

Bhutanese PM pays tributes to martyred war heroes

BSS, Dhaka  
Bhutanese Prime Minister Lyonchen Jigme Yoser Thinley paid rich tributes to the martyrs of the War of Liberation by placing wreaths at the National Memorial in Savar yesterday. After placing the wreaths, the Bhutanese premier stood in solemn silence for some time as a mark of respect to the memory of the valiant sons of the soil who embraced martyrdom during the country's War of Liberation in 1971.

A smartly turned out contingent drawn from three services of the armed forces presented a salute on the occasion when bugles played the last post.

Thinley, who arrived here yesterday on a five-day state visit, also planted a sapling and signed the visitors' book there.

KOKO'S TAX EVASION Hearing deferred until Jan 24

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday deferred the hearing until January 24 of a tax evasion case filed against Arafat Rahman Koko, the youngest son of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Judge Mohammad Zohurul Hoque of the Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order following a petition seeking an adjournment of the hearing.

Koko's lawyer sought adjournment saying a High Court (HC) rule is pending that challenged the legal basis of the case. The HC issued the rule on a writ petition submitted earlier, he added.

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) on March 1 last year filed the case against Koko for evading income tax for fiscal years from 2002-2003 to 2006-2007.

A lower court issued an arrest warrant against Koko and directed police to submit report on execution of arrest warrant following the case on March 1.

Old airport tunnel sees green light

Inter-ministerial meeting today

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

The construction of the first-ever tunnel beneath the Old Airport finally gets moving as the communications ministry has moved to conduct feasibility study of the proposed tunnel linking Jahangir Gate and Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

No tangible initiative has been made over the last three years although experts have time and again suggested for the tunnel to ease traffic congestion on the airport road, especially in Mohakhali and Prime Minister Office areas. The Strategic Transport Plan (STP) also recom-

mended for the tunnel.

"The feasibility study will begin in March to determine alignment, construction method and assess economic viability with an estimated cost of Tk 8 crore," said a Bridge Division official.

He said two firms have submitted proposals to conduct the study. They are Yooshin Engineering-BCL, a joint venture company of Korea and Bangladesh, and SMEC-COWL-ACE, also a joint venture company of Australia, Denmark and Bangladesh.

"We are evaluating their offers and expect to appoint one firm by the end of February," said the official.

cial.

The communications ministry is scheduled to hold an inter-ministerial meeting at the Bridge Division today in a bid to expedite the move.

As per the primary concept, the tunnel will be multi-lane considering the future traffic volume with at least four-lanes.

Construction of the tunnel is necessary as the Mohakhali flyover could not achieve its desired goal of easing traffic rush on the Airport Road.

The link road constructed along the old airport eased the situation,

*The feasibility study will begin in March to determine alignment, construction method and assess economic viability with an estimated cost of Tk 8 crore*

but that too can't completely serve the purpose of diverting traffic flow to areas like Mirpur,

Mohammadpur, Agargaon, Shyamoli, Rayerbazar, Dhanmondi and Lalbagh.

"We want to finalise everything in this regard without delay," said Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain.

The communications ministry has taken a number of projects, including construction of flyovers, elevated expressway, metro rail, underpasses and overpasses in the last two years to ease intolerable traffic congestion in the city. But delay in implementation of the projects has further deteriorated the situation.

Cop sent to jail on charge of raping stepdaughter

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A police official was sent to jail yesterday on charge of raping his stepdaughter in the city's Demra in December, 2009.

Judge Nur Mohammad Zahangir Hossain of Second Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression passed the order after rejecting the bail prayer of Sub-Inspector (SI) Mahfuzur Rahman of Kolagachhia Police Box in Narayanganj.

SI Mahfuzur along with his lawyer appeared before the court and sought bail in the case.

A college student on December 1, 2010 filed a rape case against Mahfuzur with the court. After hearing, the court issued a warrant of arrest against the accused on that day.

In the complaint, the plaintiff alleged that Mahfuzur, who is second husband of the victim's mother, raped her at a residence of the city's Demra area on December 23, 2009 and threatened her not to disclose the incident.

Mahfuzur threatened if she discloses the matter, he would divorce her mother and implicate her brother in criminal cases, the plaintiff added.

Stop trade on water: Environmentalists



Poribesh Bachao Andolon (Poba) forms a human chain in front of the Faculty of Fine Arts of Dhaka University yesterday demanding safe water for all.

DU CORRESPONDENT

Environmental activists yesterday demanded government to stop commercialisation of water and ensure the right use of pure water.

The demands came at a human chain organised by Paribesh Bachao Andolan (Poba) in front of Dhaka University fine arts faculty.

Speakers said more than 700 rivers and numerous canals, at present, can provide drinkable water but unnecessary wastage and indiscriminate filling up of waterways are gradually reducing those.

Condemning the thriving business of bottled water, the speakers said decreasing sources of pure water is

resulting in its commercialisation.

Environmentalists also demanded government to recover waterways from grabbers and initiate a law to preserve water sources across the country.

Poba Assistant Secretary Mahbul Alam Tahin, Puran Dhaka Unnayan Forum President Nazim Uddin, Peace General Secretary Ifma Hossain, Green Mind President Amir Hossain, Dushtho Manob Kallayan Sangstha President Mojammal Haque Palash and Nagarbasi President Haji Ansar Ali spoke on the occasion.

Folk singer Kuddus Bayati urged people to be more conscious of using water to reduce its crisis.

BDR MUTINY CASE

43 accused cross-examine two prosecution witnesses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forty-three accused of a BDR mutiny case yesterday cross-examined two prosecution witnesses while one of the witnesses gave depositions against 42 accused at a special court set up in Darbar Hall at BDR Headquarters in the city.

A total of 621 accused of 13 rifle battalion and attached signal sector are being tried under the special court-8, headed by BDR Deputy Director General Brig Gen Obaidul Haque.

Witness Havildar Syed Masud Rana during his depositions screened video footage and photographs of the activities of seven accused during the mutiny. Almost every accused are found with firearms and heavy ammunition

in the video footage and photographs.

In his depositions, Rana said that live ammunitions were seized from the personal trunk and bed of two accused sepoy Shamsul Islam and sepoy Enamul Haq.

The court was adjourned till 9:00am today.

The charges against all the accused include leaving the Darbar Hall during a Darbar on February 25, 2008 ignoring the directive of the then BDR director general when a chaotic situation was created there, not informing the higher authorities about the mutiny in time, disobeying the lawful authorities and taking arms and ammunition illegally from different armouries.

A total of 138 accused of the case are CID charge-sheeted.

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