



WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

LIFE
STYLE



PLANNED CITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Without access to basic infrastructure, South Asian cities fail to reap benefits of urbanisation

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'TALK WITH ISIS'

It's necessary to resolve crisis, says Dalai Lama

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HC pulls for road safety

Orders govt to remove structures close to highways, amend rules to set SSC as minimum educational qualification for drivers

HC DIRECTIVES TO CHECK ROAD CRASHES

- Establish a professional driving training institute
- Increase penalty for violating rules
- Include traffic rules in school syllabus to make students aware
- Highlight traffic rules in electronic, print media to raise awareness among citizens
- Make highways straight, demolishing blind corners

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered the government to immediately remove all unauthorised structures within 10 metres of highways, restore visibility of motorists at blind curves, and install speed-limit signs to prevent road accidents.

The court asked the government to have the relevant rules amended in the Highways Act, 1994, as well, so that no structures could be built within 10 metres of highways.

It also asked the authorities concerned to build central reservations on highways and underpasses at places where they were needed.

Delivering the judgment on a writ petition, the court ordered the amendment of relevant rules to set secondary school certificate (SSC) as the minimum educational qualification for drivers and it would be effective after five years.

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Three-wheelers -- motorised and non-motorised -- share the same lane of Dhaka-Tangail highway with fast buses, cars and lorries, despite a ban on three-wheelers on highways. Poor enforcement of traffic laws and lax monitoring allow the slow-moving vehicles to use the road with impunity and risking accidents. The photo was taken at Nagar Jalpai in Tangail recently.

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

TOP QUOTE

"If we're to succeed in defeating terrorism, we must enlist Muslim communities as some of our strongest allies, rather than push them away through suspicion and hate."

US PRESIDENT **BARACK OBAMA**, AT HIS OVAL OFFICE ADDRESS ON SUNDAY, ABOUT SAN BERNARDINO SHOOTINGS

Two major parties ignore women

AL nominates only 7, BNP one for mayoral race in 234 municipalities, EC criticised over gender-biased polls symbol

RASHIDUL HASAN and PANKAG KARMAKAR

They talk about women empowerment quite often, but the two major political parties picked only a few women for mayoral posts.

Out of 234 mayor posts in as many municipalities, the ruling Awami League nominated only seven women while its archrival BNP picked just one for the December 30 polls, according to the lists of candidates.

However, Jatiya Party (JP), Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, and Workers Party did not pick a single woman for mayor posts. The three parties fielded mayor candidates in over 93, 26 and nine municipalities respectively, said their leaders.

The AL, BNP and JP nominated 564 mayor hopefuls, while 17 other parties gave tickets to 147 aspirants.

As many as 1,223 mayor candidates filed nominations to contest the municipality elections. Of them, 711 will take part in the polls on party tickets while the rest as independents.

For the first time in the country's history, the municipality polls are going to be held on partisan lines.

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Most mayoral candidates businessmen

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and PANKAG KARMAKAR

Majority of the mayor aspirants in the upcoming municipality polls are businessmen and over half of them have educational qualifications of HSC or below.

Many BNP-nominated candidates are facing different criminal cases, while most of the ruling Awami League-blessed aspirants had been accused of crimes in the past, and are now either acquitted or the cases have been withdrawn.

The information was found in their affidavits submitted to the returning officers.

The Daily Star randomly checked affidavits of around 60 mayor candidates nominated by the AL and the BNP.

Of the 60 aspirants, four claimed that they are literate, six could not complete school education (class-V, -VI, -VII, -VII, and -IX), 10 aspirants passed SSC and 17 passed HSC. The rest completed graduation and post-graduation.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



PAKISTAN LYING, STILL

We present this part of our rebuttal of Pakistan's insolence with descriptions of Pakistani atrocities by the US Consul General Archer K Blood in his diplomatic cables to Washington in those fateful days in 1971. Consul General Blood vividly described the Pakistan army's genocidal attack on Dhaka city on March 25-26 in his cables.

Archer Kent Blood, a career diplomat, came to Dhaka in 1970 and was recalled to Washington before his tour was over because the US didn't want to anger Pakistan and jeopardize their efforts of opening a diplomatic dialogue with China. His career suffered greatly because of his telegrams.

Archer Blood received the Christian A Herter award in 1971 for "extraordinary accomplishment involving initiative, integrity, intellectual courage, and creative dissent."

Cables of genocide

INAM AHMED and SHAKHAWAT LITON

It was a pleasant dinner at American Consul General Archer K Blood's residence on March 25, 1971. The guests watched a movie "Cass Timberlane" about the consequence of a failed marriage.

Suddenly Blood received a phone call from a colleague who said students were felling trees on the street to block any

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



A conductor collecting fare in a BRTC bus solely for women in the city. This special bus service gives female passengers a sense of security and comfort but only a few such buses are in service. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: TRIBENI CHAKMA



Woes of women commuters

TAMANNA KHAN and TRIBENI CHAKMA

For Aliza Shikder, commuting between home and office is an everyday battle.

To fight her way through the city, the 25-year-old must wear a stern look and maintain a sharp tongue -- from finding a bus to getting a comfortable seat free from unwanted touch by male passengers to paying her fare.

"Often, I have to almost beg bus conductors to let me board when I come home after office hours," she told The Daily Star.

"Even if they allow us [female passengers] in, they charge us more than the stated fare," she alleged.

Aliza, who travels six days a week between Mirpur-12 and Purana Paltan around 7:00am and 6:00pm, takes private buses although a government-run women-only bus plies that route during the time.

These female-only buses, run by Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC), are safer for women in many ways than those run by private operators. But there are only a handful of them, making their service limited and slow.

"It stops frequently to pick up women and so I cannot reach my workplace before 9:00am," said Aliza, a private firm employee.

She stopped using the service after she had to get down from the BRTC women-only bus twice and use other vehicles to reach her office on time.

In Dhaka, there are some 41 lakh economically active population aged 15 years and above. Of them, about 12 lakh are women, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics Labour Force Survey 2010.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Uphold death penalty for Nizami

Attorney general appeals to SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam yesterday prayed to the Supreme Court to uphold the death sentence of war criminal Motiur Rahman Nizami.

Death sentence is Nizami's appropriate punishment as the Jamaat-e-Islami chief instigated the killing of civilians, including intellectuals, during the 1971 Liberation War by Al-Badr Bahini, an auxiliary force of the then Pakistan army, he said while placing arguments before the Appellate Division.

People of the country demand justice for the war martyrs, he added.

Yesterday was the 10th day of the hearing on the appeal filed by Nizami challenging his death penalty and other sentences handed down by the war crimes tribunal.

The SC pointed out defence lawyer Khandker

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