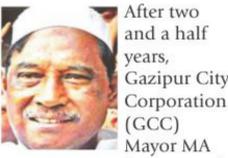


Gazipur mayor resumes office after two and half years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur



After two and a half years, Gazipur City Corporation (GCC) Mayor MA Mannan yesterday resumed office after the Supreme Court on May 31 paved the way for him to discharge his duty.

"I was harassed several times as false cases were filed against me. I fought a legal battle and got the chance to serve the people of the city corporation again," Mannan told reporters after resuming office. "I will talk to the city corporation officials and will try to complete the tasks on priority basis," he said.

Thousands of BNP leaders and activists thronged the city corporation area to welcome the mayor.

Mannan, who was elected GCC mayor on SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



The road under Mayor Hanif Flyover near the capital's Jatrabari intersection is in a terrible state. The road has developed potholes at many places, making it difficult for vehicles to ply the street smoothly. Rain and waterlogging in recent weeks have worsened the situation, adding to the plight of city dwellers. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Geological survey must before dev work in hilly areas

Experts tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The recent landslides in five districts took place due to a failure of the administration, said leading geologists, anthropologists and disaster management experts yesterday.

They said the state's policy and political attitude towards Chittagong Hill Tracts paved way for the disaster there, as the government has failed to tackle the calamity and its aftermath. To prevent recurrence of such incidents, the experts called for preserving natural forests and building infrastructure by conducting a proper geological survey.

They were addressing a roundtable on "Pahardhosh: Ken Ki Koronio" (Hill slide: why, and ways forward), organised by Prothom Alo at the newspaper's office in the capital. Prof Humayun Akhter of Geology department of Dhaka University said landslide is a natural phenomenon but people's ignorant activities had acted as a catalyst for the recent disaster.

Geological aspects of the hilly areas have to be noted carefully while building infrastructure there, he recommended. Former chief forest conservator Yunus Ali said geological and ecological aspects of the hilly areas were overlooked in the development model which had been in use for the CHT since 1976.

Prothom Alo Editor Matiur Rahman, who moderated the event, said fear of fresh landslides still remained in the CHT areas due to incessant rain in the last six days. He further said it should be figured out whether the disaster occurred only because of excessive downpour. Gawher Nayeem Wahra, director of Disaster Management and Climate Change at Brac; Philip Gain, a development activist; and Khairul Islam, country director of WaterAid Bangladesh, also spoke.

CCC 'cutting' hill to make road

MINHAJ UDDIN, Ctg

A large portion of a hill in South Khulshi area of port city has allegedly been razed under the direction of the Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) to make a road.

However, CCC officials claimed that they did not flatten any hill rather used a portion of land owned by a person beside the hill to build the road.

On the other hand, Chittagong Institute for Development of Education and Research (CIDER) trust claims that the hill was owned by them.

Vice Chairman of CIDER trust Nader Khan in a written allegation, sent to the Department of Environment (DoE) in May, said around 200 to 250 people led by a contractor on May 18 gathered in the area

and started cutting the hill. "When they were asked to stop, they became aggressive and said it would be a road of the CCC."

The workers said the road is being made under the direction of Mohammed Hossain Hiron, councillor of ward-13 (Pahartali), said Nader.

"The next day, after measuring we found that around 11,232 square feet of the hill had been flattened for the road," he alleged.

DoE official Khandakar Mohammad Tahajut Ali said they had recently visited the area and found evidence of hill cutting. They also issued a show cause notice to Hiron.

The razed portion of the hill falls in the Bangladesh Survey Marks 3,908 and 3,911, classified as hills in the government SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Amid allegations of hill cutting, the work for building a road continues. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Reinstate pre-2008 demarcation lines of constituencies

BNP urges EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday demanded that the Election Commission reinstate the delimitation lines of constituencies which existed before the demarcation ahead of the ninth parliamentary election.

"We urged the chief election commissioner to scrap the existing demarcation lines of the parliamentary seats. We submitted a letter to the CEC to this end," said Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain, the party's standing committee member.

The army-backed caretaker government redrew the boundaries of constituencies in 2008, which is not justified, he told The Daily Star.

A BNP delegation led by Mosharraf met CEC Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad yesterday to discuss election-related issues including updating the voter list.

The CEC assured the party of taking necessary measures following rules.

Abdul Moyeen Khan, another standing committee member, and Capt (ret) Sujauddin, BNP chairperson's adviser, were also in the SEE PAGE 5 COL 7

BUDGET DISCUSSION IN PARLIAMENT Ministers under fire for price hike, VAT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lawmakers from the opposition Jatiya Party criticised the finance minister for raising VAT and commerce and food ministers for their "failure" to control the price hike of rice and other essential daily commodities.

Taking part in a discussion on the proposed budget for 2017-18 fiscal, Ruhul Amin Hawlader said imposing a 15 percent VAT ahead of the next general election was suicidal.

"The way the government is burdening people with VAT is unexpected. People are frustrated...at the budget," the JP secretary general said. He said Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed and Food Minister Qamrul Islam failed to keep the prices of essentials under check.

"Our commerce minister is a seasoned politician, but he has failed to control the price hike of essentials, especially in the month of Ramadan." "How come the lowest price of 1kg of rice crosses Tk 50? It seems the government is indifferent," he said.

Hundreds of crores of taka have been laundered and looted from banks, he said. "But it seems the government has failed to take any SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

NO END TO BLOODSPILL ON ROADS

Accidents claim ten lives

CITY DESK

Ten people were killed and 21 injured in road accidents in five districts yesterday and on Saturday.

In Madaripur, three people were killed and 18 others injured when a BRTC bus collided head-on with a mango-carrying truck on Dhaka-Barisal highway in Kamaldi Bridge area of Rajor upazila yesterday morning.

The deceased are Shovo Ghos, 22, of Shariakandi area in Bogra, Saidur Rhaman Khan, 40, of Gourmudi in Barisal, and Gias Uddin, 45, of Madaripur Sadar.

Two of them died on the spot while another on the way to Rajor Upazila Health Complex Hospital. The injured were also admitted to the hospital. In Pabna, two people were killed and three SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



As Eid is only a week away, capital's New Market is buzzing with shoppers. The photo was taken yesterday.

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