



Explain remarks about Khaleda's eviction verdict

Apex court asks two HC judges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While hearing an appeal in a case, the Supreme Court yesterday asked two High Court judges to explain about one of their observations on an apex court verdict that had upheld the HC order to evict BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia from her previous residence in Dhaka Cantonment.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha asked Justice Sharif Uddin Chaklader and Justice AKM Shahidul Huq to explain about their observations before it by May 11.

In a verdict in the land-related case of one Bahauddin and others on November 21, 2013, Justice Sharif and Justice Shahidul said, "It may refer that relating to Begum Khaleda Zia's house when her registered deed was cancelled by [an] administrative order and we see, [the] said order was affirmed by the High Court Division as well as by the Appellate Division."

"This decision is the only decision of this sub-continent which was passed, not on law but on some other better law. As such that judgment as passed is per in curiam and that decision cannot be applied universally," said the judges.

The apex court asked the two HC judges about their observation on a suo moto (of its own) move while hearing the appeal filed by opposite party Joynab Bibi against the HC verdict in the land-related case.

Joynab included the two HC judges' observations in

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MOFA restricts its officials' interaction with media

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Apparently to restrict the media, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ordered its officials at the ministry, missions (except honorary consulates) and Foreign Service Academy to refrain from discussing official matters with the media.

In an April 8 office order signed by Director General (Administration) Md Allama Siddiki, it said an information flow system already existed, the External Publicity Wing, which regularly arranges press briefings and disseminates information.

The order, a copy of which The Daily Star obtained, said the decision was taken at the approval and instruction of appropriate authorities and warned of steps otherwise.



From a retreat of the local residents, Tantibazar Park in Old Dhaka has turned into a parking place of trucks over the last one decade, allegedly with the backing of the ruling party men. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Chirping replaced by honking

How many parks does Dhaka city need? According to rules, it should be 92, one for each ward. But we have only 54, with several of them having ceased to exist and many threatened. At least 10 parks have been replaced with a community centre, kitchen market, mosque, rickshaw garage or truck parking lot, mostly by the city corporation itself. This is the picture when an urban expert, Prof Nazrul Islam, says every 10,000 city residents need an open space of four acres -- park or playground -- for healthy development of children and prevention of diseases related to physical activities. The Daily Star reports how and why we are squeezing our breathing spaces in our metropolis where 15 million people cram. The first report of the series is published today.

HELEMUL ALAM

For one who has never been there before, or at least a decade ago, it would sound incredulous that once it was a park abuzz with children's whoops and a retreat for the adults to breathe some fresh air away from their hectic lives.

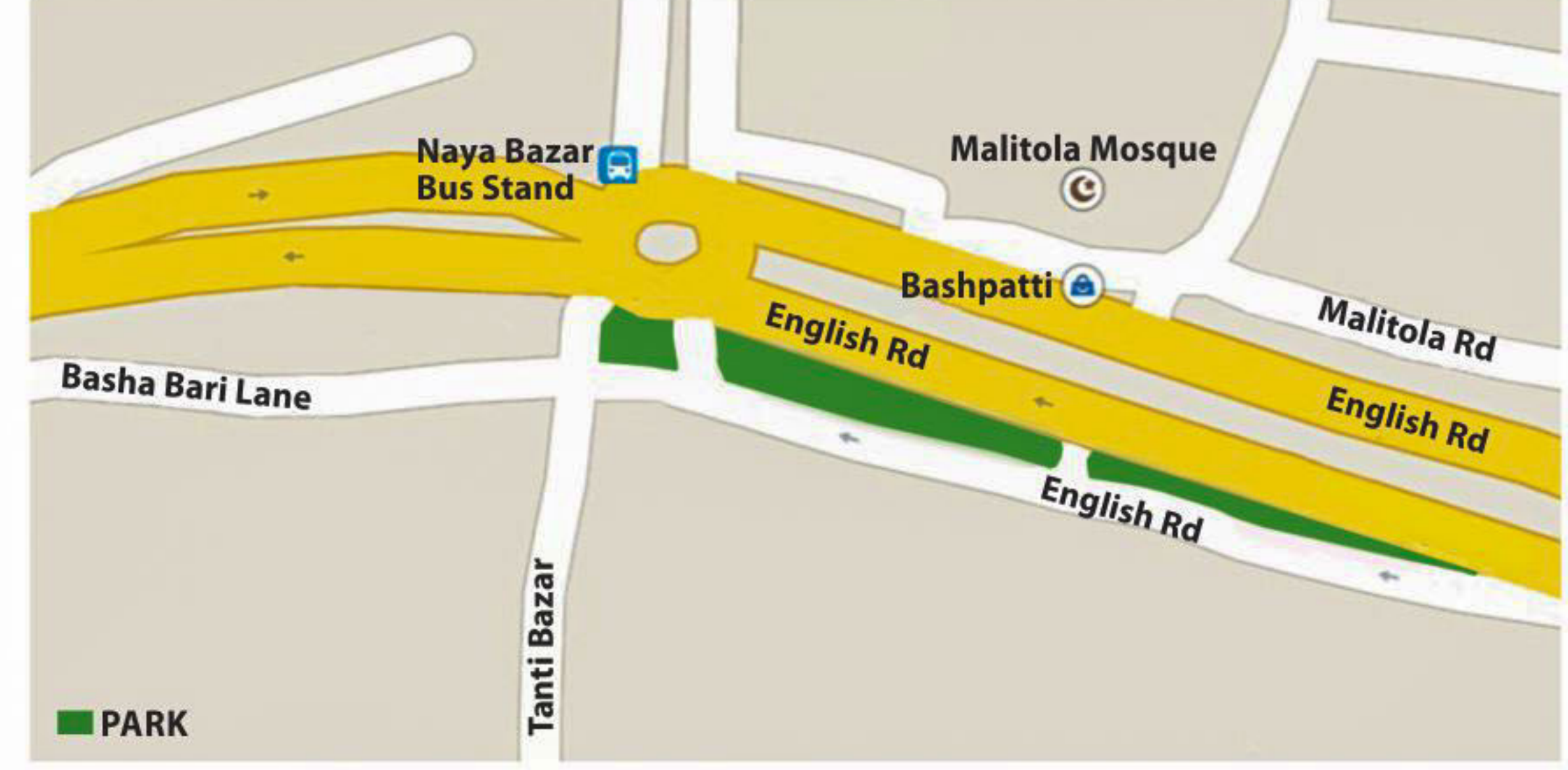
But for the last few years, it has been under occupation of some truck owners who are using it as a parking space. Routine chirping and hoots of children have been replaced by regular honking.

Even 10 years ago, Tantibazar Park was equipped with slides, swings, and seesaws -- a sight hard to come across nowadays in this busy city apart from mushrooming restaurants, said Kawsar Ahmed, a resident of Tantibazar.

A small portion of the park was beautified by Heritage, a private firm, in 2008, which somehow drops a hint about its earlier features. But, still locals do not dare visit the park due to the nuisance created by the trucks and pushcarts.

Earlier, the Dhaka city corporation used to dump construction waste in the park in the name of saving it from illegal occupation but the entire park went under occupation after clearing of the rubbish around two years back, said locals.

Md Shakil Ahmed, another resident, said, "I played in this park



D H A K A
PARKS IN PERIL
TANTIBAZAR
EST: 1980s
SIZE: 0.33 ACRES
WARD: 71 (OLD)

in my childhood. But our offspring are being deprived of the joy of playing outdoors, which is necessary for their healthy growth."

Another resident, Rajon, 40, added, "It was a very beautiful verdant park where around 400 children of Tantibazar, Malitola and Bangshal played every day."

Around 10 years ago, a road was constructed dividing the park into a big and a small portion. The small renovated portion looks good but parents do not feel safe to take their children there, said Rajon. Nor do health-conscious people and

diabetic patients choose to take a stroll due to the occupation, he added.

Sumon Das, also an inhabitant, said there is no place for recreation in the area, especially for children. The park is a blessing for the residents, and the authorities should free it as soon as possible, he thinks.

President of Dhaka Zila Truck Covered-Van Tank-Lorry Sramik Union, Joynal Abedin, said they keep their mini-trucks in the land as they do not have any other space. They have requested the government to give them a truck terminal

but to no avail, he added.

Trying to give a justification to the occupation, Joynal also said they are using the parkland now because earlier it was a place for drug peddling and prostitution.

An official at Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), seeking anonymity, said they had tried but were unable to evict the truck owners and drivers as they have backing of the ruling party people.

Chief Estate Officer of DSCC Khalid Ahmed said they will conduct an eviction drive soon to restore the park.

Chittagong about to experience farce

Say BNP leaders alleging intimidation, harassment by AL, law enforcers, EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The government is holding a farcical city corporation election in Chittagong as the ruling Awami League's cadres, aided by the Election Commission (EC) and law enforcers including plainclothes police and Rapid Action Battalion, have started intimidating voters and BNP men, alleged the party's leaders yesterday.

"They (police and the EC) did not even pay any heed to our complaints," Chittagong BNP President Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury told an emergency press conference at his Madhubagh residence.

"We apprehend that the vote will not be free and fair and people will not be able to exercise their democratic right to vote," added the chief polling agent of BNP-backed mayor candidate Manjur Alam Manju.

BNP men, especially polling agents and coordinators of polling centres, are being harassed and told to stay away from their localities till votes are cast, he said.

Many others have either been arrested or fled in fear, said Khasru along with BNP National Executive Committee Vice Chairman Abdullah Al Noman.

Both alleged that a large number of AL cadres from adjacent districts have gathered and were roaming in nearly all the wards intimidating voters since morning.

Even ministers, parliamentary standing committee chairmen and members and outsiders are staying at hotels

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RANA PLAZA COLLAPSE Family of each dead person should get Tk 14.5 lakh

Recommends army-led committee for determining compensations; permanently maimed, families of missing persons also to get same

ASHUTOSH SARKAR and AKRAM HOSEN

A committee led by general officer commanding (GOC) of 9 Infantry Division has recommended each family of the deceased and missing and permanently maimed persons (suffering spinal injuries and losing two or more limbs) of the Rana Plaza collapse be provided Tk 14,51,300 as compensation.

Persons who lost a limb should get Tk 7.5 lakh, requiring long term treatment Tk 4.5 lakh and suffering from post traumatic stress disorder Tk 1.5 lakh, said the committee's report, placed before the High Court (HC) last week.

Initially the compensation was set Tk 5 lakh higher for the deceased and missing and 25 percent more for the rest. But the committee decided against it at the insistence of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

The final suggestion came at the committee's fourth meeting at the 9 Infantry Division's Savar Cantonment headquarters on January 23, 2014 with GOC Major General Chowdhury Hasan Sarwardi at the helm.

However, the report noted that the recommendations were not applicable for similar incidents.

It suggested that the money can come from owners of the building and the factories housed there, BGMEA, and foreign buyers of garment products. The final decision rested on the government.

It termed aid, compensation and termination benefits different. "Persons who received compensations will get termination benefits from their respective institutions."

Moreover "assistance provided by different individuals or institutions" did not count. But that provided from the prime minister's office and other government-approved sources would be adjusted.

Other recommendations include providing free medical treatment and for BGMEA to provide similar jobs to workers of New Wave Style Limited, New Wave Bottom Limited, Ether Tex Limited, and Phantom Apparels Limited.

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NARAYANGANJ-7 MURDER Families, residents demand death for Nur Hossain

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Locals and relatives of the victims of the Narayanganj seven murders yesterday formed a human chain demanding capital punishment for main accused Nur Hossain who is yet to be extradited from India.



They also demanded inclusion of names of five people in the charge sheet. They said the five were accused in the FIR but later dropped from the charge sheet.

Abdus Salam, brother of one of the victims, panel mayor Nazrul Islam, at the human chain in Shiddirganj on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway said the investigation officer of the case dropped the names without interrogating them.

He further said they would continue their demonstration till Nur Hossain is put on trial.

On April 27 last year, seven people, including Narayanganj city panel mayor Nazrul Islam and senior lawyer Chandan Sarker, were abducted separately from Dhaka-Narayanganj Link Road. Their bodies were found floating in the Shitalakkhya River a few days later.

Selina Islam Beauty, wife of Nazrul, filed a case accusing ward councillor Nur Hossain and others. Bijoy Kumar Paul, son-in-law of the deceased lawyer, filed a separate case against unidentified persons.

On June 14, the key accused Nur Hossain along with three of his accomplices was arrested at Kaliakair in India.

Police submitted charge-sheet against 35 people, including former Rab-11 commander Tarek Sayeed Mohammad, on April 8 of this year. Twenty-two accused, including Nur Hossain, are in jail while the others are on the run.

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