of Bangladesh Sarak ParibahanSamity.

He alleged that whenever they establish a profitable route, BRTC introduces its service there, as it has easy access to any roads.

"It shouldn't be the case. The private sector provides transport for majority of the passengers, not BRTC."

Enaytullah said he wants the state-owned operator to flourish but there should be a policy.

BRTC general manager, however, differs with him.

"The BRTC ordinance permits the corporation to operate anywhere in the country without any permission from any authority.

"BRTC is supposed to set the standard for transport sector in the country but private operators are trying to dictate our operation," he said.

At present, the corporation offers service on 159 routes in some 25 districts. Despite its popularity, good safety record and a yearly profit of around Tk 12.5 crore, BRTC shut down

Jamaat declares

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headquarters and unions across the country.

Acting Secretary General of the party ATM Azharul Islam announced the programme at a press conference at the party's central office in the city.

At the conference, he said police arrested 20 "innocent" members of Jamaat and its student body Islami Chhatra Shibir from the party's Mirpur office when they were attending a doa mahfil.

About the seizure of Jihadi books, Azharul said, "Which are the Jihadi books... [the government] is identifying Islamic books as Jihadi books. Has the government banned any Jihadi or Islamic book?"

The Jamaat leader said that in the name of recovering bombs from Jamaat men, the government is trying to hide the wrongdoings of pro-government people.

Azharul, however, ignored journalists while he was being asked repeatedly for his comment on Islami Chhatra Shibir president's remark about trying the prime minister and the home minister in a special tribunal.

Earlier on Thursday, Shibir president Rezaul Karim at a discussion said, "Listen, prime minister and home minister, you people would be tried upon formation of a special tribunal."

Natore murder

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did not even know Mizanur.

"I didn't intentionally run the motorcycle into him, it was an accident. I didn't know the teacher, never saw him before, nor even I teased any girls," Abdur Rahim, investigating officer (IO), quoted Rajon as saying before police.

"We need to further interrogate Rajon as we want to know whether any other person is behind the murder," said Rahim replying to a question.

The court will hear the remand prayer on Sunday, informed the IO.

Earlier Asif also denied his involvement in the murder.

Police arrested Rajon from Chawkrampur in Natore town on his return from Dhaka Thursday evening.

Rajon and Asif ran their motorbike into Mizan, a chemistry teacher of Lokmanpur College, on October 12. Mizan succumbed to his injuries at BSMMU Hospital 12 days later.

Police officials and locals said district unit Awami League (AL) Vice-president Majedur Rahman Chand used Rajon as a muscleman.

Chand is also the principal of Tamaltala Agriculture College in Bagatipara, where Rajon is undergoing a diploma course and his father Mansur Rahman is serving as a clerk.

Stalking victims of Lokmanpur College and eyewitnesses said, Rajon and Asif used to tease college girls very often. Rajon threatened Mizan of teaching him a lesson as he (Mizan) warned him not to tease the girls.

operations on around 100 routes in the last five years.

Service on routes connecting Dhaka with Barisal, Khulna, Rajshahi, Narayanganj, Narsindi, Kishoreganj, Tangail and Pabna have been either suspended or cut. BRTC, which used to operate on as many as 50 routes in Dhaka, now operates on five.

The state-run operator owns two percent of the total number of passenger buses carrying about 33 thousand commuters daily. Even a decade ago, it owned more than 10 percent of the buses operating in the country.

BRTC's service, however, is shrinking also because of the appalling condition of its current fleet.

According to official record, the number of its buses has come down to 579 from 827. Currently, as many as 248 buses remain in workshop for repair, while another 100 were scrapped in the last couple of years.

BRTC GM (operations) said, "Majority of the buses exceeded their economic life. Besides, they weren't repaired when required, which led to the dismal state of BRTC fleet."

The government recently approved procurement of 950 buses -- 300 double-deckers and 50 articulated (bendy) ones.

"The government wants to expand BRTC's service all the way up to upazila level," he said. But the negative role of private operators might stand in the way, he added.

Jamaat

FROM PAGE 16
books and leaflets seized from the arrestees contain various anti-state matters.

Besides, the materials recovered from their possession include some explosives and bomb making materials, the DC of DB said.

The meeting was being held after leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami on August 4 at a meeting at the Jatiya Press Club issued a threat to the government.

Meanwhile, 19 of the arrestees, 19 were remanded for three days yesterday while another was sent to jail.

Sub-Inspector Abu Shahed Khan of Mirpur Police Station produced the Jamaat men before the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Rashed Kabir, seeking a 10-day remand for them and the court granted their remand for three days.

Officer-in-Charge Kazi Wazed Ali of the police station said the court sent Rubel to jail because he was under 18.

Earlier, five of the arrestees were interrogated at the DB head office while the rest by Mirpur police.

The arrestees include Jamaat lawmaker Mujibur Rahman; Mahfuzur Rahman, Jamaat Mirpur thana (west) unit ameer; Kazirul Islam, an executive member of the party; Shafiqul Alam, Khulna city unit nayebe-ameer; SA Abdul Hai, Sramik Kalyan Federation publicity secretary; Abdul Karim, a leader of the party's ward-12 unit; ATM Rahim Uddin; Ahsan Ullah Patwari; Abdullah Al Noman; Rubel Mridha; Hemayet Uddin; Monirul Islam; Yasin Ali; Nazmul Hossain; Ruhul Amin; Moazzem Hossain and Idris.

Jamaat acting Secretary General ATM Azharul Islam condemned the arrest describing it as an undemocratic act and claimed that the Jamaat men were innocent.

13 hurt

FROM PAGE 1
clash and put barricade on the Sylhet-Sunamganj road in the city's Madina market area for two hours till 12:30am.

Police said, the students were locked into an altercation with the counter manager of a bus operator at Kodomtali at about 7:30pm for not providing them pick-up service to Madina market, which is adjacent to the Sust campus.

The students said the bus operator did not provide them transport service up to Madina market from Kodomtali, which they usually do on other days for their passengers.

The students were returning to their campus after ending an excursion to Ghorasal.

As the bus operator declined to provide them transport service, a scuffle took place between the students and transport workers.

At one stage of the brawl, the workers beat the group with iron rods and steel pipes.

As the news reached the campus, hundreds of students rushed to the spot and clashed with the transport workers.

They vandalised about 50 vehicles and 10 shops including the office of the bus operator there, sources said.

Around 10 students were given first aid while others including Rashed, Sunon and Al-Amin were admitted to the Jalalabad Ragib-Rabeya Medical College Hospital.

Police later rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

A case has been filed with the Kotwali Police station, said Sust Registrar Ishraqul Hossain.

War crimes

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report to the prosecution immediately for making the arrests for links to war crimes, said Rahim, former inspector general of police.

The investigator denied giving further detail.

He said they are now investigating allegations of war crimes against 16 other people.

The prosecution and investigation teams of International Crimes Tribunal visited Chittagong in September this year and found evidence against SQ Chowdhury having links to the murder of a member of Hindu community during the 1971 Liberation War in the port city.

Prafulla Chandra Singha, son of Nutan Chandra Singha, a philanthropist and former owner of the herbal medicine factory, 'Kundeshwari', alleged that SQ Chowdhury on instructions of his father Fazlul Quader Chowdhury brought Pakistani army personnel to their residence on April 13 in 1971. They killed Nutan Chandra.

Five Jamaat leaders -- party Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami, its secretary general Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid, its Nayebe-ameer Delwar Hossain Sayedee, Senior Assistant Secretary General Muhammad Kamaruzzaman, and Assistant Secretary General Abdul Quader Molla -- had been arrested with links to war crimes.

The government on March 26 formed the seven-member investigation agency, headed by former additional secretary Abdul Matin, under the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act 1973.

The agency is probing offences mentioned in section 3 of the Act: crimes against humanity; crimes against peace; genocide; violation of any humanitarian rules during armed conflicts as laid down in the Geneva Convention of 1949; any other crimes under international laws; attempt, abetment or conspiracy to commit any such crimes; and complicity in or failure to prevent commission of any such crime.

It is empowered to arrest accused war criminals and even confiscate their properties under the tribunal's permission.

The war crimes trial will begin on completion of the investigation.

BDR mutiny

FROM PAGE 16
They looted the armory of the battalion violating discipline of the force. Rebel jawans also took control of battalion headquarters and put up barricades on Chapainawabganj-Rajshahi road at Sultanganj in the district, they added.

Ahsanul Haque, then officer-in-charge of Chapainawabganj Police Station, filed the case against 30 jawans in connection with the mutiny on May 17 last year.

Deputy Attorney General advocate Shashanka Shekhar Sarkar will act as the representative of attorney general with two lawyers.

Lt Colonel Zayeed Hossain, commanding officer of 39 Rifle Battalion, will act as the prosecutor.

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Army sues 50-60

FROM PAGE 1
during the clashes died in a hospital in the capital the next day, while three other villagers who had joined the demonstration remained missing for the next couple of days.

In the case, Warrant Officer Aminur Rahman alleged that some unruly persons and criminals from Bariasoni, Moushuri and Purbogram villages under Ruppaganj upazila put up barricades with logs and burning tyres on Ruppaganj-Demra and Ruppaganj-Khilkhet roads at 5:00am on that day.

Armed with locally made weapons, villagers and outsiders started marching towards temporary army training camps in Purbogram, Bariasoni, and Moushuri at 6:00am, and the camp commander directed his troops to be patient, it reads.

At 10:00am, some 50 to 60 people armed with locally made weapons entered Tanmoushuri army camp illegally. At that time the troops in the camp were beaten, the camp was set on fire, and goods were looted. The protesters vandalised two jeeps and a pick-up truck parked at the camp. When the troops opened fire into the air in self-defence, the attackers dispersed, it adds.

The unruly criminals launched another attack on the camp at 11:00am with firearms, explosives, and local weapons, and the troops fired into the air to save their lives and state property. As the mob was not quitting, the troops had to fire again into the air. Under such a circumstance a civilian was found lying on the ground

inside the camp, the statement says.

Injured civilians and three army personnel were airlifted to Combined Military Hospital in the capital around 3:00pm. After the four camps were vacated, the attackers launched fresh attacks on the camps around 3:30pm, looted those, and set those on fire, it claims.

Meanwhile, Zulhas Mia, a local businessman, filed another case with Ruppaganj police station on Thursday night against 11 named and 200 unnamed people for launching an attack on his house.

Forkan Shikder, officer-in-charge of the police station, confirmed the filing of the case by the army, and said the situation in the area is under control.

No arrest was made till yesterday in the cases, he added.

Earlier, police filed a case against 3,000 to 4,000 unidentified people, and Rapid Action Battalion filed another case against 3,000 unidentified people in connection with the violence.

Meanwhile, fresh panic gripped the villagers following the Bangladesh Army case. Villagers said they pass nights at their relatives' houses in fear of arrest although police asked them to return home.

The families of the three missing men are still waiting for the bodies of their loved ones. Family members claimed that the law enforcers had shot them during the clashes and took them away.

Govt won't

FROM PAGE 1
workers through BOESL to keep the migration cost low and ensure recruitment of skilled workers.

The Bangladesh mission in Amman stopped attesting demand letters for workers in favour of private agencies after the expatriates' welfare ministry informed it of the decision, said the letter.

The Jordanian employers want the migrant workers to join work in Jordan very quickly, Shatil said in the letter, a copy of which has been obtained by The Daily Star.

Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) Secretary General Ali Haider Chowdhury said such a government decision would affect the already shrinking job market abroad.

Wishing anonymity, a recruiting agent said, "I have paid the government a huge amount for the licence to send workers abroad. If I do wrong, the government can punish me. But it cannot bar me from doing business."

Around three lakh Bangladeshis went abroad for work so far this year. The number is unlikely to hit even four lakh with only two months remaining.

Nearly 4.75 lakh workers migrated abroad last year while the figure was 8.75 lakh in 2008.

"Utilisation of the job market in Jordan could give Bangladesh a huge lift amid such a decline. A readymade garment worker earns around Tk 20,000 a month and his or her travel cost is paid by the employers in Jordan," said Ali Haider.

Private agencies usually charge around Tk 2 lakh,

person's house so we can't sit idle. We have to respond, and we have to resist the ill motive of the government."

Some other leaders confirmed that mid-level leaders including Dulu, Ilias Ali, Khairul Kabir Khokon, and Habibur Islam Habib met Khaleda recently in her Gulshan office in the capital, demanding tougher anti-government programmes, where the party's Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain, and Standing Committee Member MK Anwar were also present.

Hearing the younger leaders at the meeting, Khaleda suggested that the secretary general talks to all concerned for taking preparation for a "tougher" movement, the sources said.

Mirza Alamgir however told The Daily Star that the issue of the chairperson's house is absolutely a political one, which they will face politically.

Another senior leader of the party said junior leaders can demand tougher programmes, but the party must consider many things, so the organisation's greater interest is not harmed.

He however hoped that the anti-government movement will pick up pace after the chairperson's proposed countrywide tour next month.

BNP scheduled a tour of 21 districts by Khaleda Zia, where she will attend various party programmes including rallies.

DCC to survey

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The BSS correspondent visited several children parks including Narinda Shishu Park, Narinda Shishu Park-2, Khilgaon Shishu Park, Out-fall Staff Quarter Shishu Park.

During the visit, the correspondent found that DCC has lost its control over those greenspaces.

Outfall Staff Quarter Shishu Park has become a safe haven for drug peddlers and addicts and all the trees in the park were felled.

Locals at Khilgaon area said that even seven years ago children used to play in the open space.

Commenting on the issue, Dr Mehtab Khanom, professor of the Psychology Department of Dhaka University, said, "Lack of playgrounds hinders children's mental, social and physical growth."

Chief Estate Officer of DCC Moshir Rahman said, "I have no idea about the numbers of playgrounds under illegal occupants but so far I know those are small in number."

BNP's probe

FROM PAGE 1
claiming himself to be an eyewitness.

The commission, led by Supreme Court Bar Association President Khandaker Mahbub Hossain, received the statements 15 kilometres away from the spot of the accident yesterday morning. The local BNP units arranged the programmes where witnesses gave statements before the commission members.

Mozammel Haque, Shafiqul Islam, Mozammel Haque, Atiar Rahman and Fazal Karim gave evidence yesterday.

Later the commission members went to Kamarkhanda upazila and received a few more statements from people at Vodroghat.

The commission was formed on instructions of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia as confusion arose over the accident.

Six people were killed when an intercity train ploughed through a BNP rally at Soidabad on October 11.

Tk 50cr

FROM PAGE 1
can also get the inputs.

Matia mentioned that her ministry has prepared a list of the farmers to get the government help, and repeatedly checked it so that no fake farmer gets it.

The minister however said the agricultural inputs might not fully meet the needs of the flood-hit farmers but they will see that the government stands by them in their bad times.

Five arrested

FROM PAGE 1
assured them of exemplary punishment to the killer.

Talking to the reporters, Inu said stalkers and their accomplices, irrespective of their family status and party affiliation, must be arrested and punished. If any police officer fails to control such social menace, he will be suspended.

Abdur Rahman said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has taken the issue seriously. None committing such heinous acts will be spared.

He also said Champa's daughters will get government assistance for their education, employment, etc.

Meanwhile, Faridpur Sugar Mill workers' union will hold a meeting today at 8:00am at the mill demanding exemplary punishment to the killer.

Earlier on Thursday, the law enforcers picked up Rony's stepmother Pramita Rani Saha and Rizia, mother of one of Rony's friends, from their Madhukhali residences and released them after interrogation.

UP member

FROM PAGE 16
police assured them of arresting the killers.

Police and locals said a gang of six to seven assailants, led by Motor Sramik League activist Kala Joynt attacked Rafiqul around 9:30pm Thursday night when he was returning home from the town by his motorcycle. The gang beat the BNP leader severely, leaving him critically injured.

After rescuing him from the spot, locals sent him to Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital. As his condition worsened, he was referred to RMCH where he died around 10:00am yesterday.

The body of Rafiqul was kept at RMCH for an autopsy.

Family members and locals claimed political rivalry led to the murder.

Lalmonirhat Superintendent of Police Habibur Rahman said law enforcers were raiding different spots to arrest the killers.

Biman pilots

FROM PAGE 1
Biman cancelled as many as nine flights scheduled for today.

"Thousands of passengers of cancelled flights were either stranded at hotels or at the airports both home and abroad," said a Biman high official wishing not to be named.

Talking to The Daily Star in the afternoon at least five passengers--Jakir Hossain, Rezaul Karim, Shafiqul Islam, Ahad and another passenger wishing not to be named--said some of them will lose their jobs and visas for others will expire if they fail to reach Dubai and Riyadh in time.

"I have only one day left to reach Dubai...I therefore cancelled my Biman ticket and will fly on Gulf Air to save my job," said Aatur, who was scheduled to fly by Biman today.

The row between pilots and Biman started after the airline increased the retirement age of pilots from 57 to 62 years through an order issued on September 9.

Biman, however, said it would not provide pilots over 57 years with various benefits, including rehabilitation and insurance benefits if a pilot loses his or her wings for medical reasons.

The national flag carrier also said pilots between 57 and 62 would be out of the purview of the existing accord between Biman and BAPA.

But pilots, citing a provision for consulting them in the present agreement, said the pilots over 57 should be covered by the existing contract.

They say Biman acted on its own without talking to the pilots.

In early October, some pilots challenged the Biman decision to increase retirement age at the High Court.

The Biman managing director claimed that pilots went to the court without

Sanaullah

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Sentu, Belal, Monir, Babu, Rezaul, Toffel, Kalam, Deraj, Badsha, Kashem Sarkar, Bablu Mollah, Masud, Jahid, Sawpan, Jalal, Prosanto, and Zahurul.

"We couldn't submit the names of all who were involved with the killing as we had to file the case in a hurry," said Mohua to The Daily Star.

We submitted the names to DIG as we found out their involvement through video footages, she added.

Earlier, Mohua filed the murder case against 27 AL, BCL, and Jubo League men with Baraigram Police Station on October 9.

Meanwhile, Lutfur Rahman, sub-inspector of Bonpara Police Investigation Centre, has been transferred yesterday on a complaint of the deceased's wife.

Mohua alleged that so far police drives to nab the accused failed as Lutfur gave information to latter.

Lutfur denied the allegation.

Police, till date, managed to arrest only a BCL activist Rasel Hossain Pappu while the main accused are still on the run.

However, Abdul Hannan, investigation officer of the case said police are conducting frequent and intense raids in places of Pabna, Naogaon, Sirajganj districts to nab the accused.

Sanaullah Noor Babu, upzila chairman of Baraigram and a BNP leader, was killed as AL activists attacked a procession of BNP at Bonpara Bazar of the district on October 8.

Hi-tech fraud

FROM PAGE 1
The clients used a tiny piece of paper, which looked like a well-filled circle, to cover the circle of the question paper set they received. This fooled the teachers on duty at the hall and they signed their answer sheets knowing the examinee filled the correct circle on the answer sheet for his or her question paper.

Regardless of whatever set they got, the client students were actually answering question paper set three. And all the correct answers were sent to them via SMS from the five gang members. The five got all the answers from Aminul who was inside an exam hall.

Before submitting the answer sheets, all the client students took off the tiny piece of paper covering the circle marking the set and filled the circle for set number three.

They all answered question paper set three and their answer sheets were signed by the teachers.