

2 Dhaka prison vans get online surveillance system

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid widespread allegations of irregularities during prisoners' transportation, the prison authorities yesterday introduced a web-based surveillance system in two prison vans, first of its kind in the country, which will monitor prisoners' activities from outside.

The vans having four CCTV cameras each will telecast live everything happening inside, giving the authorities an opportunity to take any immediate step, if needed.

Inaugurating the prison vans yesterday at Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said they are expecting the vans will ensure security during transportation of prisoners.

"If the two vans found effective, we will introduce more such vans to ensure surveillance of moving prisoners," he told reporters.

The minister said they introduced the prison vans so that militants and terrorists do not get any illegal facilities during transportation.

Moreover, the audio and video recording facilities will also monitor conversation among prisoners. The GPS tracking system in the vehicles will give real-time location of the vehicle, said jail officials.

The ten-seated small prison van with air-conditioning facilities will carry only VIP prisoners, while the other one that has a capacity of 40 people will be used to carry militants and terrorists between Kashimpur jails and Dhaka Central Jail.

Besides, the system will end the alleged exchange of money between criminals and cops over illegal facilities like food, use of mobile phones, carrying drugs and so on.

A prison official, preferring anonymity, said it was impossible in the past to monitor prisoners' activities

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Traffic halts after evicted hawkers demonstrate occupying the road in front of Jatiya Press Club. People suffered immensely yesterday as the traffic situation became unbearable also due to movement of presidential motorcade. The photo was taken around 11:00am.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

KARNAPHULI WATER SUPPLY PROJECT PHASE-1 IN CTG Old pipelines breed problems for Wasa

MINHAJ UDDIN, Ctg

The recently-completed Karnaphuli Water Supply Project Phase-1, which was supposed to ease the perennial water crisis in the port city, is itself facing a major challenge due to the leakages in the old pipelines of Wasa.

With the completion of the project Chittagong Wasa (Water Supply and Sewerage Authority) was ready to supply an additional 143 million litres of water in the city but the challenge has popped up before the inauguration of the project.

According to the Wasa officials, the additional flow of the water which Chittagong Wasa on a test basis started to supply with the earlier amount of 180 million litres on November 1 for 72 hours, created around 800 leakages in the old distribution pipelines across the city.

The Wasa authority has managed to repair more than 500 leakages but there are around 250 leakages yet to be repaired and more

leakages are appearing every day due to the pressure of additional water.

After completion of the new project -- which is likely to be inaugurated on February 12 -- Wasa was supposed to cover 70 percent of the daily demand of 500 million litres of water in the city by adding the new production to the earlier amount, Wasa officials said.

Currently Wasa is being able to supply only two-third of its production from its new project through the old and leak-prone pipelines.

Terming the old pipelines a major challenge, Managing Director of Chittagong Wasa AKM Fazullah on December 1 at the project site in Rangunia upazila's Pomra union said the pipelines are 40 to 60 years old and cannot bear the pressure of additional water.

"We are currently providing 90 to 100 million litres of water through the newly completed project and can supply up to 120 million litres. But if the full production of

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Vandalism at Ctg court to be probed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice SK Sinha yesterday formed a three-member committee led by Supreme Court Registrar General Syed Aminul Islam to probe the incident of vandalism at a Chittagong court on Wednesday.

The two other members are Sabbir Faiz, additional registrar of the SC's High Court Division, and Hussain Mohammad Reza, senior judicial magistrate of Chittagong, HC Registrar Abu Syed Diljar Hussain told The Daily Star.

He said the committee will enquire why the incident of vandalism took place, who are involved and submit the report to the chief justice. The committee was not given any specific limit for the report submission, he added.

On Wednesday, agitating lawyers reportedly vandalised a Chittagong court after it rejected a bail petition of their fellow lawyer and his wife in a human trafficking case.

The couple -- Jamal Hossain and his wife Yasmin Akhter -- were arrested at Shah Amanat International Airport on Tuesday in connection with helping two people, including a Rohingya woman, to go to Saudi Arabia with fake Umrah visas.

As the court rejected their bail prayer, the agitating lawyers vandalised the nameplate of the judge, windows of his chamber, ransacked the files at the courtroom and also scuffled with police.

Meanwhile yesterday, the SC asked the lower courts to immediately inform the SC registrar general about any unexpected incident taking place there.

The SC authorities issued a circular containing the directive saying that appropriate departmental action will be

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Address causes of fire

Suggest speakers at a roundtable on "fire hazards in urban areas", organised by the disaster science and management department of Dhaka University and Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence at the university senate building. The two mayors of Dhaka city, professors of DU, Buet, and representatives of Public Works Department, Department of Architecture, police, fire office, home ministry, Rajuk, Wasa, Titas Gas, UNDP, ActionAid, Oxfam and Save the Children also shared their insights. We publish here opinions of some of them.

CAUSES & CHALLENGES

- Mushrooming high-rises
- Faulty building structure
- Chemical storages in residential areas
- Traffic congestion, narrow road
- Water scarcity
- Inadequate numbers of fire stations, firemen

REMEDIES

- Fire resilient urban areas
- Capacity building
- More fire stations
- Strict measures against unauthorised structures
- Public awareness
- Skilled fire professionals
- Comprehensive approach

MAHDI AL MUHTASIM

DSCC Mayor Sayeed Khokon

We will start transferring the chemical storages of old Dhaka from March 1 this year. Also, after an incident of fire, probe committees are formed but the reports never gets revealed before public. It must be revealed within the shortest possible time. If the reason behind the fire is found to be sabotage, exemplary punishment must be given to the perpetrators.



DNCC Mayor Annisul Huq

We need 10,000 firemen for 1.5 crore people of Dhaka city but we have only 500 firemen. We have 13 fire stations while we need at least 50. We want practical suggestions and policy from the stakeholders to meet the challenges of fire hazards.



Chairman of DU Disaster Science and Management Dept Dr ASM Maksud Kamal

Comprehensive research and study is needed after any fire incident and based on it further work has to be done. We have to establish a fire academy for creating skilled and trained fire professionals. Public awareness is a must



and media needs to play a vital role in this regard.

Director General of Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence Brigadier General Ali Ahmed Khan

Safe and standard electric wires and fittings should be used and electrical system of a building has to be examined by skilled electrical engineers on a regular basis. The government is also working on establishing fire stations in every upazila.



Managing Director of Wasa Taqsem A Khan

Unabated encroachment and filling of ponds and canals of the capital by the land grabbers created a scarcity of water, which thwarts the firemen's effort of dousing the blaze immediately.



Editor of Amader Orthoneti Nayeemul Islam Khan

We have to arrange scientific sessions to scrutinise the source of fire hazards. Various sub-standard instruments are available in the market which causes deadly fire. Selling of those must be strictly monitored and stopped.



A prison guard stands in front of a prison van equipped with a web-based surveillance system at Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj. The jail authorities yesterday introduced two such vans, first of its kind, to monitor prisoners' activities during transportation. Inset, a CCTV camera installed inside a van.

PHOTO: STAR



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15 'traffickers' held, 10 victims rescued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) detained 15 alleged human traffickers including a lower tier staff of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in separate drives in the capital.

The elite force also rescued 10 victims who were allegedly gathered at a place for sending them to Malaysia and a migrant worker from Libya with the assistance of the Bangladesh embassy.

Rab-3 yesterday produced the arrestees and the rescued at a press briefing at its media centre in the capital's Karwan Bazar.

Lt Col Khandaker Golam Sarwar, commanding officer of Rab-3, said Rab conducted a drive at a restaurant in Baridhara on January 7 and detained three men in connection with human trafficking.

They also detained 12

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Chambers available for Doctors

(SIBL Foundation Hospital, Diagnostic & Dialysis Center)

SIBL Foundation Hospital and Diagnostic Center, a state-of-the art, Specialized 200 bedded General Hospital with 6 modular OT's & most modern diagnostic facilities established under Social Islami Bank Ltd (SIBL) offers some chambers for Professors & Associate Professors and Senior Consultants of different Clinical Disciplines. Interested Doctors are requested to book their chambers mentioning their convenient time at cell no. 01749543939 of Dr. Capt. (Retd) Zubair Mahmud, Deputy Director (operation) or at cell no. 01913088821 of Syed Mahbubur Rahman, Deputy Managing Director, Fattah Plaza, 70 Green Road (Near Green Road Panthapath Crossing), Dhaka.

Chambers shall be allocated at first come first serve basis.

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