



The whole length of Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue clogged with severe traffic congestion in the afternoon yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

BDR CARNAGE TRIAL Incumbent IGP refuses to disclose ex-IGP's directives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pandemonium gripped a Dhaka court yesterday after Inspector General of Police (IGP) Hassan Mahmood Khandker for several times refrained from disclosing the exact directives he received from the ex-IGP during the 2009 BDR mutiny.

"I will not give the answer due to strategic reasons," said Hassan Mahmood after Judge Mohammad Zohurul Hoque intervened and the commotion had settled down.

Defence lawyer Aminul Islam, while cross-examining the IGP, had sought the exact directives the latter had received and the instructions he had given to his subordinates.

Hassan Mahmood was avoiding a direct reply, going on to talk on other issues.

Annoyed, the defence lawyers repeated the question four times and asked the judge for assistance. At one stage, prosecutors came to the IGP's help and locked in a noisy argument with the defence lawyers, leading to the commotion.

Earlier, the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, set up at Alia Madrasa playground in the capital's Bakshibazar to hold the BDR carnage trial, started recording Hassan Mahmood's deposition around 11:20am.

Hassan Mahmood, who was the director general (DG) of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in 2009, said he was called to the former IGP Nur Mohammad's office to discuss over the situation at Pilkhana on February 25, the first day of the mutiny.

"We talked about the situation in Pilkhana in presence of IGP and other high officials and the IGP gave us some directions. "Later, from there, I contacted the additional DG of Rab and the company commanders over phone to give necessary instructions over the situation at Pilkhana," he said.

He added, "As the rebels began deploying heavy weapons around 11:00am, it became risky to send Rab members inside Pilkhana to conduct an operation."

The BDR rebels had introduced deputy assistant director Towhid as their new DG several times and he had witnessed Towhid actively leading the mutineers on the first day, he said.

He said he heard that the bodies of two slain army officers were found in a sewerage at Nababganj but did not inform the home minister before going to Jamuna.

Seventy-four people including 57 army officials were killed in the two-day mutiny in the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) headquarters in Pilkhana.

DOCTOR KILLING PLOT Four suspects sent to remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent to one-day remand four men arrested for allegedly plotting to murder three physicians following an internal feud of Doctors' Association of Bangladesh (DAB), a pro-BNP organisation.

The four are dentist Md Kamrul Hassan, a DAB member, Taufiqul Islam Tushar, Md Mostafa and Mohorom Ali.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) detained Kamrul and five "killers", the aforementioned three and two others, Mithu alias Prasanta and Joynal Abedin, from road No 3 of Mirpur-6 on September 2.

Rab, in a press conference the next day, said Kamrul hired the five to kill DAB central leaders -- Dr Mofakkarul Islam Rana, Dr Shariful Islam Bahar and Dr Alamgir Kabir Ujjal.

Another Dhaka court, on September 4, sent Mithu and

Death anniversary

METRO DESK



The 41st death anniversary of Shaheed Engr Nazrul Islam, a freedom fighter, will be observed today, says a press release.

A Qurankhwani and a milad mahfil will be held after Asr prayers today at Ace Autos on 204/A Gulshan Tejaon Link Road in Dhaka.

GOING TO MALAYSIA FOR WORK Cost should not exceed Tk 80,000

Says expatriates' welfare minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Migrant workers' travelling cost through the government's legal channels to Malaysia should range from Tk 75,000 to Tk 80,000, Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, minister of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, said yesterday.

He was speaking at the launch of an information campaign programme "Shabdhaner Mar Nai" to create awareness on safe migration. The campaign is also aimed at spreading information about legal ways to travel abroad among prospective migrant workers from Bangladesh.

Recently, Malaysia has announced that it will hire workers from Bangladesh, the minister said, adding that it was unfortunate that potential workers who did not know this information would fall victim to unscrupulous middle-men who would promise to help them migrate for large sums of money ranging from Tk 2 lakh to Tk 3 lakh.

Migrant workers, especially women, fall victims to fraud brokers and unscrupulous recruiters because they are unaware of the legal procedures to migrate abroad, the speakers said.

The awareness campaign will be carried out through radio, television and newspapers, and a door to door awareness programme will also be conducted in Manikganj since a large number of women workers go abroad from there.

The minister said many developed countries had extremely low birth rates, in some cases negative. These countries with aging populations have a decreasing young and productive population, he said.

In contrast, South Asian and Sub-Saharan African countries, including Bangladesh, have a growing young population who could migrate to those developed countries to support the growth of the economy, he added.

"It is noteworthy that we have about 26 lakh migrant workers in Saudi Arabia presently, 15 lakh in the UAE and about 2 lakh workers each in Kuwait, Qatar and Oman. This huge population of migrant workers sends home a large amount of remittance which shapes the balance of payment of Bangladesh's economy," the minister said.

Information Secretary Hedayatullah Al Mamoon and Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Secretary Dr Zafar Ahmed Khan also spoke on the occasion.

The event was organised by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) with Asiatic Marketing Communications taking part in coordination and supervision.

AUG 21 GRENADE ATTACK

Babar showed negligence in arresting real culprits

Ex-police officer tells court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A former police officer yesterday told a Dhaka court that the then state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar had showed negligence in arresting the real culprits after the August 21 grenade attack on an Awami League rally in 2004.

SM Mizanur Rahman, who had become the acting commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police three hours before the attack, said this while replying to a question of the defence lawyer Abdus Sobhan Tarafder.

Mizanur is now on leave preparatory to retirement (LPR).

He told Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 that he had given his statement to the investigating officer, narrating Babar's negligence and reluctance in investigating the August 21 grenade attack cases and arresting the real accused.

Additional Superintendent of Police of CID Abdul Kahar Akond recorded his statement on

February 3, 2008.

Meantime, the defence lawyers for 26 other accused, including BNP leader Abul Harris Chowdhury, have completed cross-examining Mizanur.

Judge Shahed Nuruddin of Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 recorded Mizanur's statement yesterday and fixed September 23 and 24 for the next hearing.

The August 21 grenade attack was aimed at assassinating Awami League President and the then opposition leader Sheikh Hasina. Though she survived the attack, 24 AL leaders and activists were killed and 300 others injured. AL leader Ivy Rahman, wife of President Zillur Rahman, was among the slain.

Advocate Syed Rezaur Rahman, chief counsel for the August 21 grenade attack cases, appeared for the state, while Mahboob Ahmad and Abdullah Mahmud Hassan defended the accused.

New envoys to Nepal, Portugal appointed

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The government has appointed two new ambassadors of Bangladesh to Nepal and Portugal, says a foreign ministry press release.

Imtiaz Ahmed, incumbent ambassador in Bhutan, will now serve as ambassador to Portugal, while Mashfee Binte Shams, currently director general (South Asia) in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has been made ambassador to Nepal.

Imtiaz Ahmed joined foreign service through the 1984 Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination. In addition to his ambassadorial appointments in Sweden, Nepal and Bhutan, he has served Bangladesh embassies in Rome, Cairo, Kuala Lumpur and Washington DC in various capacities.

Imtiaz is married and has a daughter.

A career diplomat, Mashfee belongs to the 9th batch of BCS cadre. In her diplomatic career, she has held different offices in Bangladesh embassies in Rome, Bangkok and New Delhi.

Mashfee has graduated from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BuEt) and obtained an MA degree in International Relations from the University of Leeds, UK.

She is married and blessed with a son.

Medicines seized at airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs officials found 78 kilogrammes of tablets and liquid medicines while scanning three luggage of a passenger at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital.

The passenger, who arrived in Dhaka at 8:10am in a flight from Bangkok, however, could not be traced after the drugs were found.

The seized tablets and liquid medicine bottles belonged to different companies, said customs sources.

No test has been conducted yet to determine the type and purpose of the medicines, they added.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Panelists address a policy session on "Setting Maternal Health Priorities in Bangladesh: Policy Directives and Strategic Options" organised by USAID funded Maternal and Child Integrated Program, Saving Newborn Lives programme of Save the Children, and Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society of Bangladesh (OGSB) at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre. The session was organised on the second day of the 21st International Scientific Conference of OGSB that started on September 14.



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Man dies after being shot

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man shot by unidentified criminals on Sunday night in the capital's Shyampur died early yesterday.

The deceased Rana Sheikh, 30, was a resident of Shahidnagar of Shyampur.

Police quoting witnesses said a group of miscreants shot Rana on Mirhazirbagh Pipe Road around 8:00pm and fled the scene.

Locals rushed Rana to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), where doctors declared him dead around 12:35am yesterday.

Rana served five years in jail in connection with an arms case, his family members said.

Meanwhile, unidentified criminals shot a satellite cable service provider in the capital's Uttar Ibrahimpur.

Mofizur Rahman, 45, owner of Famous Satellite Network, was admitted to the DMCH with a bullet wound in his chest.

Police said they were looking into the incident.



Puddles, mud and potholes have been covering this road in Bhatara in the capital for long due to the negligence of the authorities concerned. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



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