

MOBILE COURT DRIVE

12 drivers jailed for anomalies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A drive against unfit vehicles and unlicensed drivers in the capital continued for a second day with three mobile courts handing down jail terms to 12 bus drivers yesterday.

Of the offenders, 10 got 15 days and two got 20 days.

Three mobile courts at New Market, near Victoria Park and opposite Notre Dame College in Motijheel imposed fines totalling around Tk 1.4 lakh and filed 61 cases against drivers and transportation providers.

Eight buses were also impounded for not having required documents and fitness, Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Estate Officer Debashish Nag told The Daily Star.

DSCC, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation and Dhaka Deputy Commissioner's Office are jointly conducting the drive.

Inaugurating the drive at Bangabandhu Avenue, Mayor Mohammad Sayeed Khokon told journalists that it would be continued in public interest. He blamed reckless driving by unlicensed and uneducated drivers for accidents and traffic jam.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina being welcomed by Indonesian Minister for Female Empowerment and Children's Protection Yohana Susana Yembise, and Bangladesh Ambassador in Jakarta Maj Gen Azmal Kabir, left, at the Halim Perdana Kusuma International Airport in Jakarta yesterday. PHOTO: PTD

AL intimidating BNP over next JS elections

Alleges Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday alleged that the government was trying to intimidate the party into contesting the next general election.

"A deep-rooted conspiracy is on to force BNP to contest the next general election. As per law, it is mandatory to join the polls. But the law was enacted for people. The law is meaningless if it doesn't ensure people's welfare," BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said.

He was addressing a discussion jointly organised by Bangladesh Student Forum and Northern Regional Student Forum at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, marking the "imprisonment day" of BNP Senior Vice Chairman Tarique Rahman.

Some senior Awami League leaders, including its General Secretary Obaidul Quader, recently said the BNP must join the next parliamentary election as its registration with the Election Commission would be scrapped if it doesn't do so.

Fakhrul yesterday said the government wants to win the next parliamentary polls by using tricks as "it did in 2014".

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North Korea fires 4 missiles

3 reach Japan waters; world powers condemn; China urges restraint

AGENCIES

Nuclear-armed North Korea launched four ballistic missiles yesterday in another challenge to President Donald Trump, with three landing provocatively close to America's ally Japan.

Seoul and Washington began annual joint military exercises last week that always infuriate Pyongyang, with the North's military warning of

its name for the Sea of Japan.

The missiles travelled around 1,000 kilometres and reached an altitude of 260 kilometres, said a spokesman for South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, adding they were unlikely to be ICBMs.

Regional and world powers lined up to condemn the launches.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said three of the North Korean

tolerate this."

Pyeonggang carried out two atomic tests and a series of missile launches last year, but yesterday was only the second time its devices had entered Japan's EEZ.

After an emergency meeting of South Korea's National Security Council, acting president Hwang Kyo-Ahn called the North's nuclear and missile provocations "immediate and real threats" to his country.

"Considering the North Korean leadership's brutality and recklessness shown through the murder of Kim Jong-Nam, the results of the North having a nuclear weapon in its hands will be gruesome beyond imagination," he said.

Seoul has blamed Pyongyang for the killing of the half-brother of the North's leader by two women using VX nerve agent at Kuala Lumpur's international airport last month.

Hwang called for "swift deployment" of a US missile defence system, THAAD, a proposal which has infuriated neighbouring China, the North's key diplomatic protector and main provider of trade and aid.

BIG, BIG PROBLEM

In Washington, the State Department condemned the launches, saying the US was ready to "use the full range of capabilities at our disposal against this growing threat".

"We remain prepared -- and will continue to take steps to increase our readiness -- to defend ourselves and our allies from attack," acting spokesman Mark Toner said in a statement.

Close tanneries

FROM PAGE 1 liquid waste from the 47 units now operating in Savar. Another 107 units are supposed to be relocated to Savar from Hazaribagh.

Waste, generated in the test run that began after the Eid-ul-Azha in October last, is discharged into the river.

The Department of Environment tested the water of the river and found the waste was not treated properly. Conducted on January 5, the test found more than 80 microgram of salt along with other pollutants in one litre of the river water.

Following a meeting with Bangladesh Tanners Association and Bangladesh Finished Leather, Leather Goods and Footwear Exporters Association, the secretary of the Ministry of Industries on March 1 announced that all the factories would have to be moved to the estate by March 31, 2017, as the tanners missed several deadlines.

Meanwhile, industries ministry lawyer Rais Uddin Ahmad told this correspondent that 43 of 155 tanneries have moved to the Savar estate.

The project of the Savar Tannery Industrial Estate including its ETP is almost ready, he added.

Following a writ petition, filed by Bela, the HC on June 23, 2009, directed the tannery owners to relocate to the estate by February 28, 2010.

The HC on October 30, 2010, extended the deadline until April 30, 2011, Bela's Chief Executive Syeda Rizwana Hasan told The Daily Star.

During the hearing yesterday, the HC observed that setting up of the central ETP at the estate was at the final stage. So the time has come for passing a firm decision to this effect, she said.

Rizwana said Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, senior secretary to the industries ministry, on January 1 told the press that no raw hides would be allowed to enter Hazaribagh after January 31, 2017, and no tannery would be allowed to operate there after March 31, 2017.

Bela, on January 3, submitted the writ petition saying that the industries secretary had no authority to extend the time for relocating the tanneries from Hazaribagh without permission from the HC.

After holding hearing on the petition, the HC yesterday directed the DG of DoE to immediately close the tanneries at Hazaribagh and sever their utility connections.

On March 2, another HC bench directed 154 Hazaribagh tannery owners to pay the government Tk 30.85 crore as fine within two weeks for polluting the environment and failing to relocate their factories to the estate.

In July last year, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court ordered that every tannery owner must pay Tk 10,000 a day for damaging and polluting the environment in the area and also ordered the owners to move their businesses to Savar.

During the hearing of a contempt petition on March 2, the HC bench of Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam and Justice Ashish Ranjan Das said the tannery owners would face serious consequences if they did not deposit the due compensation into the state funds.

The Daily Star failed to reach Bangladesh Tanners Association President Shaheen Ahmed for comments last night.

Tigers look

FROM PAGE 1 skipper Mushfiqur Rahim scored the country's first double-hundred.

But four years have elapsed since then, and that match has very little bearing other than the intangible confidence Bangladesh can draw from a rare good performance on the island. Sri Lanka's legends Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene have departed, and they are a team in transition led by the sole survivor of that match, left-arm spin wizard Rangana Herath.

Bangladesh, on the other hand, while retaining their core group, have since graduated from perennial Test whipping boys for whom Galle 2013 was an aberration into one that can be expected to compete. The teams are much more evenly matched than they were four years ago.

There have also been additions to that core that can serve them well on this trip, both among players and coaching staff. Two of those players -- Mustafizur Rahman and Mehedi Hasan Miraz -- are expected to be playing for the first time together, and both have taken the world by storm in the little time that they have been international cricketers. Mustafizur's story is well-known and he will be expected to continue on that trajectory when he returns with red ball in hand after a gap of more than a year and a half from Test cricket. Off-spinner Mehedi will be expected to show similar qualities on an expectedly spin-friendly pitch that saw him take 19 wickets in his debut Test series against England last October.

The coaching staff with head coach Chandika Hathurusingha, batting coach Thilan Samaraweera and trainer Mario Villavarayan, is a predominantly Sri Lankan one and according to Herath, will be a definite advantage for the tourists.

As for team composition, the one big change is that Mushfiqur will not be keeping wickets, which means a return to the Test side for Liton Das for the first time since June 2015. That also means that one of the regular batsmen -- most likely Sabbir Rahman -- will miss out today.

Mushfiqur, while speaking at the pre-match press conference yesterday, provided enough clues to provide a shape to the bowling line-up, with four bowlers including all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan all but confirmed.

"The type of bowler he is, Mustafizur will make them work hard on this wicket. Many of them [Sri Lanka batsmen] are going to play him for the first time, which we have seen is difficult for any batsman. We also have Taskin Ahmed, but we have to make sure to grab the opportunities that come our way.

With the skipper also indicating that Mehedi will be in the side, it remains to be seen whether Bangladesh go in with two pacers, with left-arm spinner Taijul Islam completing a three-man spin attack, or whether they will plump for three pacers with one of Rubel Hossain, Subhashis Roy or Kamrul Islam Rabbi taking the third seamer's spot along with Mustafizur and Taskin.

The pitch, according to both captains, is likely to aid the spinners with help on offer, and according to Mushfiqur, to pacers on the first two days. Herath thought that it will be good for batting on the first two days. Mushfiqur seemed to be hoping that the scorching Galle heat will cause the wicket to break up quicker, which will play into the hands of his spinners, provided of course that he calls rightly at the toss and bats first, which seems to be a no-brainer here.

Making the decision trickier is the forecast, with rain predicted from the second day onwards, which might in turn contribute to the wicket holding together for longer than anticipated.



"merciless nuclear counter-action".

Under leader Kim Jong-Un, Pyongyang has ambitions to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capable of reaching the US mainland -- which Trump has vowed will not happen.

Seoul said four missiles were fired from Tongchang County, North Pyongan province into the East Sea --

missiles came down in Tokyo's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) -- waters extending 200 nautical miles from its coast, reported AFP.

"This clearly shows North Korea has entered a new stage of threat," Abe told parliament.

The North's repeated launches "clearly violate UN Security Council resolutions", he said. "We can never

Pollution kills 17 lakh children

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh Paediatric Association, said many of the children suffer from various diseases linked to environmental pollution.

"It is high time the government gave more attention to child health.

"Sometimes, we find that the same patients, who face respiratory problems in Bangladesh, get better when they stay abroad."

The first WHO report says, "A large portion of the most common causes of death among children aged one month to five years -- diarrhoea, malaria and pneumonia -- are preventable by interventions known to reduce environmental risks, such as access to safe water and clean cooking fuels."

Globally, more than one in four deaths of children under five is attributable to unhealthy environment.

"Every year, environmental risks -- such as indoor and outdoor air pollution, second-hand smoke, unsafe water, lack of sanitation, and inadequate hygiene -- take the lives

of 1.7 million children under five years," the WHO says.

In a statement on the WHO website, its Director-General Dr Margaret Chan said, "A polluted environment is a deadly one -- particularly for young children.

"Their developing organs and immune systems, and smaller bodies and airways, make them especially vulnerable to dirty air and water."

The second report revealed that children are at an increased risk of diarrhoea and pneumonia in households without access to basic services, such as safe water and sanitation, or that are smoky due to the use of unclean fuels, such as coal or dung for cooking and heating.

"Children are also exposed to harmful chemicals through food, water, air and products around them. Chemicals, such as fluoride, lead and mercury pesticides, persistent organic pollutants, and others in manufactured goods, eventually find their way into the food chain," it said.

The report said harmful exposures

can start in the mother's womb and increase the risk of premature birth.

"Additionally, when infants and pre-schoolers are exposed to indoor and outdoor air pollution and second-hand smoke, they have an increased risk of pneumonia in childhood, and a lifelong increased risk of chronic respiratory diseases, such as asthma."

It also said exposure to air pollution may also increase their lifelong risk of heart disease, stroke and cancer.

In the State of Global Air Report 2017 released last month, Dhaka ranked the second city in the world with the worst air pollution, which claims 122,400 lives in Bangladesh a year.

Bangladesh and India experienced the steepest increase in air pollution levels between 1990 and 2015, it said.

Air pollution is the leading environmental cause of death worldwide, and 92 percent of the world's population lives in areas with unhealthy air, mentions the report.

fuel efficiency, the company said.

For example, a 3D-printed spoiler may weigh less than half its cast metal counterpart.

Ford added that 3D printing is not yet fast enough for high-volume manufacturing, but it is more cost efficient than traditional manufacturing at a low-volume production level.

The new 3D printer system is housed at Ford Research and Innovation Centre in Dearborn, Michigan.

Crude bombs thrown

FROM PAGE 1 two machetes and Tk 7,500 from his possession.

The arrestee, who introduced himself as Mostafa Kamal, 25, of Mymensingh, was in the custody of Tongji police.

The other attackers fled.

Police said Kamal "admitted" that he threw bombs at the vans for Tk 10,000.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan told The Daily Star last night, "Two crude bombs exploded near the prison vans. We have arrested an attacker. We are looking into the motive and trying to find out who were behind it."

The incident happened amid intelligence reports that Huji men were planning to snatch away Mufti Hannan and his associates in an ambush on prison vans like the Trishal-styled ambush three years ago.

"We had intelligence that militants had carried out a recce and communicated with prisoners inside jails while making a plan to snatch away Hannan," Deputy Commissioner of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CITC) unit of the DMP Mohibul Islam told The Daily Star.

Mizanur Rahman, senior jail super of Kashimpur High Security Jail, said four prison vans had taken prisoners, including Mufti Hannan and some other militants, to a Dhaka court for hearing yesterday. "We were not officially informed about the van that came under the attack."

A top CITC official, wishing anonymity, said the van carrying Hannan was the target.

Two weeks ago, the CITC unit arrested three suspected militants Abu Bakar Siddik Mahmood, 22, Javed Hossain, 19, and Saleh Ahmed, 49, in Shahjahanpur and Mohammadpur in

the capital.

They also divulged a plan to carry out a Trishal-styled ambush to snatch Mufti Hannan and other top Huji leaders.

On February, 23, 2014, an armed gang ambushed a prison van and snatched away three convicted JMB militants -- two of them on death row -- in Mymensingh's Trishal upazila, killing a policeman.

One of them was captured in Tangail soon afterwards and killed in a "shootout" with police.

The Supreme Court on December 7 last year upheld death penalties for Hannan and two top Huji leaders for carrying out a grenade attack on then UK envoy in Bangladesh Anwar Choudhury in 2004.

Hannan faces 24 other criminal cases, including those filed in connection with the August 21, 2004 grenade attack on an Awami League rally on the capital's Bangabandhu Avenue. The attack left 24 people killed and around 300 injured.

The 24 cases are now under trial. Hannan has to travel to different courts for taking part in hearings.

On April 30, 1992, the Huji appeared in Bangladesh through a press conference wearing sleeveless olive jackets over their shalwar-kameez.

The militant leaders sat shoulder to shoulder during the press conference at the Jatiya Press Club and boastfully described how they fought in the Afghan war. They demanded that Bangladesh be turned into an Islamic state.

In 2002, the US blacklisted Huji as an international terrorist organisation. It took the then government three more years to ban it on October 17, 2005 after repeatedly denying about its existence in Bangladesh.

Giant 3D printer

FROM PAGE 1 printing for automotive applications and requirements."

The printer is capable of producing parts of practically any shape or size, the car company said.

To produce a 3D car part, the desired component is first designed using a computer programme.

Specifications for a part are then transferred from the programme to the printer's computer, which analyses the design.

The device then gets to work, printing one layer of material at a time, gradually stacking layers into a finished 3D object.

When the system detects the raw material or supply material canister is empty, a robotic arm automatically replaces it with a full canister.

This allows the printer to operate unattended for days at a time.

Car parts produced by a 3D printer are lighter and could lead to greater