



Two parrots playfully sing to each other atop a sunflower. In the early morning, parrots venture into this open garden in the Diabari area of Uttara in the capital to feast on sunflower seeds. Afterwards, they flutter around the garden, playing with one another. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

HSIA'S 3RD TERMINAL

Bangladesh seeks revised proposal from Japan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has called upon the Japanese side to promptly submit a revised proposal on the operation and maintenance of the third terminal at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka.

The request was made during a meeting between the Civil Aviation and Tourism Affairs Ministry, Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB), and a Japanese delegation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday, meeting sources said.

The issue is expected to be discussed again at another meeting, likely to be held by the end of March.

After nearly a year, the two sides resumed talks in a renewed effort to turn the long delayed third terminal operational on a win-win basis.

Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman, Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Afroza Khanom Rita, Prime Minister's Foreign Affairs Adviser Humayun Kabir, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism M Rashiduzzaman Millat and State Minister

for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam represented Bangladesh during the negotiations, among others.

The Japanese delegation included Charge d'Affaires of the Japan Embassy in Bangladesh Takahashi Naoki, and Assistant Vice Minister of Japan's Ministry



of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Rieko Nakayama, along with other senior officials.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed a proposal presented by the Japanese delegation regarding the

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

SEMI-AUTOMATED TRAFFIC SIGNAL SYSTEM IN DHAKA

Pilot project shows promise, but delays stall wider rollout

Poor road discipline among drivers remains a key challenge

HELEMUL ALAM

On a recent Thursday afternoon, traffic pressure was high at the Sonargaon intersection in Dhaka. Although buses were stopping and moving according to traffic signals, traffic police were still using hand signals to manage traffic.

The scene reflects both the progress and limitations of Dhaka's newly introduced semi-automated traffic

buses stopped in the middle of the road to pick up passengers, slowing traffic flow and wasting valuable green-light time.

"As timings are maintained both manually and automatically, the system is working well," said Traffic Sergeant Omnit Chowdhury. "Vehicles do not have to wait long because the signals

traffic movement in the area has improved significantly since the system was introduced, he added.

FRUSTRATION OVER PROJECT DELAYS

Despite the positive results at the intersections where the system has been installed, experts say the project has faced major delays.

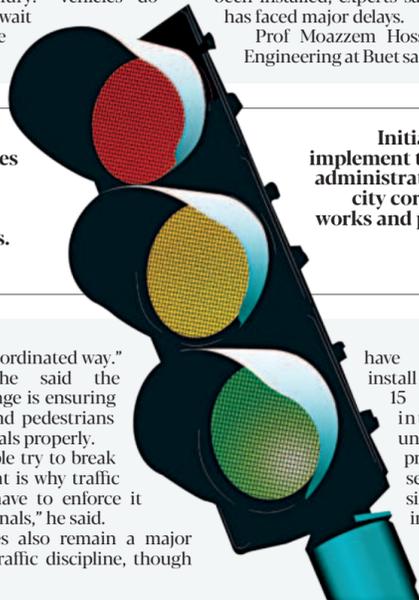
Prof Moazzem Hossain of Civil Engineering at Buet said authorities

results were very good. But we couldn't implement the rest because of procurement complications, administrative changes and changes of engineers," he said.

According to him, the two city corporations were responsible for completing the civil works and preparing sites for installation. However, they have yet to finish the tender process or award contracts for

As timings are maintained both manually and automatically, the system is working well. Vehicles do not have to wait long because the signals operate in a coordinated way. However, many people try to break the signal. That is why traffic police often have to enforce it using hand signals.

Omit Chowdhury, Traffic Sergeant



Initially, the results were very good. But we couldn't implement the rest because of procurement complications, administrative changes and changes of engineers. The two city corporations were responsible for completing civil works and preparing sites. However, they have yet to finish the tender process or award contracts.

Prof Moazzem Hossain, Civil Engineering, Buet

signal system.

Since the system was introduced at several intersections under a pilot programme, traffic congestion has eased somewhat. However, many drivers and pedestrians still ignore traffic lights and try to move or cross during red signals, forcing traffic police to intervene manually.

During a visit to the intersection, it was also observed that some public

operate in a coordinated way."

However, he said the biggest challenge is ensuring that drivers and pedestrians follow the signals properly.

"Many people try to break the signal. That is why traffic police often have to enforce it using hand signals," he said.

Public buses also remain a major challenge to traffic discipline, though

have failed to

install signals at 15 additional intersections under the pilot project in the seven months since its inauguration.

"Initially, t h e

all locations.

"Because of procurement and administrative complications in such an important project, we lost around seven to eight months," he said.

Under the pilot project, Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) was supposed to implement signals at 14 intersections, while Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) was responsible for eight.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

'It's completely unacceptable'

41 eminent citizens, Gonotantrik Jukta Front, Udichi protest condolence motion for war criminals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of 41 eminent citizens, the Gonotantrik Jukta Front, and the Bangladesh Udichi Shilpigoshthi yesterday strongly condemned a condolence motion in the 13th Jatiya Sangsad that honoured "Razakars (collaborators of the Pakistani army)" and others convicted of crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War.

They described the motion as a grave insult to the spirit of the Liberation War and demanded immediate corrective action.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Doctors decide brain surgery for Mirza Abbas

UNB, Dhaka

A medical board has decided to perform brain surgery on Prime Minister's Political Adviser and BNP Standing Committee member Mirza Abbas, who is undergoing treatment at Evercare Hospital in the capital.

"After reviewing all reports, the medical board decided to carry out brain surgery on Mirza Abbas. He was taken to the operation theatre a short while ago at around 3:10pm," BNP Health Affairs Secretary Dr Rafiqul Islam told the news agency yesterday.

He said a medical board formed with specialist doctors took the decision considering the critical condition of the BNP leader.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 7



Dreams crushed under wheels

Engineering student loses leg after being pushed from train by muggers

MONJURUL HAQUE, Gazipur

The third-year civil engineering student at Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology (DUET) had boarded the Lalmoni Express from Joydebpur Railway Station on the night of March 5.

He was heading to his father's rented home in Dhaka's Motijheel from the university campus in Gazipur. It was meant to be a routine journey home.

It became the night that changed his life forever.

Nur Mohammad Nayeem, 23, lost both legs after being pushed from the moving train during a mugging. His attackers fled with his bag containing a mobile phone, a laptop and academic documents, leaving him beneath the wheels.

Today, the DUET student lies in a hospital bed at the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR), his dreams of becoming an engineer are now overshadowed by a long and painful recovery.

Nayeem used to live in a university dormitory at DUET. His father, a security guard at a building in Dhaka, lived in a rented house in Motijheel.

His mother, Nurunnahar Begum, sat beside him at

SEE PAGE 9 COL 7



Dhaka sees sudden hailstorm

STAR REPORT

Sudden hailstorms hit parts of the capital yesterday, accompanied by strong winds and rain.

Sourav Sarkar, a resident of Dhaka's Bashundhara Residential Area, told The Daily Star that the rain started suddenly in the evening, causing inconvenience for people who were out for Eid shopping.

Omar Faruk, a meteorologist at the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, told The Daily Star, "This is similar to the strong winds that come with a nor'wester. However, it is not long-lasting. It rains for an hour and then stops again. There may be hailstorms."

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh-Pakistan ODI cricket match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur was temporarily halted due to lightning and thunder.



Cars, motorbikes and CNG-run autorickshaws move through a sudden hailstorm that hit parts of the capital yesterday. Strong winds and rain accompanied the hail, though the storm lasted only about an hour. The photo was taken in the Farmgate area.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON