

SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES Govt moves to step up railway security

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid the ongoing political unrest, the government has instructed Bangladesh Ansar and Village Defence Party (VDP) to deploy over 4,000 personnel along the rail tracks to prevent possible sabotage.

The home ministry yesterday issued a circular, signed by its Deputy Secretary Habibur Rahman, ordering the organisation to deploy the members at "vulnerable places" of 40 districts, an Ansar official told. The Daily Star, wishing not to be named.

"We are taking preparations for the deployment to prevent criminals from uprooting rail tracks and throwing all sorts of objects at trains," she said.

The official said the deployment would take place as early as possible.

The instruction came when road communications at many places have almost remained snapped since Sunday night, a day before BNP's planned rally in the capital for Monday marking the first anniversary of the 10th national election which it called "Democracy Killing Day".

BNP chief Khaleda Zia announced an indefinite nationwide blockade the moment she was barred from attending the rally.

During the ongoing blockade, criminals have carried out arson attacks on vehicles on roads in the capital and elsewhere that eventually prompted many to travel by trains.

Even though no arson attack on trains has been reported, the government made decision on the deployment to stop the recurrence of what had happened in 2013, added the Ansar official.

After the national election schedule was announced that year, criminals interrupted rail communications at many parts of the country by removing fish plates, uprooting rail lines, setting fire on those.

This severely hampered the rail communications on the Dhaka-Chittagong, Bogra-Lalmonirhat and Santahar-Natore routes.

Home ministry sources yesterday said the Ansar and VDP personnel would mainly be deployed in the areas where the rail tracks were attacked in 2013.



Two people rush to hospital after they were shot by police in Chaumohani of Noakhali yesterday. The firing took place when BNP-Jamaat men went on the rampage there. PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

No plan to call

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for the fifth day yesterday and law enforcers in huge numbers were seen deployed in front of the office main gate.

Water cannons, police vans and trucks were parked on both ends of the street in front of her office. The sand-laden trucks were removed from the main gate.

Road-86 of Gulshan-2, where her office is, was made off-limits to traffic and public.

She could not appear before a court yesterday in connection with two graft cases filed against her, according to her lawyers.

Several female leaders of the BNP yesterday morning managed to get out of Khaleda's Gulshan office.

Her security personnel were being allowed to enter the office.

A six-member delegation of University Teachers Association of Bangladesh, led by Prof AFM Yusuf Haider, also visited Khaleda yesterday. Senior journalist Mahfuz Ullah also visited her.

Talking to reporters outside Khaleda's office, Prof Yusuf said they were very worried about the BNP chief's health as the police had used pepper spray while she was talking to reporters on Monday at the gate of her office.

Sirajuddin Ahmed, of the

Orthopaedics Department of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, also visited her.

RIZVI DODGES

Rizvi Ahmed, who was picked up by plainclothes police at the BNP's Nayapaltan office and then admitted to Apollo Hospital in the city on Saturday night against his will, left the hospital dodging police early yesterday.

Referring anonymity, one of Rizvi's assistants told The Daily Star that he left the hospital around 3:30am and was now safe. He, however, refused to give Rizvi's whereabouts.

Talking to the reporters at the undisclosed location, Rizvi alleged that the government as part of its "evil intentions to kill Khaleda sprayed poisonous pepper spray on her" on Monday.

He called upon people to build strong resistance against the current "repressive" government.

Rizvi also condemned and protested the arrest of BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and demanded the government release him immediately.

Rizvi himself had cleared all his medical bills for his four-day stay at the hospital. The bill was within five digits, Mofizul Islam, duty office of the hospital told The Daily Star.

Khaleda skips

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Court-3, setup on the premises of Alia Madrasa in the capital's Bakshibazar, passed the orders after recording partial deposition of Harun-ur-Rashid, deputy director of the Anti-Corruption Commission and also the complainant of the case.

The court adjourned the proceedings of the cases until January 15. It, however, was yet to start trial of the Zia Charitable Trust graft case.

Khaleda's counsels prayed for more time, citing the BNP chief's confinement to her Gulshan office and her illness.

A skirmish broke out the last time Khaleda Zia attended the trial on December 24 with supporters of BNP and the ruling Awami League clashing for over an hour.

The BNP chief had sought protection in that regard.

However, Khaleda Zia has been confined inside her Gulshan office since Saturday night and barred from leaving the premises by law enforcers.

The government and police repeatedly claimed she was not under confinement and that the arrangement was made for her security purpose.

Sylhet mayor

FROM PAGE 16

Chairperson Khaleda Zia's former political secretary Harris Chowdhury, in the murder case.

The court came up with the order after the Criminal Investigation Department filed a petition seeking arrest warrants for the accused. All the accused were shown absconding in the third supplementary charge sheet submitted to the court on November 13.

On December 30, a Habiganj court sent Ariful, a BNP central committee member, to jail after he had surrendered before it in the Kibria murder case.

The same court on December 28 sentenced Gaus, also the general secretary of Habiganj district unit BNP, to prison after his surrender.

Dilip Kumar Banik, deputy director of the local government division in Habiganj, said they received the suspension letter of Gaus yesterday which was issued on Tuesday.

The order made Panel Mayor-1 Peara Begum, also a female councillor, acting mayor of Habiganj municipality with immediate effect, he added.

SAMS Kibria, then an opposition lawmaker, was assassinated in a grenade attack while addressing a rally in Habiganj on January 27, 2005. The blast also killed Kibria's nephew Shah Manzur Huda, local AL leader Abdur Rahim and two others.

Sun may

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"Solar activity at birth decreased the probability of survival to adulthood," thus truncating average lifespan, according to the paper published in the journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B.

There was a stronger effect on girls than boys, it said. The Sun has cycles that last 11 years, give or take, from one period of greatest activity or solar maximum, to the next.

Solar activity is linked to levels of ultraviolet radiation-- an environmental stressor known to affect survival and reproductive performance, possibly by causing cell and DNA damage, according to the study authors.

The team, from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, based their study on demographic data from church records of some 8,600 individuals from two different mid-Norwegian populations, one poor and one wealthy.

This was matched to maps of historical solar cycles.

On top of lifespan, being born in a solar maximum period also "significantly reduced" fertility for women born into the poor category, but not for wealthier women or for men, said the authors.

Ijtema begins tomorrow

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Talking to The Daily Star on the current political situation, a Murobbi, one of the organisers, said, "We hope both the ruling and the opposition parties will show tolerance to each other."

Those who went on the way of Allah would attend the Ijtema keeping faith in Him even if the blockade was not lifted, he observed. He, however, said the blockade would definitely make it difficult for devotees to come to the ground.

"We, a group of 48 people, arrived here today keeping faith in Allah. Our bus came under attack by picketers at Mohasthangar in Bogra," said Lutfor Rahman, 55, who along with other devotees left Dinajpur at 9:00pm on Tuesday and reached the ground at 4:00am yesterday.

He said their bus driver was wounded during the attack, but they continued on their path with the help of another driver.

"We are general people and we want to perform our Ijtema peacefully, for which opposition parties should lift the blockade considering our sufferings," said Md Jasim Uddin who came to the ground from Jamalpur.

The annual congregation will be performed in two phases -- January 9-11 and January 16-18 -- for the fourth time to ensure better management and security. Devotees from 32 districts will attend the first phase, while devotees from the rest 32 districts will join the second phase. Several million devotees are expected to join Juma prayers on Friday.

Organised by the Tabligh Jamaat, the congregation starts formally after Fajr prayers with religious sermons by Islamic scholars and prayers.

This year the number of foreign devotees was likely to increase, said Giyas Uddin, one of the organisers.

As many as 17,000 devotees from abroad attended the Ijtema last year, he added.

Additional Secretary to Home

Ministry Mostofa Kamal Uddin on Saturday said at Gazipur City Corporation they had given instructions to people of the Ebola-affected countries to take clearance certificates before coming to the Ijtema.

They would have to take one certificate from their respective countries and another from the Tabligh Jamaat before applying for visa, he added.

He further said they had opened a reception centre at the airports in Bangladesh for issuing on-arrival visas for the devotees.

Apart from the airports, committees had been formed for different land ports to issue on-arrival visas after proper examination, he added.

Superintendent of Police of Gazipur Harun-ur-Rashid said a five-tire security system would be in place at the Ijtema ground. Law enforcers would also patrol the Ijtema venue and plainclothes police would remain alert, he added.

There would be three helipads to carry sick or injured persons and VIPs, he said.

Commanding Officer of Rab Lt Col Tuhin Mohammad Masud said the elite force would also remain alert to ensure security at the Ijtema.

He said they would monitor the Ijtema through CCTV, watchtower, mobile courts, detectives, helicopter patrol and river patrol.

Different organisations would offer free medical services for devotees in case of emergencies.

Three hundred buses of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation will be used to carry devotees to the Ijtema ground from across the country.

Work was going on to set up seven floating bridges by today to cross the Turag river.

Executive Engineer of Gazipur City Corporation Mujibur Rahman Kajol said they had taken different initiatives to supply pure drinking water and arranged 4,000 public toilets at the venue.

Matarbari, Paira

FROM PAGE 2

600MW will be set up. The entire project is scheduled to be completed by June 2023, according to the project documents.

The total capacity of the power plants would be raised to 10,000 MW gradually.

In August last year, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council approved the country's most expensive power project.

About 1,500 acres of land have already been acquired for the project while the appointment of a consultant for the project is at the final stage. Besides, fencing of the acquired land is

going on, according to an official document.

The Paira seaport, the third of the kind in the country, will be built on a Public Private Partnership basis.

The authorities have stated that around Tk 15,000 crore will be required to complete the construction in five to seven years. The PM in November 2013 formally inaugurated the seaport and in October last year she invited the Dubai Port World authorities to conduct a feasibility study on the construction of the seaport at Paira in Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali district.

Fast track projects see mixed progress

FROM PAGE 1

LNG terminal in Maheshkhali.

Of the six, Padma Bridge project is making good progress. Rooppur project, which requires completion of two phases before construction starts, has received attention of the Prime Minister's Office, and so far seen good progress.

Similarly, the metro rail project has also made significant headway.

But the Rampal power project is lagging behind the schedule. The tender for the LNG terminal project has not yet seen the light of the day. And there is no visible progress on the deep-sea port project.

Against this backdrop, the PM yesterday held the third meeting of the Fast Track Project Monitoring Committee.

The \$4.5 billion Matarbari coal-fired power plant (capacity 1,200MW) that secured Japanese funding mid last year was placed under this committee as the seventh high priority scheme and the deep-sea port project at Paira of Patuakhali as the eighth fast track project.

PMO Principal Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder, who heads another committee on implementation of the projects, prepared a progress report on the projects.

"The monitoring committee has expressed its satisfaction at the progress of the fast track projects," Sikder told The Daily Star last week.

Among the projects, Padma multipurpose bridge and metro rail are making very good progress, while there is less advancement in construction of a thermal power plant at Rampal, he said.

PADMA BRIDGE

After going through many hurdles, the \$3 billion self-financed Padma bridge project finally kicked off last year. The project has so far seen 16 percent progress in construction of approach roads, rehabilitation and development of the project area.

During a recent visit, it was seen that construction work was going on in full swing on both banks of the Padma. Large cranes were brought there to lift heavy construction equipment. Big machines were being used for road construction

and expansion work.

Talking to The Daily Star, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said, "We are implementing the project fast so that people can use the bridge from 2018."

Though there have been conspiracies and propaganda against the project, Padma Bridge is no longer a dream but a reality now, he said.

METRO RAIL

The Tk 22,000-crore project got a major thrust upon receiving Japanese funding in February last. It is expected that the 20-km elevated rail project would be completed by 2020.

In November last, the government signed a contract with a consortium of consultants who would prepare detailed project design, supervise construction and help manage Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit Development Project, the official name of the metro scheme.

In December, the government enacted Metro Rail Act-2014 for the operation, control and regulation of the rail project.

Obaidul said tender would be invited this month for construction of the metro rail.

Basic design of the project is already done, and the government has secured 22 hectares of land for the metro rail depot, said the minister.

The process of appointing consultant is going on. Besides, the tasks of soil test of the MRT-6 route and detailed design of the project are also underway, said the minister.

Metro rail named as Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Line-6 route from Uttara to Bangladesh Bank will have 16 stations covering Uttara, Mirpur, Rokeya Sarani, Khamarbari, Sonargaon Hotel, Shahbagh, Doyel Chattar and Topkhana Road.

ROOPPUR NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

According to project officials, construction process of the 2,000MW nuclear power plant involves three phases. The first one has been completed; the second one is in progress as per schedule, and in some areas, ahead of the schedule.

The progress of the Russia-funded power project would have been faster if the total project cost was clear to Bangladesh. While

Bangladesh expects the 2,000MW nuclear power project to cost \$2-3 billion, Russia now hints that the cost may go up to a staggering \$10 billion.

"The project cost and financing modalities will be set by the highest level of leadership of the two states. This will not be on the basis of a commercial decision," said a project official.

The two countries are now developing a contract for completing the preparation for the plant's construction.

Russia's state-owned company Rosatom began working at Rooppur in mid 2013 and is now conducting a techno-feasibility study with a loan of half a billion US dollars.

Rosatomb's sister concern Atomenergoproekt, which is carrying out the study, has recently floated a tender for engineering survey, environmental monitoring and development of project documents for the Rooppur project site.

The \$18 million job will be completed by September, after which the plant's construction will begin.

"Until now, we are ahead of the stipulated tasks," Yeafesh Osman, state minister for science and technology, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Construction of the nuclear reactor would start in early 2017 with a target of completing it by 2020 so that the plant can start trial operation the following year, said the state minister.

LNG TERMINAL

In 2010, Petrobangla floated the tender for constructing a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal to facilitate import of 500 million cubic feet (mmcf) LNG per day from the Middle East.

The LNG would be very costly, but it would not only diversify the country's primary energy sources but also ensure that the gas-based industries and installations don't face a sudden death in the near future.

Petrobangla, however, failed to secure a solid bid and stuck to an incomplete offer from a Singapore-US joint venture.

As four years went by,

Petrobangla finally made a draft agreement with the joint venture. But the government didn't give approval, as it was found to be too sketchy. Nobody knows when the project would see the light of the day.

RAMPAL POWER PROJECT

While public outcry couldn't stop the government from proceeding with the 1,320MW coal-fired Rampal power project near the Sundarbans, the Indo-Bangla joint venture company failed to float the tender to select a contractor for arranging the finance and building the plant.

According to a high official of the company, the project's tender documents were still being refined.

Other sources, however, said securing at least \$1.7 billion finance for the project was a big hurdle, especially due to its proximity to the world's largest mangrove forest, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

DEEP-SEA PORT

Due to "strategic reasons", the government failed to make any headway with the Sonadia deep-sea port project in the last one year. There was a concrete proposal from China two years back, but Bangladesh didn't give it any concrete decision.

PMO Principal Secretary Sobhan Sikder said, "Deep-sea port would not be needed immediately."

The government is considering Paira of Patuakhali, instead of Sonadia, as the site for the proposed deep-sea port.

Two senior ministers told this newspaper that the PM discussed the project with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the Gono Bhaban a week ago when he visited Dhaka.

She stated that the government was considering building the port, involving at least three countries -- China, Japan and India -- among others.

The PM also wanted to involve the UAE-based Dubai Port World Authority and the government of the Netherlands in the scheme.

Bakhrabad Gas Distribution Company Limited
(A Company of Petrobangla)
Comilla, Bangladesh

Ref. No. 28.02.1900.011.53.303.14(Re-tender) Dated: 21.12.2014

জালালি নিরাপত্তা সর্বোচ্চ আধিকারিক শিল্পে প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস ও গৃহস্থায়ীতে বিকল্প জ্বালানি

Invitation for International Re-Tender

01. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/Energy & Mineral Resources Division.	
02. Agency	Petrobangla.	
03. Procuring entity name	Bakhrabad Gas Distribution Company Limited.	
04. Procuring entity district	Comilla, Bangladesh.	
05. Invitation for	Procurement of Different Sizes of Ball Valves & Relief Valves.	
06. Invitation Ref. No.	28.02.1900.011.53.303.14 (Re-tender).	
07. Date	21.12.2014.	

KEY INFORMATION

08. Procurement method	Open Tendering Method.	
09. Budget and source of funds	BGDCL's Own Fund, Cash Foreign Exchange.	
10. Time limit to selling tender document	From 08.01.2015 to 08.02.2015 during office hours.	
11. Tender last selling date	08.02.2015.	
	Date	Time
12. Tender receiving date & time	09.02.2015	12-00 noon
13. Tender opening date & time	09.02.2015	12-15 hrs.
14. Name & address of the office(s) - Selling tender documents	Tender document will be available in the following offices of BGDCL during office hours: a) Accounts Department, Head Office, Chapapur, Comilla, Bangladesh. b) Dhaka Liaison Office, House No. 222, Lane No. 15, Lake Road, New DOHS, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1206, Bangladesh.	
15. Receiving tender document	Purchase Department, Bakhrabad Gas Distribution Company Limited, Head Office, Chapapur, Comilla, Bangladesh.	
16. Opening tender documents	Purchase Department, Bakhrabad Gas Distribution Company Limited, Head Office, Chapapur, Comilla, Bangladesh.	

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

17. Eligibility of tenderer	All bonafide manufacturer(s)/suppliers are eligible. But they must have overseas track records/experience in supplying of Ball Valves & Relief Valves/similar types of goods for last 05 (five) years and related evidences must be submitted along with the bid(s).	
18. Brief description of goods or works	Different sizes of Ball Valves & Relief Valves.	
19. Price of tender document	US \$ 50.00 or Tk. 4,000.00 (non-refundable).	
20. Lot No.	Identification of lot	Tender security amount Delivery schedule
1	Ball Valves & Relief Valves	US \$ 3,200.00 or Tk. 2,50,000.00 60 days from the date of receipt of letter of credit

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

21. Name & designation of official inviting tender	Nurul Huda Deputy General Manager (Purchase).	
22. Contact details of official inviting tender	Deputy General Manager (Purchase), Bakhrabad Gas Distribution Company Limited, Chapapur, Comilla, Bangladesh. Tel: +880-81-68681, E-mail: dgm_purchase@bgdcl.org.bd	
23. Special instructions	a) Local tenderers are not eligible to participate in this tender. But this will not bar to work as local agent of foreign manufacturer/supplier. b) Should the submission date of tender happen to fall on holiday, tenders shall be received and opened at the same time & place on the first subsequent working day. c) BGDCL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.	

BG/1216-December '14 GD-57