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# RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT Govt officials must give info

HC upholds fine on one for refusal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday upheld an Information Commission verdict, fining a government official Tk 1,000 under the Right to Information Act, 2009 for refusing to provide information.

The court made the judgement after rejecting a writ petition filed by Mohammad Golam Mostafa, health and family planning officer in Araihaazar upazila of Narayanganj, challenging the commission's decision to fine him.

The HC ruled that any responsible official is bound to furnish information to anybody within 20 days or within 30 days in particular cases after filing of the application as per the RTI act.

The official concerned neither can wait for an approval from the higher authorities nor waste time for any bureaucratic tangle for providing information, the court said.

The HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim observed that the Information Commission is a quasi-judicial body and every public servant is bound to comply with its orders and instructions.

The court also vacated a stay order on the commission's verdict issued by another HC bench on September 29 last year.

According to the counsels, Golam Mostafa has to pay the fine to the state coffers following the HC verdict.

Sheikh Ali Ahmmad of Fatullah had enquired Mostafa whether Mamun, a murder case accused, had been undergoing treatment at Araihaazar Upazila Health

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Dhaka Wasa installs underground water pipelines near the central reservation of Darussalam Road in Mirpur in the capital, causing tailbacks as far as the eye can see. The scene was snapped yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



## Caught at last

Tax official dodged graft trial for 7 years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

After remaining absent for more than seven years in a graft case, Abdur Rahman, who managed a man to appear before court and undergo punishment in jail on his behalf, has been arrested at last.

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## RAPID BUS PROJECT

# Lot of hurdles ahead

TAWFIQUE ALI

Even though the government gave the nod to the formation of a company for a section of the proposed route of the rapid bus service, experts say its implementation will be difficult and could take years.

The government intended to reduce the horrendous congestion problem in the capital with a 45-kilometre Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route stretching up to Sadarghat from Gazipur. But it requires a dozen elevated overpasses and coordination with other large upcoming projects.

The route comprises two sections--one from Gazipur to Shahjalal International Airport and the other from the airport to Sadarghat--occupying two central lanes of existing roads.

Feasibility studies show that the 20-kilometre-long Gazipur section requires nine elevated overpasses at Joydevpur, Kunia, Cherag Ali, Bhogra, near National University, Abdullapur, Tongi Station Road, Sonargaon road and Jasimuddin

intersections in Uttara.

It requires replacing the rundown Tongi Bridge with a multi-use eight-lane bridge with a dedicated lane for BRT.

The Sadarghat section requires an elevated overpass at Mohakhali intersection and coordination with the flyover proposed by the LGED from Shantinagar to Satrasta intersection in Tejgaon.

Moreover, its coordination with another proposed flyover from Shantinagar to Dhaka-Mawa highway via North-South Road and across the Buriganga is yet to be settled.

Prof Md Shamsul Hoque, a member of the project's technical steering committee, said it would take several years to overcome these hurdles, as it required massive civil construction work on a heavily-active national highway (Gazipur-airport) stretching through densely built localities.

Project officials earlier said construction of the BRT route would start early this

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## 7-POINT DEMAND JU teachers go for fresh agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Agitating Jahangirnagar University (JU) teachers have announced a week-long fresh programme from February 11 to realise their seven-point demand including the removal of the whole proctorial body that the university administration has been refusing to meet.

Prof Nasim Akhter Hossain, a teacher of the Department of Government and Politics, announced the programmes at a press conference yesterday at Jahangirnagar University Journalists Association

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# Nasheed was 'forced to resign at gunpoint'

He vows to come back to power; violence spreads in Maldives

AGENCIES

Violence erupted in the Maldives yesterday as supporters of the ex-president who claims he was forced out by a coup clashed with security forces in Male and stormed police stations on outlying islands.

Local officials on four atolls in the holiday paradise nation told AFP that residents overran several police stations and set fire to government buildings.

The attacks followed clashes in the capital Male where protesters, some throwing stones, fought army and police in riot gear who fired tear gas and used batons to disperse several thousand people in the city's Republic Square.



Mohamed Nasheed

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## Cops didn't kill the two Claims Chandpur SP about Jan 29 incident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Chandpur Superintendent of Police (SP) M Shahidullah Chowdhury yesterday said the police firing on January 29 did not kill Abul Hossain Mridha and Limon Choyal.

According to the probe and forensic report, the bullets that killed the two at Chandpur were not fired from arms used by Bangladesh police, he said at a press conference at the district police headquarters after 10 days of the incident.

The police super said demonstrators or

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PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Children work in dried fish industry on the Cox's Bazar beach. Every day they work under conditions of extremely bad odour for next-to-nothing. It seems child labour prevention measures are not effective there at all.

# Fraudsters embezzle Tk 11cr thru' forgery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of fraudsters forged government cheques and took over Tk 11 crore from the state coffers.

The gang using 47 cheques, similar to that printed by Bangladesh Government Press, withdrew over Tk 11 crore posing as people getting compensation for land acquisition by the state, said Deputy Director Benogir Ahmed of Special Enquiry and Investigation Section-2 of Anti Corruption Commission.

Sources said the ACC is looking into whether employees of the BG press were involved in this.

Benogir Ahmed said they already detected 10 members of the gang which withdrew the money opening 20 bank accounts with different banks with fake identities.

The gang posed as land owners in Savar, Baunia of Uttara and Mohammadpur whose land were acquired by the government, he added. In truth, neither the government acquired the land nor did the DC office provide the compensation cheques.

Benogir said they smelt something fishy way back in 2010 but it took them time to detect the gang since the gang uses fake documents. He said they were going to file 35 fraud cases but the ACC only gave permission for 10 so far.

On Sunday, 10 cases will be filed with police stations concerned and with the ACC's permission the remaining cases will be lodged later on, he added.

None has been apprehended in this connection.

The Daily Star

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ONLINE POLL

Are you satisfied with the search committee's proposed names for chief election commissioner?

Yes

No

No Comments

21.0%

72.6%

6.3%

TOTAL VOTES: 504

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir that the entire appointment process of the chief election commissioner is unconstitutional?

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February 9

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6-05

Zohr

12-45

1-15

Asr

4-15

4-30

Maghrib

5-52

5-56

Esha

7-15

7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation