

Two flyovers at Dhour and Gabtoli on cards: Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has taken a plan to construct two flyovers at Dhour and Gabtoli points for reducing traffic congestion in the capital, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader told parliament yesterday.

Responding to lawmakers' queries, the minister said the government will implement the second phase of Dhaka Circular Route touching Teromukh, Abdullahpur, Dhour, Birulia, Gabtoli, Babubazar, Postogola, Fatullah, Chashara and Demra.

"The government has a plan to construct two flyovers at Dhour and Gabtoli points on the proposed route. Feasibility study and detail design of the two flyovers are going on," Quader said in a scripted answer.

In addition to this, a 700-metre-long flyover will be built at airport turning point on Banani-Joydebpur highway under Greater Dhaka Sustainable Urban Transport Project, the minister said, adding that another 600-metre-long six-lane flyover will be built at Jasimuddin turning point.

Meanwhile, Quader yesterday told the House that occurrence of road accidents in the country has significantly reduced compared to other countries in the world as the government has taken various steps to contain road accidents at a tolerable level.

"According to a World Health Organization [WHO] report in 2014, Bangladesh secured 109th position out of 172 countries, whereas it placed 90th in the previous WHO report in 2011, meaning that road accidents have drastically reduced," Quader said replying to queries.

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The road beside Dhaka Medical College Hospital has turned into a parking spot for pickups. The vehicles also block access to the adjacent footpath. In addition, open garbage containers and waste dumped all around it cause nuisance to locals. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Myanmar operations have 'hallmarks of genocide'

Says UN official about atrocities against Rohingya AP, Seoul

The UN special envoy on human rights in Myanmar yesterday said the Myanmar military's violent operations against Rohingyas bear "the hallmarks of a genocide."

Yanghee Lee told reporters in Seoul, where she is based, that she could not make a definitive declaration about genocide until a credible international tribunal or court had weighed the evidence, but "we are seeing signs and it is building up to that."

Her briefing described her recent visit to refugee camps in Bangladesh and other areas in the region to discuss the Rohingya, a persecuted Muslim minority in Myanmar. Nearly 700,000 Rohingyas have fled their villages into Bangladesh since the

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It'll choke free speech

Says left-leaning parties about draft of Digital Security Act 2018 demanding its annulment; TIB calls for the same

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rejecting the draft of the Digital Security Act-2018, several left-leaning parties yesterday demanded that it should be repealed immediately.

The party activists will also hold a rally in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club on Sunday to press home their demand.

The leaders of the left-leaning parties including Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal and Ganatantrik Bam Morcha said this at a press conference at Mukti Bhaban in the capital.

Terming the proposed digital security

act a gag on freedom of expression, they said this act would protect the corrupt.

"This act... would indirectly give indemnity to the corrupt," said Mujahidul Islam Selim, president of CPB.

He said there is a Right to Information Act in the country. The draft of digital security act is against it. "We will continue our movement and won't let the government pass it in the parliament."

Saiful Haque, general secretary of Biplobi Workers Party, said the act would be a huge barrier to investigative journalism.

Mushrefa Mishu, convener of

Ganatantrik Bam Morcha, read out a statement, saying that the draft was formulated without taking any opinion from any quarters of the society.

The draft act is contradictory to the constitution and democratic rights, it added. If the act is passed, it will choke freedom of expression.

The speakers said section 57 of the Information and Communication Technology Act was kept in the proposed law with some changes, despite assurances in the past of eliminating the controversial provision.

Section 57 deals with defamation, hurting religious sentiments, causing

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Survey excluded local water bodies

Tarabo municipality residents tell public discussion on detailed area plan for capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Representatives and residents of Tarabo Municipality at a public hearing yesterday demanded that the severe water logging in the area be resolved by identifying and conserving all water bodies under the upcoming detailed area plan (DAP) for the capital city.

The municipality, having over 1.5 lakh population and covering 24.60 square kilometres of area, is known for its weaving industry of world-famous Jamadani saris.

The area remains under water for the most part of the year as a significant portion

of water bodies and wetlands in the area have been filled up, said locals.

All the water bodies in the municipality including canals and storm drainage systems as well as the river Shitalakhya have to be conserved by conducting errorless field survey, mapping and incorporating land use provisions in the Narayanganj-Narsingdi Augrani Irrigation Scheme (NNAIS), they also demanded.

Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk), the official custodian of Dhaka's master plan, organised the public discussion at the municipality as part of updating

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Dr AM Shamim, managing director of Labaid Limited, and Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, pose after signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Star signs MoU with Labaid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Daily Star and Labaid Ltd signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) at the Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

Under the deal, the employees of The Daily Star and their dependents will enjoy discounts on all pathological and biochemistry investigations in all branches of its diagnostic centres and hospitals across the country.

Managing Director of Labaid Group Dr AM Shamim and Editor and Publisher of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam signed the MoU.

Assistant General Manager (corporate communication) of Labaid Group Saifur Rahman Lenin and General Manager (finance and admin) of The Daily Star Mizanur Rahman were also present during the signing ceremony.

ZIA CHARITABLE TRUST GRAFT CASE

ACC had no jurisdiction to file it: Defence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission had no jurisdiction to file the Zia Charitable Trust graft case, in which BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is one of the four accused, a defence counsel said yesterday.

Aminul Islam also told the Special Court-5 that the prosecution failed to prove that money came to the trust through "illegal and corrupt means", and thus all the accused should be acquitted.

Judge Md Akhteruzzaman of the court recorded arguments for the third day yesterday before adjourning the case proceedings until February 25 when the defence would resume their arguments.

"This is a private trust. It's my decision where I'll keep my money... the ACC has no jurisdiction to file a case over the trust issue," said Aminul. "The case is not the subject matter of ACC, and thus all the accused should be acquitted."

He said the caretaker government, which came to power after the BNP-led government,

did not find any irregularity in the trust, but the "irregularities" were found when Awami League came to power in 2009.

ACC, represented by the prosecution, could not tell the sources of the money deposited to the trust. The money actually came from party leaders and donors, he said.

"The prosecution has to prove that the money came from illegal sources and I [for instance, an accused] have abused power [to obtain the money]. Until the prosecution is able to prove this with evidence, the case must fail," he added.

Citing several High Court and Supreme Court verdicts of Bangladesh and India, Aminul said there must be evidence on record that the accused obtained any amount of money through "illegal or corrupt means".

He said the prosecution alleged that the money came to the trust from illegal sources but did not say where the money came from. None of the prosecution witnesses said the trust took money from them, he

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Muggers stab mobile banking rep to death

Another hurt in similar attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A sales representative of bKash mobile banking was stabbed to death by muggers travelling in a car in the capital's Uttara yesterday.

Al Amin, 26, was stabbed twice in the thigh and chest. He died due to profuse bleeding, police quoted doctors as saying.

Around 10:30am, three muggers intercepted Al Amin at Sector-5 and tried to snatch a bag full of cash he collected from different bKash agents, said Sub-inspector Aminul Islam of Uttara Paschim Police Station.

Refused, the muggers stabbed him and snatched the bag, he said.

A man and woman tried in vain to resist the muggers, said the SI.

Police could not confirm how much money was in the bag.

He was declared dead in a local hospital. Al Amin, hailing from Jhalakathi, lived in Mirpur-2.

Meanwhile, three muggers riding a motorcycle stabbed another bKash sales representative and snatched his bag in the

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ATTACK ON POLICE, VAN Two BNP leaders held

Ex-JCD president, 60 others remanded

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested two BNP leaders in the capital's Shahbagh and Paltan area last evening for their alleged involvement in attacking policemen and vandalising a prison van in the High Court area on Tuesday.

The arrestees are Kazi Rawnaqul Islam Tipu, BNP forest and environment affairs assistant secretary, and Refayet Ullah, president of Savar municipality unit of BNP.

Meanwhile, former Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal president Azizul Bari Helal and 60 others were remanded in three cases filed for assaulting police.

Earlier on Wednesday, a Dhaka court sent BNP leader Gayeshwar Chandra Roy to jail and remanded 54 others after they were produced before in the three cases filed with Ramna and Shahbagh police stations.

They were arrested as part of a

police crackdown on BNP leaders and activists that started after BNP activists attacked police and snatched two fellow activists from a prison van in High Court area on Tuesday.

On that day, several hundred BNP leaders and activists were accompanying a motorcade of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia while she was returning home after appearing a court at Bakshibazar.

Of the 61 accused, Helal and 32 others were remanded for five days each in a case filed with Ramna Police Station over assaulting policemen and preventing them from discharging their duties in front of BTCL crossing on Tuesday.

The remaining 28 BNP activists were remanded for two days each in the other two cases filed with Shahbagh Police Station for assaulting policemen, ransacking a prison van and preventing policemen from discharging their duties in front of Kadam Chattar on that day.



A senior citizen cautiously walks down the stairs to avoid a fall. Every day, many people use this awfully dilapidated staircase to get on and off the Second Buriganga Bridge (Babu Bazar). The photo was taken near Mitford Hospital in the capital recently.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON