

# Move to clear footpath faces resistance

Hawkers, DSCC team clash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A clash broke out between hawkers and a Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) team during a drive to remove illegal makeshift shops from pavements and the underpass market at Gulistan yesterday.

The drive began around 1:00pm. Halfway through hawkers and their leaders obstructed it leading to the detention of one of them, said Executive Magistrate of the DSCC Khan Md Nazmus Soeb.

The portion of the underpass that should be kept free for pedestrians is occupied mostly by goods of the traders of the shops lined up on either side of the underpass.

The DSCC conducted the drive to ensure smooth movement of people through the underpass, Soeb said.

Along with a mobile court, magistrates of the city corporation went to conduct the drive, said Officer-in-Charge of Paltan Police Station Rafiqul Islam, adding that they didn't have police with them.

As hawkers tried to stop the drive, the team detained a leader of them and took him to Nagar Bhaban.

Hawkers of the market then

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Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu and Standard Chartered Bank Bangladesh CEO Abrar Anwar, centre, with noted cultural personalities, and photographers, lyricists and filmmakers during the launch of a music album and a photo-book from the winning entries of Standard Chartered-The Daily Star Celebrating Life at the Westin Dhaka yesterday. Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, was also present.

# Music album

FROM PAGE 1  
based film, photography and lyrics contest organised by The Daily Star and Standard Chartered Bank. It has become a major platform for photographers, lyricists and filmmakers to showcase their talent on themes connected to Bangladesh's heritage, successes and harmony.

The photo-book features the winning photographs from the contest of the last two years while the music album comprises songs written by the winners of the lyrics contest of 2015.

For an extensive coverage of the event, see today's Arts & Entertainment page (page 10).



**PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 28**

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
4:50	12:30	4:00	5:36	7:15

**JAMAAT** 5:25 1:15 4:15 5:41 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

# RAB-POLICE TENSION

## Police headquarters issues directives for personnel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The police headquarters has issued an 11-point directive to field-level policemen and Rab personnel asking them to communicate more and have respect for each other.

Benazir Ahmed, director general of Rab, on September 27 wrote a letter to Senior Home Secretary Mozammel Haque Khan about "misunderstandings" between the two forces. A list of six such incidents was attached to the letter.

In the letter, he complained to the home ministry about police excesses on Rab men and said the prevailing situation was so tense that it might go out of hand soon.

He requested the senior home secretary to take action against the people at fault and other necessary steps to avoid any unwarranted incidents.

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) is comprised of officials and employees of seven security and law enforcement agencies -- armed forces, border guards, police, Ansar and the coast guard.

Following the letter, police formed a three-member committee on October 9, with Deputy Inspector General (media and planning) AKM Shahidur Rahman as its head, to investigate the six incidents of "police excesses" against Rab members.

On October 24, police headquarters

issued the directives and asked police and Rab personals to work with an attitude of cooperation.

The directive threatened them with departmental action if unprofessional or impolite behaviour to a colleague was proved in an investigation following an untoward incident.

The headquarters letter of directives also asked police and Rab to try and avoid untoward situations and solve insignificant misunderstandings through discussions or through their respective authorities.

"On duty law enforcement agencies [RAB and police] will show due respect and behave in a professional way with each other after ensuring their identity," the directives said.

They would abide by the legal directives of the highest on duty or present official at the spot, it said.

In no circumstances a law enforcement agency personnel would take law into their own hands and defame or physically assault or use objectionable language against the personnel of the other agency, it went on.

It said while discharging duty, they must all be in their respective uniforms.

The unit in charge would arrange probe into an untoward incident that happens in a unit, it said.

Whatever be the situation, no comment could be made ridiculing another force, it added.

The letter containing the directives suggested improving interactions between the members of police and Rab. "The members of police and Rab will treat each other as colleagues instead of rivals and they will behave in a professional way ...," the directives read.

Meanwhile, Rab DG Benazir yesterday said he did not want to get into any "trap" by commenting on police claims that dead militant suspect Sarwar Jahan alias Abdur Rahman was a third-tier leader of "Neo-JMB".

Benazir at a press briefing on October 21 claimed that Sarwar was in fact Shaykh Abu Ibrahim Al-Hanif, the chief of "Neo JMB".

Five days later, Monirul Islam, chief of DMP's Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit contradicted his claim. "We have information that Abdur Rahman's [Sarwar] position was below the deputies of militant suspect Tamim Ahmed Chowdhury," Monirul said.

"I do not want to step into this trap. He [Monirul] is my junior officer, a beloved officer. I don't want to counter whatever he did," he told a TV channel after meeting the home minister yesterday.

He said at the meeting he had talked about the identity of the militant suspect based on facts and evidence.

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# Manner of an arrest termed insensitive

STAR REPORT

Criticism poured in from many social media users after Bipul Chakma, general secretary of Pahari Chhatra Parishad, was arrested when he was taking his ailing mother, a cancer patient, to hospital on Sunday.



Bipul Chakma

Bipul's mother Nirudevi Chakma, who fainted seeing the arrest of her son, died the next day at the Khagrachhari Sadar Hospital.

Since then, many Facebook users have been condemning the police action terming it "insensitive".

On Tuesday, the authorities freed Bipul on parole for seven hours to join his mother's cremation.

He was sent back to jail in the afternoon after the funeral service at the cremation ground of Buddharampara in Logang union of Panchhari upazila in Khagrachhari district.

Bipul was taking his mother to a Chittagong hospital on a microbus.

On the way, a team of Panchhari Police Station stopped the microbus and arrested him.

After his mother died, Bipul appealed to the district commissioner to allow him to join his mother's cremation. The DC granted him seven hours.

During the cremation, leaders of

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# No scope for talks with BNP on polls

Says Quader; Fakhrul criticises AL gen secy's comments, says dialogue a must

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday ruled out the possibility of talks with the BNP over the next elections, while the BNP said dialogue is a must for finding ways for holding fair and inclusive national polls.

"There is no scope for holding political dialogue with the BNP. It is the BNP who has spoiled the atmosphere for holding talks," Quader told reporters after a meeting with Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Harsh Vardhan Shringla at the Secretariat.

Quader said, "Why should there be discussions with the BNP? Did they [BNP] leave the path to dialogue open? It is the BNP who had closed the path."

In another programme, the AL general secretary said BNP's activities were limited to holding press briefings at its office.

On the next polls, the newly-elected AL general secretary said, "There is a constitution, and the election will be held as per the charter. There is no scope for bringing changes to the constitution in this regard, and the BNP will have to accept this."

Responding to a query about the BNP's participation in the next national polls, Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, said they had the chance to take part in the previous election, but they could not make the right

decision at that time.

"If they can't make the right decision about the upcoming polls, it will be a big mistake for them," he said.

About the Teesta river water-sharing deal with India, Quader said it would be resolved very soon, and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina might visit India in December.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir sharply criticised Quader for his comment that there was no need to hold any dialogue with the BNP, saying that holding talks is essential "for the sake of a credible and inclusive election" in the country.

"There's no other way but to hold talks for restoration of true democracy and for holding a free, fair and inclusive election in the country. An acceptable and effective way will have to be found for a free and fair election through discussions with all political parties," he added.

Fakhru made the remarks yesterday while talking to the media after placing wreaths at BNP founder Ziaur Rahman's grave with leaders and activists of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, the youth wing of the party, marking its 38th founding anniversary.

About Quader's comments, the BNP leader said, "The Awami League general secretary is naturally very excited as he has just been elected to the post. That's why he made such remarks."

# South Africa requested to return Aug 21 accused Tajuddin

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka yesterday called upon Pretoria to expedite the process of extradition of Maulana Tajuddin, a key accused in August 21 grenade attack case, who is reportedly hiding in South Africa.

The call was made when State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam met South African Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Nomandiya Mfeketo on the sidelines of 16th Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Council of Ministers Meeting in Bali, Indonesia.

In response to the call, the South African deputy minister reiterated her government's willingness to cooperate in this regard, said a foreign ministry press release.

The state minister also requested Mfeketo to actively consider opening up of South African resident diplomatic mission in Dhaka at the soonest to facilitate enhanced people-to-people exchange as well as exchanges between potential businesses between the two countries.

Shahriar also met Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop on the sidelines of the IORA meeting. He thanked the Australian government for adjusting their air-cargo restrictions and adhering to uniform mileposts for aviation security.

He informed Bishop that the government of Bangladesh was doing everything to ensure security in the country.

# Dead dolphins litter Kuakata

FROM PAGE 1

Apart from the agility and grace dolphins display in the wild, dolphins, like them, have enviable fishing skills.

"I've worked as a fisherman for 20 years," says Nurul Islam, 45, from Alipur village in Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila. "It's beautiful to see dolphin pods swim and jump out of the water. On our boat, the FB Mayer Doa, we never hunt dolphins; we seek hilsa fish. But we find many dolphins that died in fishing nets."

"There can be up to 50 dolphins in a pod," says another fisherman, Sha Alam, 40. "They're really charming to watch as they chase each other and play!"

"When we see a dead dolphin floating in the Bay of Bengal, we feel really sorry," says Md Forkan 35, a fisherman from adjacent Hazipur village. "Dolphins are a wonderful part of the sea."

According to conservationist Elisabeth Fahmi Mansur, seven species of dolphin, one porpoise and two whale species have been observed thus far in Bangladesh, making the country's waterways and maritime territory of global significance for cetaceans.

"Most fishermen consider dolphins as brethren," says Mansur, director of education and livelihoods at the Wildlife Conservation Society, Bangladesh. "With the exception of a few areas along the major rivers dolphins are not targeted. But fishermen know that dolphins indicate the presence of fish shoals which means nets are cast nearby. This practice increases the entanglement risk."

She notes that fishing nets are not the only danger. Declining freshwater flows and sea level rise, collisions with boats, water pollution and unsustainable fishing practices, especially the widespread fishing for juvenile shrimp, which depletes the dolphins' food source, are also threats. "But entanglement is by far the greatest risk to small cetaceans, worldwide," she says.

Meanwhile, back at the beach the dolphin carcasses are proving a nuisance. "We are really disturbed by the bad smell," says a tourist from Dhaka, Md Zahiduzzaman, visiting Kuakata with his family

of five. "Because of the dead dolphins we can't bathe as we'd planned. The authorities concerned should take immediate steps to keep the beach clean."

According to local Abdul Hakim Fakir, at least 25 dead dolphins have washed up on the beach in the eastern Gangamoti area in the course of two weeks. Most appear to be Irrawaddy dolphins. The number increases during hilsa season and unlike when fish wash ashore, the resident jacks and dogs can't be relied upon to polish off the carcasses: they don't eat dolphin. "Tourist numbers are decreasing because of the dead dolphins," says Abdul.


"The carcasses should be buried with lime or bleaching powder mixed into the grave," says Kalapara's livestock officer Habibur Rahman. "Otherwise there is risk tourists can be infected with bacteria or disease."

Kuakata's mayor and member of the local beach management committee Abdul Bareq Mollah says he is unaware of the issue. "Nobody informed me," he says. "I will take steps to bury the dolphins to ensure the cleanliness of the beach."

Through extensive educational outreach, the Wildlife Conservation Society Bangladesh is working towards better protection for dolphins, which would mean fewer carcasses on Kuakata Beach in the first place. There are hopes a new initiative, the Citizen Science Fishermen Safety Network, can help. "The initiative aims to obtain better information on fatal dolphin entanglements by engaging gillnet fishermen to monitor nets, rescue entangled dolphins and sea turtles and collect information on fishing practices," explains Mansur. "In exchange the fishermen are given a GPS navigation device, which can help them survive storms."

"To balance the conservation needs of highly mobile, long-lived and socially complex species like dolphins with growing human demands is a major challenge," says Mansur. "This challenge is especially acute in Bangladesh where fisheries are vital to food security and livelihoods, while in the process dolphins and other marine life are killed at almost certainly unsustainable rates." She strongly believes that well-managed protected areas for dolphins are crucial.


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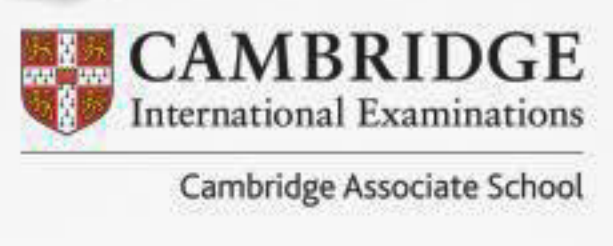


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