



A road roller for repair of Dhakeshwari Road in the capital got stuck in a pit as the road caved in yesterday. The driver of the roller said the road is now in such a bad shape because there is inadequate sand under its concrete surface. Later, the roller was pulled by a wrecker. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

# Six kidnappers held for abducting UP chairman

'Befriended' criminals release him after realising ransom

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
A union parishad chairman has fallen victim to a kidnappers' gang that adopted a rather unique way to execute their abduction plan.  
The criminals first befriended Sadhan Chandra Das, chairman of Kolma union parishad under Bajitpur upazila in Kishoreganj, dupe him into coming to Dhaka with them and then took him hostage, impersonating members of Detective Branch (DB) of police, according to police.  
Six members of the gang were held from an apartment building in the capital's Badda area yesterday.  
The arrestees are Md Alauddin, 35; Md Selim, 32; Md Jahangir Alam, 45; Md Emdad, 32; Nikul, 27; and Masuma, 27.  
Senior Assistant Commissioner

Mahmuda Afroz Lucky of Dhaka Metropolitan Police led the drive following a case filed by Sadhan who alleged that he had been kidnapped by the gang in April and released only after paying a ransom of more than Tk 2 lakh.  
Earlier in March, Sadhan got a Tk 300 recharge on his cell phone. Soon after, an unidentified man called him to say the refill was sent to his number mistakenly, and requested him to return it. The chairman did it and then that person again called him and started praising Sadhan's honesty, according to police.  
This conversation led to many more such interactions between the two and the unidentified man earned Sadhan's trust. So much so that when the man offered Sadhan to send a car to bring him from Bajitpur to Dhaka on April 4, the chairman could not refuse it.

However, when the car reached Badda in the capital that day, the criminals abducted him and held him hostage on the fifth floor of a building there. Then they realised Tk 2.25 lakh from his family and released him on April 5; that too on the promise that Sadhan would send them another Tk 1 lakh later.  
On May 10, the victim filed a case with Bajitpur Police Station, and based on this, police started investigating the matter leading to the arrest of the gang from Dhaka, said to Officer-in-Charge Subrata Kumar Saha of the police station.  
The arrestees confessed to robbing people of their money and valuables by impersonating law enforcement personnel, according to Senior Assistant Commissioner Mahmuda Afroz of the DMP.

# Gambia offers to resettle Rohingya

**ALLAFRICA.COM**  
The Gambia government has offered to resettle the Rohingya people of Myanmar, a sovereign state in Southeast Asia bordered by Bangladesh, India, China, Laos and Thailand.  
In a press release aired by the state TV last night, the Gambia government has offered to resettle the Rohingya people, also known as boat people, in The Gambia.  
The release states: "The Government of The Gambia notes with great concern the inhumane condition of the Rohingya people of Myanmar, especially those referred to as boat people currently drifting in the seas off the coast of Malaysia and Indonesia.  
"As human beings, more so fellow Muslims, it is a sacred duty to help

alleviate the untold hardship and sufferings these fellow human beings are confronted with.  
"Therefore, The Gambia being a country with predominantly Muslim population and with a natural culture of interfaith tolerance hereby expresses willingness to accept and resettle all boat people who wish to reside in The Gambia.  
"In this regard we are appealing to all countries with a conscience to assist in bringing the Rohingya people to The Gambia for resettlement.  
"The Government of The Gambia further requests the international community to contribute towards the humanitarian gesture in the form of tents, beddings, household material, medicinal and other forms of requisite logistical support, to set up habitable camps with decent sanitary conditions for the Rohingyas."

# Philippines offers shelter

**FROM PAGE 1**  
In fear of arrest, the traffickers and crewmen abandoned a number of boats that were on the sea, leaving the victims in total uncertainty, according to IOM.  
The UN yesterday said at least 2,000 migrants stalked by hunger and violence have been trapped for weeks on boats off Myanmar, the UN said yesterday.  
Vivian Tan, a spokeswoman for the UN's refugee agency the UNHCR, told AFP they had received reports that at least 2,000 migrants had been "stranded on at least five boats near the Myanmar-Bangladesh coasts for more than 40 days".  
Reports of "food shortages, dehydration and violence" were a cause of "great concern", she added saying passengers should be allowed to disembark.  
But the boats are still controlled by people-traffickers who will only let passengers return to land after they have paid between \$180 and \$270

each, she added.  
Philippines Justice Secretary De Lima in a statement said boatpeople could be victims of persecution.  
She recalled the Philippines had its share of hosting asylum seekers in the past even before it became a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees that was adopted on July 22, 1981.  
Meanwhile, Asif Munier, spokesman for the IOM in Bangladesh, said following requests from Bangladesh government, the IOM has decided to repatriate the people rescued recently off Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.  
"[The] IOM is already registering them. But it will repatriate the Bangladeshis only after the Bangladesh government identifies them," he told The Daily Star.  
He said the inter-governmental agency had released an emergency fund of \$1 million to this end.  
**UN AGENCIES FOR PROTECTING MIGRANTS**  
The UNHCR, the OHCHR, the IOM

and Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children (SRSG) yesterday strongly urged Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand to protect the drifting migrants and refugees, give priority on saving lives and human dignity.  
In a joint statement yesterday, the UN agencies called on the leaders of the three nations to allow men, women and children on overcrowded boats to disembark safely.  
**'TRAFFICKING KINGPIN' HELD**  
Thailand yesterday arrested a suspected human trafficker, Pajjuban Angchotephan, also known by the alias of Ko Tong, after a brief manhunt along the Thai and Malaysian border, reports The Nation newspaper.  
Police rejected the bail plea of Pajjuban, a former local politician in Satun, and detained him at the Provincial Police Region 9.  
Police have also obtained arrest warrants for Pajjuban's wife, Thassanee, and a police officer based in Ranong, Lieutenant Narathorn Samphan.

# Chinese vice premier due on May 24

**DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT**  
Chinese Vice Premier Liu Yandong will arrive in Dhaka on May 24 for a three-day official visit to discuss with the Bangladesh leadership to advance high-profile visits between Dhaka and Beijing in the next few months.  
According to a formal announcement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Hong Lei yesterday said Liu would visit Bangladesh and Indonesia from May 24-31.  
At a regular press briefing, Hong said she [Liu], one of the four vice premiers, would make the visit at the Bangladesh government's invitation.  
Officials in Dhaka said the Chinese vice premier would arrive here on May 24 and hold meetings with President Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali when Dhaka would seek Chinese assistance in infrastructure development and cooperation in various fields.  
Dhaka and Beijing would ink several agreements in different areas of cooperation during her visit, she said.  
Liu may extend a formal invitation to Sheikh Hasina to attend an event to be arranged for selected Asian leaders on "One Belt, One Road" initiative to be held in China later half of this year.  
Diplomatic sources said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Chinese counterpart Li Keqiang would exchange visits likely in September-October this year.  
Dhaka is expecting that both Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang will visit Bangladesh to grace the programmes on the occasion of the 40 years of establishing diplomatic ties between Bangladesh and China.



Liu Yandong

# BTCL to lose \$25m loan

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Netas submitted its bid to prequalify with four-five others in the tender. BTCL repeatedly disqualified Netas from the process. At one stage it led to government arbitration, followed by a BTCL-initiated High Court case and finally a Supreme Court appeal. In all stages, the BTCL move was declared improper and Netas was found a prequalified bidder.  
According to official documents, the BTCL cancelled the tender in 2013 and floated a retender in the following year. KT Korea and Netas participated in it and Netas was technically qualified by a seven-member technical evaluation committee (TEC) assisted by a sub-committee in which the project's consultant Japan Telecommunication Engineering and Consulting Service (JTEC) is a member.  
Official documents show that while the BTCL floated the retender in February 2014, it had signed and

approved the official estimate of \$25 million on April 20, 2014. As per procurement rule, an agency must approve an estimate before it floats a tender.  
The BTCL managing director in June 2014 forwarded the evaluation to JTEC instead of tabling it before the BTCL Board of Directors. The JTEC then disqualified Netas mainly on grounds that the Power of Attorney of Netas was false.  
Keeping the board of directors out of the process, the BTCL chief then sought concurrence of Jica for selection of only KT on June 9. Jica did not accept it and sought BTCL's clarification. In response, the BTCL presented some documents showing anomalies of Netas which Jica found to be distorted. While this exercise continued till September, the Bangladesh embassy in Turkey and the foreign ministry confirmed that the Power of Attorney of Netas was authentic and notarised.

Soon afterwards the BTCL and its consultant JTEC in October and November separately reported to Jica that they have qualified Netas. They did not explain why Netas was previously disqualified. Jica immediately concurred selection of Netas and KT as qualified bidders.  
Finally late last year, Netas and KT's financial bids were opened. The tender evaluation committee found Netas bid to be cheaper by Tk 32 crore than that of KT and recommended awarding the job to Netas. However, the price offer of Netas was 22 percent above the initial project cost estimate of 25 million dollars. The TEC noted this issue but pointed out that in the retender the BTCL had increased the volume of work without revising the initial estimate. The TEC also noted that the BTCL can either reduce the scope of work by discussing it with Netas or seek extra fund from the government to carry out the task.  
Disregarding the TEC suggestions,

the BTCL MD again refused to award the job to Netas on grounds of elevated project cost. He turned to JTEC that once again disqualified Netas and recommended retendering the project. This note was sent to Jica for concurrence.  
Jica rejected the JTEC's recommendation and agreed with the TEC. It also suggested that BTCL might either arrange the additional fund, or negotiate with Netas to reduce the project cost by dropping some less necessary components.  
The BTCL Managing Director repeatedly wrote to Jica directly as well as through the Economic Relations Division (ERD) to agree to go for a retender and extend the loan period.  
Jica on May 7 wrote to the senior secretary of the ERD that "We cannot agree to your request for the extension of the disbursement period as a result of consultation with the government of Japan because, despite

our series of requests, the BTCL did not take possible measures admitted in the JICA Procurement Guidelines to complete with the Lot-B as early as possible for which they failed tendering before. Even granting that the disbursement period were extended, we cannot have a clear prospect of completion of the project within the extended period."  
"Therefore, we recommend you to take necessary actions/formalities expeditiously so as to make the maximum disbursement within the current period... we would also like to ask you to draw lessons from this example to avoid repeating similar cases in the future in consultation with the ministry of posts, telecommunications and Information Technology and BTCL."  
When contacted, BTCL managing director (in charge) Abu Sayed Khan said "I am fully aware of this development," but refused to comment on the issue.

# 30-day remand sought for Mirza Fakhrul

Shown held in 3 cases

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**  
Police yesterday sought 30 days' remand for Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir after showing the BNP leader arrested in three arson cases.  
Sub-inspectors Shafiqul Islam and Morshed Alam of Paltan Police Station, investigation officers in the cases, sought 10 days' remand for Fakhrul in each of the cases filed with the station in January.  
Metropolitan Magistrate Md Rashed Talukder fixed today for hearing the remand pleas and asked jail authorities to produce the BNP acting secretary general before the court.  
Meanwhile, another Dhaka court yesterday fixed July 21 for hearing charge framing against Fakhrul and 11 others in a bomb blast case filed with Motijheel Police Station in 2012.  
Of the three cases, the first one accuses Fakhrul and 28 others of vandalising and torching a bus in Gulistan on January 4.  
The second case alleged that Fakhrul and 49 other BNP leaders and activists brought out a procession and later set fire to a motorbike of a policeman at Fakirapool on January 5.  
According to the 3rd case, a BRIC bus was torched near Bangabandhu National Stadium on January 6 by a group of BNP leaders and activists including Fakhrul.  
On May 11, Fakhrul and 25 other BNP men were charged with hurling crude bombs at policemen and damaging vehicles in Shantinagar area in March, 2013.

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