

Gazipur City Mayor Mannan suspended

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Gazipur City Corporation Mayor MA Mannan has been suspended for being charged with criminal offences.

GCC received the suspension order signed by LGRD ministry Assistant Secretary AKM Anisuzzaman yesterday, said the city corporation Assistant Secretary Nezamul Haque.

Mannan was suspended after a Gazipur court accepted a charge sheet against him in a case filed with Joydevpur Police Station for an arson attack on a passenger bus in the city on February 4, said Nezamul citing the order.

The suspension has been made as per the Local Government (City Corporation) Act-2009, the circular stated.

Mannan, also an adviser of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, was arrested in his Baridhara residence on February 11.

Awami League leader and GCC panel mayor Asadur Rahman Kiron has been the acting mayor since the arrest.

HC directs jail authorities to admit Rizvi to BSMMU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the prison authorities to admit BNP Joint Secretary General Rizvi Ahmed to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) for proper treatment.

Rizvi's wife Anzuman Ara Begum filed a petition saying her husband has been suffering from different ailments, including diabetes and high blood pressure, and therefore he should be admitted for better treatment.

Petitioner's lawyer Sagir

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A polluted Gulshan Lake even after years of reporting and publishing of photos about the dismal condition of the water body in the swankiest neighbourhood of the capital, where some of the people whose blatant disregard brought the situation to this, actually live. *Inset*, one of the many sewer lines connected to the lake that are part of the reason of the savage pollution.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Govt high-ups for restorative justice to curb crime

They speak at two-day GIZ, DFID conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Government high-ups yesterday underscored the need for restorative justice, saying it would reduce crime, backlog of cases and overcrowding in prisons, save energy, money and time and bring peace and harmony to society.

Restorative justice is a mediation session under a trained facilitator between the accused and victim to provide reparation that can be agreed upon in place of prosecution, to prevent recurrence of an offence and to rehabilitate the offender through reconciliation with victims and the community at large.

The officials were addressing the

inauguration of a two-day international conference, "Restorative Justice: From Crime Prevention to Conflict Transformation" jointly organised by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and Department for International Development (DFID) at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in the capital.

"If we can prevent crime, our streets, homes and workplaces will be safer," said Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal.

He said research shows that there was little possibility for offenders to commit crimes again if they faced restorative justice. But, jailing increases chances of recurrence of a crime, he

added.

According to the minister, 69,719 offenders are now crammed in prisons meant for 34,681 persons.

The home ministry, GIZ and DFID have been jointly implementing a project, "Improvement of the Real Situation of Overcrowding in Prisons in Bangladesh" since 2008.

In this regard, GIZ Bangladesh has initiated restorative justice at community-level arbitrations so that local problems can be solved using local and community solutions.

It also has decided to introduce restorative justice in specific cases like those concerning small scale physical

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ASK worried over 'crossfire deaths' of errant pro-ruling party men

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), a rights body, yesterday expressed deep concern over the deaths of three ruling party affiliated political activists in "crossfire" between their cohorts and law enforcement agencies early Tuesday and yesterday.

In a statement, ASK urged the government to take effective measures against all criminals, irrespective of their political affiliations, following due legal process.

Pointing out alleged involvement of the party activists in two incidents of gunfire and another incident of killing, ASK said, "In recent times, the government has faced a lot of criticism for the activities of ruling party affiliated student and youth organisations."

Former Bangladesh Chhatra League leader Mehedi

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BCL MAN'S DEATH
Hazaribagh
AL calls
'encounter' staged

Wants punishment for
Rab officials involved

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Hazaribagh unit of ruling Awami League yesterday termed Tuesday's "gunfight" a "staged drama" that killed Arzu Miah, the thana unit president of Bangladesh Chhatra League.

They demanded punishment for those members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) who were involved in the incident.

Police and locals earlier told The Daily Star that Arzu

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Jubo League leader shot on Tuesday dies in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A ward-level Jubo League leader, who was shot in the capital's Tikatoli on Tuesday, died at Apollo Hospitals yesterday evening.

Unidentified criminals shot Abdul Mannan, 32, general secretary of Jubo League of ward-31 in Dhaka Metropolitan unit (south), in front of his house while he was returning from his drug-store along with a friend, and fled on a motorbike.

Mannan also had worked as an informant for Rapid Action Battalion, said police and Rab-3. The friend, Alamin, is absconding, said police.

Sources at Sir Salimullah Medical College Morgue, where the body was sent for an autopsy, said they found four bullet injuries in the body.

Baldha Garden Road nightmare for drivers

HELEMUL ALAM

The stretch of the road near Baldha Garden in Wari is not longer than 50 yards, but drivers are reluctant to use this small stretch due to its terrible condition.

The situation was made worse when authorities concerned, instead of carrying out repair works, covered up most of the potholes on the portion of the road with pieces of bricks. Moreover, the part of the road creates traffic congestion as vehicles are forced to move slowly on it.

Visiting the area this week, The Daily Star found one of the wheels of a truck stuck in one of the potholes not covered by bricks.

Nur Mohammad, helper of the truck, said the axle of the truck broke, leaving the vehicle stranded on the road. This inevitably caused traffic congestion.

Mohammad Mostafa, driver of a Dhaka-Narsingdi bus, said they regularly spend more than 30 minutes crossing this small part of the road due to its numerous potholes.

The condition of the road deteriorated

rapidly in the last one month, he added.

Sudip Kumar, sub-assistant engineer of Dhaka South City Corporation, zone-5, said they have already submitted a proposal of Tk 23 crore project to the LGRD ministry about 10 days back to repair the road that stretches from Sayedabad to Joykali Mandir.

He said they would begin repair works after getting the go-ahead from the ministry.

Meanwhile, the city corporation spent Tk 72 crore to repair the dilapidated road under the Mayor Hanif flyover amid public outcry and sufferings during rainy season last year.

It also spent Tk 7 crore more for development of a drainage system to put an end to waterlogging on the road.

Although the entire sum had been paid to the contractors, the road remains in the same dreadful state.

Many potholes along with mud and waterlogging at different points have made the road a hazardous one following days of rain.



A helper of a truck driver trying to put a support under a wheel of the vehicle which was stuck in a mud filled pothole and was only spinning on Baldha Garden Road in the capital's Wari yesterday, as the road not longer than 50 yards became muddy after the authorities concerned, instead of carrying out repair works, covered up most of the potholes with only brickbats.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

STAR WEEKEND in other news...

With a fresh new format, new writers and a new perspective, the *Star Weekend* has an array of interesting articles for you. This week our spotlight is on how a Teach for Bangladesh Fellow spends a day that is hectic and inspiring all at once. There is a Heritage piece on the first private school in the country - Pogose School. There is also a fascinating satire related to the VAT imposed on private university students. Don't forget your copy of *Star Weekend* tomorrow, Friday!



EC's Nat'l ID staff beat journos

Project deputy director justifies by claiming that reporting there requires permission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two journalists were assaulted by staff of the Election Commission's National Identity Registration Wing in the capital's Agargaon yesterday after a project's deputy director allegedly claimed they required permission to go there for news reports.

GM Mostafizul Alam and Ripu Ahmed, reporter and cameraperson respectively of Channel 24, said they went there around noon to gather information over allegations that people were suffering when trying to make corrections on their national identity cards and get replacements for lost ones.

"When we were interviewing people, some staff of the office came and asked to turn the video camera off. This triggered an altercation," said Mostafizul.

They along with the office's security personnel, forcibly took the duo to the office of Abdul Bari, a deputy director of the wing's Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services project, he said.

"Without even talking to us, Bari started shouting and asking who gave us permission to go there for news report," said Mostafizul.

A director (operation) of the wing, Mohsin Ali, hastily left the room seeing the chaotic situation, he added.

"At one stage, Bari asked his subordinates to snatch the camera... Around a dozen staff then started kicking, punching and slapping us indiscriminately," he alleged.

The attackers snatched and vandalised the camera and their cellphones and confined them to a room for around

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