

Include environment, socio-economic issues in coal policy: Experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts yesterday called for incorporating environmental and socio-economic issues in the country's coal policy to avert any possible disasters during or after the extraction of coal from the mines.

suggest possible means to make them mandatory for the coal companies. The internationally renowned water scientist also recommended community-based monitoring system for environmental aspects during the coal extraction.

disadvantages of the open pit and underground mining, the mining engineer said, "These are just the two ways of mining and we cannot choose the system, rather it depends on the soil structure. For instance, Phulbari requires open pit mining, while the Barapukuria requires underground."

CONSTABLE MURDER Hearing in case against Mirza Abbas, 5 others begins today

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The hearing in the constable Abu Naser murder case against Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas, his brother Mirza Khokon and four others will begin at a Dhaka court today. Judge Mohammad Momin Ullah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's (MSJ) Court will hear the case if the accused appear before it, court sources said.

Routes to Shaheed Minar, Azimpur Graveyard



Make all probe reports public: Dr Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gono Forum and Jatiya Oikya Mancha President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday demanded of the government to make public all investigation reports on the series of bombings and killings that terrified the entire nation. Referring to the killing of a teacher at Rajshahi University, he also alleged that the government is patronising the killers instead of punishing them.

'Launch mass awareness campaign against POPs'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a national workshop yesterday urged the government and NGOs to launch a mass awareness campaign highlighting the negative effects of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), a class of toxic chemical substances that can harm human and environment.

Eviction of old buses, trucks begins in Mar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eviction of more than 20-year-old diesel-run buses, minibuses and trucks from the city will begin next month in a bid to keep its air free from pollution. Mobile courts will work in different parts of the capital under the joint supervision of Department of Environment, Bangladesh Road and Transport Authority (BRTA) and Metropolitan Police to identify and phase out the age-old vehicles.

Mobile courts filed 87 cases against old vehicles emitting nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide and sulfur dioxide that pollute city air. The meeting also discussed amending the Motor Vehicles Ordinance 1983. Emerging from the meeting, Tariqul told The Daily Star that the government is taking the initiative to phase out outdated motor vehicles to keep the environment of the capital free from pollution.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of journalist AZM Haider will be held at his residence at Dhanmondi Road No-6, House No 24 in the city after Maghrib prayers today, says a press release.

Build a world free from conflicts

President tells int'l youth summit

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday called upon the young generation to acquire adequate knowledge to build a brave new world free from conflicts by facing the recent challenges. "I want these fresh minds to spread in every corner of the world with the message of unity, brotherhood and togetherness," he told a summit meet of youths who moved beyond their national borders and gathered in Dhaka.

days of distress - a nation always gets the support and encouragement from the youths," he said. He noted that recent "information revolution, technical breakthrough and tremendous development in science and education extended the frontiers of our knowledge to a great extent".

Achievements to be displayed on March 26

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to display achievements in different sectors in last 35 years since the independence on mobile vehicles in the capital on March 26 as part of the Independence Day celebration programmes. Success stories in various fields and national tradition and culture will be projected from decorated mechanised vehicles during the Independence Day parade at National Parade Square. The vehicles will also parade city streets after the march past.

Citizens Rights Movement and Nagorik Sanghati form a human chain in front of the High Court in the city yesterday protesting continued corruption and irregularities in public hospitals, including Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.



Rain or thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

DHAKA TODAY Seminar United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) and Northern University Bangladesh (NUB) jointly organise a seminar on International Mother Language Day with Ataus Samad, advisory editor of the daily Amar Desh, as chief guest.

Discussion Bangladesh Awami Jubo League organises a discussion to mark the International Mother Language Day. Venue: Institute of Engineers. Time: 3:00pm.

Discussion Workers' Party of Bangladesh will hold a discussion on 'Struggle for language and development of non-communal democratic spirit'. Venue: Asad auditorium, Tophkhana Road. Time: 4:00pm.

Publication ceremony The publication ceremony of a book titled 'Opounnayan' [Misdevelopment] by noted economist Dr Atiur Rahman will be held. Venue: Nazrul Mancha, Boi Mela. Time: 5:00pm.

Publication ceremony Prothom Alo Editor Matur Rahman will unveil the cover of a book titled 'Bibidh prashongho' (Miscellaneous topics) by Rashed Khan Menon. Venue: Lethok Kunja, Boi Mela. Time: 5:00pm.

Publication ceremony Dar kak, a literary magazine, will hold

Police forces turned into political lackey

FROM PAGE 1 example, were arrested without any court order, tortured and charged with sedition. Many such victimised officers have even been denied their legitimate financial dues. PROMOTION AND POSTING ON POLITICAL CONSIDERATION The government has crippled the police service by a policy of 'pick-and-choose' and witch-hunting.

hailing form Gopalganj and greater Faridpur region have constantly been deprived in the last four years. The police administrations outside Dhaka had been given verbal instructions not to send any Hindu policeman for duty during the last Saarc Summit in November. A police officer hailing from Gopalganj was superseded thrice while he was an ASP. After he was made an additional SP, he was deprived of the promotion for 11 times despite having excellent service record.

retired police officer. Originally, an advertisement was made for recruitment of 786 SIs, but later 850 were recruited. About 90 percent of the recruits have been learnt to be workers of BNP, its student wing Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Jamaat-e-Islami's student front Islami Chhatra Shibir and relatives of ruling coalition men.

Both Rana and Shwadhin will pass out of the academy on February 22. BNP and Jamaat men with criminal records are randomly filling the vacant posts of National Security Intelligence (NSI). Ekrumul Haq, a Chittagong-based JCD cadre, who was arrested and charge-sheeted in an abduction case, has been appointed a field officer of the NSI. He is now posted in Chittagong. Besides, although 52 deputy assistant directors at NSI were appointed fairly in early 2001, 19 of them were fired merely on political grounds after alliance came to office. All the eight non-Muslim officers of this batch lost their jobs. BREAKING POLICE MORALE Despite being faced with numerous problems, the honest members of the police department have been trying their utmost to keep the department working. But their moral has been severely undermined by the last four years' culture of political appointment and illegal favour to the dishonest ones.

Three retired police officers were appointed to the apex post of the police only out of political consideration, ignoring the norms and traditions of the service. Shahudul Haque, Ashrafud Huda and Abdul Quyum became IGP after retirement from service, which is unprecedented in the history of police in the subcontinent. Shahadul and Quyum retired as additional IGP and Huda as DIG. But they were promoted to the rank of IGP. According to rules, no retired officers can be promoted. Although Shahadul was convicted of contempt of court, the government did not discipline him for more than a year after the conviction in a total disregard to the law.

Other key posts of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Additional IGP of CID, Director General (DG) of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) were held by the retired officers under contract during the regime. Especially the officers who failed to demonstrate political allegiance to the BNP-Jamaat alliance suffered a lot. Muklesur Rahman, an honest officer of SP rank, has remained an officer on special duty (OSD) since the beginning of this regime. ASP Habibur Rahman was withdrawn from Bhola after the election and was suspended later. Since then, he has remained under suspension although no charge could yet be brought against him. He ordered lodging of an first information report (FIR) against the BNP candidate in Lalmohan of Bhola for snatching rifle from police and killing a worker of his opponent camp on the election day of 2001.

Paradoxically, 29 ASPs recruited through 20th and 21st BCS examinations were fired only a week before their passing out of the academy. Six of them appeared in the subsequent BCS examinations and were selected in police, administration and other cadres. But on unwritten orders from the home ministry, the establishment division did not allow them to join. In yet another alarming move, the government has appointed Masud Rana of Sariakandi, Bogra as an SI although his name was on a police list of suspected militants. The list was prepared after August 17 countrywide blasts. Masud is now in training at Sarda Police Academy. Mizanur Rahman Shwadhin, a Dhaka Suhrawardy College unit JCD leader who was arrested in connection with Ramna blast in April 14, 2001, has also been appointed as an SI. He too is now taking training at Sarda. Police arrested him along with his brothers at a mosque mess at Matuail in

Much to the distaste of the honest officials, police stations these days are controlled by local leaders of the ruling coalition. They [political leaders] determine whom to arrest and when to lodge a FIR. Talking to The Daily Star on a remedy to the situation and reform of the whole department, former and some incumbent police officials stressed the importance of operational independence allowing police to operate without interference. Commenting on consequence of politicisation of the department, former additional IGP Ahmedul Huq Chowdhury told The Daily Star, "Alliance candidates, leaders and workers will get illegal assistance before and during the next election and the politicisation is in fact aimed at it." These policemen are being used in political persecution, he said, adding: "Overall, the ongoing politicisation is sending the morale of the police administration to a rock bottom."