

DOWN TO EARTH

Boats to replace automobiles in city

By Khalilur Rahman



Country boats will soon replace automobiles in the streets of metropolitan city during monsoon. The boats will carry passengers and cargo and enter straight into ground floors of buildings.

Half a decade ago a senior engineer of the then drainage division of the Public Health Engineering (PHE) made this observation. To some engineer's remark sounded like a joke. But now the townspeople find it to be an understatement.

Tuesday's rain fall, recorded at five inches, caused serious water logging in many parts of the metropolis. At dawn on Wednesday people were found wading through waist-deep water with household effects and children on their laps in search of safer places as the dwellings were inundated.

The worst-affected areas included Shantinagar, Khilgaon, Rajarbagh, Naya Pallan, Sahjahanpur, Nazimuddin Road and Alauddin Road, Nimali, New Market, Old Airport Road and parts of Gandaria.

The discharge of accumulated water was so slow that many residents who left their submerged dwellings early morning could not return home till late in the evening. Most of the residents, however, stayed on makeshift machans in some submerged places.

The situation has caused widespread concern among the city-dwellers. Monsoon is yet to set in. If the rainfall lasting only two and a half hours can create this type of water logging, it is anybody's guess as to what will happen during incessant spells of rain in the Bangla months of Ashar and Sraaban.

Unless emergency steps are taken immediately most of the city areas are likely to remain under waist to chest-deep water following continuous rain in monsoon.

Unsound planning, thoughtless filling of natural outlets and total negligence over the years to develop a proper drainage system for the fast-expanding metropolis have now resulted in stagnation of water never seen before.

Coordination among the development agencies is virtually non-existent. As a result completion of a road or any other complex in the city further aggravates inadequate arrangements for flushing out of stagnant water.

Let us cite one example. The 100-feet-wide highway, known as Viswa Road from Syedabad at Jatrabari up to Tongi via Malibagh railway crossing in the city has been opened to traffic this year. The road has already cost about Taka 42 crore.

The Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (RAJUK), formerly known as Dhaka Improvement Trust (DIT) has sealed the culvert of the Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (WASA) at Malibagh point in course of construction of the Viswa Road.

Instead, the RAJUK has placed narrow-diameter pipes four feet above the closed WASA culvert. This, in turn, caused severe water logging in Khilgaon, Malibagh and other adjoining areas because the rain water did not pass on the other side of the Viswa Road till the stagnation reached the level of drainage pipes.

By the time rain water touched the pipes the whole neighbourhood was inundated. At Khilgaon, Tuesday's rain caused heavy waterlogging and it was about to inundate ground floors of most of the houses. Previously there was no stagnation of water other than during a flood. This time the Viswa Road has caused such a situation.

Before construction of this most vital thoroughfare RAJUK, WASA, Municipality, Public Health Engineering (PHE) and other related development agencies could sit together and examine all aspects of public interest. Now fresh provision for quick disposal of rain and flood water must be made and for that extra money will be needed which could be avoided had there been arrangements at the beginning of the construction of the road.

In another case, the government of ousted President HM Ershad hastily drew up a plan for developing a huge

sports complex at Arambagh in Motijheel and quickly filled up the wide canal which existed there for over a century. In the absence of this outlet Arambagh and large parts of Motijheel Commercial Area become inundated even after a moderate shower.

Old records available with the Dhaka City Corporation (municipality) suggest that as many as 13 canals which flowed through the town having their outlets in the rivers Buriganga, Balu, Sitalkhaya and Turag are now virtually non-existent.

Over the years these have either been filled up for development work by the government or heavily encroached upon by the members of the public.

All these canals quickly flushed out rain and flood water into the rivers from the city.

The biggest canal, the famous Dolai Khal, built centuries ago during the Mughal rule does not exist now. Only a small portion of it is seen flowing below the Walter bridge, popularly known as lohar pool at Sutraapur.

Over three decades ago this canal which not only drained out rain and flood water but served as the most useful waterbody to carry cargo by boats to distant places within and outside the city, was filled up. There was public protest but the authority was adamant and filled up Dolai Khal.

That was the first organised effort to fill up a natural outlet. The action was later followed by the successive governments and one after another the canals and ditches in and around the metropolis were filled up.

During the nine-year rule of deposed President HM Ershad many other canals and outlets were either drastically narrowed down or totally sealed up in the name of development further worsening the situation.

An official of WASA told The Daily Star that they have inherited a broken down drainage system and it is too difficult to maintain. The result is undoubtedly public sufferings, he added.

Appellate Division hears Ershad's prayer Sunday

By Staff Correspondent

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court has fixed the date for hearing Ershad's arms case transfer petition on June 2 (Sunday).

The four-judge Appellate Division of the Supreme Court comprising Justice M H Rahman, Justice ATM Afzal, Justice Mostafa Kamal and Justice Latifur Rahman sat Thursday morning.

The case was scheduled to be heard Thursday but due to delay in the preparing of the judgement of the High Court Division which was ready on Wednesday evening, the Supreme Court, re-fixed the date for hearing the case.

Deposed President Ershad had invoked the provision of transfer of the arms case alleging that he would not get a fair trial at the Special Tribunal and filed the petition in the High Court Division under Section 526.

The High Court Division Bench disposed of the case on May 22 saying that the allegations against the Tribunal judge were baseless. Immediately after the

Judgement Ershad made a petition leaving the appeal to the Appellate Division.

The Appellate Division fixed the date for hearing of the case on May 30. But the petition could not be heard because the certified copy of the High Court judgement was available to the lawyers of the accused on May 29 after dusk.

The Special Tribunal was to hear the arguments of both the State and the Defence lawyers on May 14. But due to the proceedings of the case at the High Court, the Special Tribunal stayed the hearing of the arguments although there was no stay order from the High Court.

In this case the Tribunal followed the conventional practice of showing respect to the upper court.

The start of the trial of this arms case was also delayed when Ershad did not attend the Tribunal on March 26 because of his illness.

Prior to that Ershad had made an attempt to quash his trial, on charges of possessing illegal arms, in the High Court.

Communal politics

From Page 1 Col. 5
Quamruzzaman Ansari, President and General Secretary respectively of the organisation's Dhaka University unit.

Speakers at the rally said that vested quarters had hatched a conspiracy to rehabilitate the 'anti liberation forces' in the name of peace initiative, which the students of the university resisted.

They said the constitution of a judicial probe body into the matter once again proved the BNP as an associate of the anti-liberation forces, which was earlier proved by the decision to withdraw the ban on communal politics.

The JCL rally was addressed by Kader Sarkar, Wahiduzzaman Chan and Pankaj Nath.

Speakers at the rally demanded withdrawal of the cases filed against some of the student leaders by the Jamaat-e-Islami and strongly resented the raid launched by police at the residences of some of the student leaders including Jahangir Sattar Tinku.

The BCU rally was addressed by Sazzad Jahir Chandan and Ahmed Shaheen Jewel.

They said the people of Bangladesh fought the War of Liberation to root out communalism and communal politics from the country. But the communal forces once again surfaced with the help of 'anti-liberation forces', they added.

The speakers called upon the people to resist them.

The BCL (N-S) rally was addressed by Roknuzzaman Rokon. He demanded immediate arrest of the accused murderers of Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon and criticised the vice-Chancellor of the Dhaka University for inviting Maulana Nazami.

CUTA resents
Dr M Akhteruzzaman and Prof Golam Samdani Quraeshi.

Aid pledge
From Page 1 Col. 5

the establishment of a democratic government, a comfortable foreign exchange position and the strong support of the international community would now provide a window of opportunity to move forward decisively to address Bangladesh's long-term development needs.

The World Bank, IMF, ADB, USA, UK, Japan and all other donors congratulated the government in its success in maintaining macro-economic stability despite the extreme difficulties caused by the Gulf crisis and the devastating cyclone. The meeting also endorsed the government's policy of eliminating waste inefficiency and corruption, the measures taken to recover outstanding loans and programmes to improve the financial position of PDB, railway and other organisations.

They also expressed satisfaction at the government's commitment to generate more domestic resources to make the economy increasingly self-reliant.

A six-member delegation led by the Minister for Finance and Planning M Saifur Rahman represented Bangladesh in the meeting.

The minister addressed the meeting on the first day's session yesterday while, responding to the various statements made by the participants the minister said that the priority of the government was to alleviate the condition of the disadvantaged people of Bangladesh.

Side by side with efforts to improve macro-economic management and implement structural reform the government would make all out effort to remove corruption and establish rule of law and social justice, he added.

President and General Secretary respectively of Bangladesh College-University Teachers' Association in a statement Thursday strongly resented the inviting of Maulana Nazami to the peace-initiative-meeting.

They termed the invitation as an attempt to rehabilitate 'anti-liberation forces' and said it was an insult to the martyrs who had laid their lives in the Liberation War.

They held the Vice-Chancellor responsible for the incident and called upon all to move unitedly against the anti-liberation forces.

Sirajganj UZ chairman assaulted

SIRAJGANJ, May 30: Chairman of Sadar upazila of the district was manhandled today by some contractors for reported harassment by the administration, reports UNB.

T and T

From Page 1 Col. 8
tained serious injuries during the clash and were admitted to the hospital are Md Shaifque, Md Abu Bashar, Md Mujibur Rahman, Jasmuddin and Shipon, belonging to Karmachari Parishad. Fifteen others were given first aid.

Police intervened during the clash to bring the situation under control. When contacted last night, Ramna police said four persons, Malek Bhuiyan, Malek Majumder, Hazrat Ali and Hamid, were arrested from the spot.

Madaripur

From Page 1 Col. 6
blamed JCD for the clash. They said a group of JCD activists, equipped with sticks and knives, attacked a Chhatra League procession at the college compound this morning during a campaigning for college students' union election.

Aslam, a worker of Chhatra League, was rushed to Barisal Medical College Hospital with serious injuries while another Chhatra League worker Mostafa was admitted to the local Sadar Hospital.

The attackers also ransacked the district Awami League office and some shops at Pura Bazar in the town, the Chhatra League leaders said.

In Dhaka, Chhatra League President Shah Alam and General Secretary Ashim Kumar Ukil have condemned what they said the unprovoked attack on their procession.

In a joint statement, they demanded of the authorities to give exemplary punishment to the attackers and restore normalcy in the college.

Disaster

From Page 1 Col. 7
Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dr Mohammed Shahjahan, said major cyclones hit Bangladesh every three to four years. He said frequency of cyclones in Bangladesh is high in the October to December period.

Giving statistics of major cyclones in the last 200 years Dr Shahjahan said 21 out of 43 major cyclones in this period had hit the Chittagong coast.

Barrister Syed Istiaque Ahmed said modern technology should be employed in forecasting cyclones.

He said government should take up effective disaster prevention plans.

Professor Nazrul Islam of the Dhaka University Geography Department also spoke on the occasion.

Mob attacks WDB engineer's office at Moulvibazar

MOULVIBAZAR, May 30: A crowd of angry people today ransacked the office of the Executive Engineer-1 of the Water Development Board here causing damage to the office furniture and equipment, reports BSS.

A group of infuriated people came in a procession and agitated before the office of the engineer demanding repair of the damage caused to the Manu river embankment. The mob at one stage entered the office and accused damages to office property and threatened the staff with dire consequences if their demand was not met immediately. They also damaged the two office jeeps parked outside. The local police visited the office immediately after the incident.

The embankment which covers a command area of about 56,000 acres of land under its project was cut open at different points by the local people between May 9 and 16 in a bid to flush out the flood waters from inside the project. But the flood waters gushed through the openings of the embankment instead of receding from inside.

According to sources here about Taka 28 lakh would be required to repair the embankment.

The officers and staff of the Executive Engineers' office are passing their days in a condition of insecurity after the sudden attack was made this noon.

Writ rejected

From Page 1 Col. 8
establishment and/or news agencies could have been aggrieved by the impugned award of the Fourth Wage Board but no direct and personal interest of the petitioner, BSP has been adversely affected by the award.

The court, therefore, did not consider BSP as competent to file a writ petition and invoke the extraordinary writ jurisdiction under Article 102 of the Constitution.

In delivering the judgement the court considered numerous decisions cited and placed before the court on the question of locus standi by the learned lawyers, representing unions of journalists and press workers and BSP.

Khondker Mahbubuddin Ahmed with Zainul Abedin appeared for the petitioner BSP.

A R Yusuf, Akhtar Imam, Md Khalequzzaman and SK Habibul-Alam appeared for the respondents - Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), Bangladesh Newspapers Press Workers Federation (BNPWF) and Bangladesh Newspapers Employees Federation (BNEF).

Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan, Additional Attorney General, with Syed JR Modasser Hossain, Deputy Attorney General, appeared for the Ministry of Information.

Nizami's attackers

From Page 1 Col. 5
the violent attackers, it said adding that even after publishing the name and pictures of the attackers, they have not yet been arrested, and were issuing provocative statements.

Several ministers and MPs on Thursday visited Ibne Sina clinic to inquire about the condition of Maulana Nazami. They include Minister for Shipping M K Anwar, State Minister for religious Affairs Prof Abdul Mannan, State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Dr Mosharrar Hossain, Md Abdullah, a BNP Member of Parliament and A S M Firoz, MP of Awami League.

The Midnight File

Joan Kennedy guilty of drunken driving

QUINCY (Massachusetts), May 30: Joan Kennedy, the former wife of Sen Edward Kennedy, was found guilty Thursday of drunken driving and ordered to check in to an alcohol treatment centre. Mrs Kennedy was arrested May 14 when police noticed her car swerving across three lanes of a super-highway. Judge Albert Kramer also ordered Mrs Kennedy to attend outpatient therapy after she released from the undisclosed centre. She had surrendered her driver's license to Kramer the day after her arrest, reports AP.

Cholera in Lucknow : 35 dead

LUCKNOW, May 30: At least 35 people have died and 335 have been taken to hospital in an outbreak of cholera in Lucknow, capital of the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, officials said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Challenge to Bob Hawke

CANBERRA, May 30: Labour Members of Parliament will meet Friday to vote on a leadership challenge to Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke, government officials said late today. The announcement came after spokesmen for Hawke and Deputy Prime Minister Paul Keating said the two men had accused each other of treachery and breaking promises, report AFP.

Rajiv's security

From Page 1 Col. 4

A senior opposition leader today went on an indefinite fast to protest violence in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh. N T Rama Rao, chairman of the National Front grouping five parties including former premier V P Singh's Janata Dal, launched the fast at a busy public place in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh's capital.

Rajiv broke rules

Indian police commandos assigned to guard Gandhi say his assassin succeeded because the former prime minister broke strict security rules during the last few days of his life.

Five of the six bodyguards, or personal security officers (PSO), who were present during the May 21 assassination survived the bomb attack.

Interviewed while travelling with Gandhi's widow, Sonia, to Allahabad with his ashes, they said the former premier who had survived two assassination attempts since 1985 could have escaped the third if he had listened to his security advisors.

"During his last few days he used to get irritated when he would stop someone trying to

'get close,' said one of the Congress (I) members.

A senior opposition leader today went on an indefinite fast to protest violence in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh. N T Rama Rao, chairman of the National Front grouping five parties including former premier V P Singh's Janata Dal, launched the fast at a busy public place in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh's capital.

Gandhi, under instruction to avoid disorderly situations, ignored the rules and walked towards the dais through a crowd assembled for an election rally, they said.

Suspected Sikh militia murdered a Hindu politician today in Punjab as separatist violence left another 13 people dead elsewhere in the troubled north Indian state, reports said.

Two young Sikhs drove to the house of Vijay Kumar Gupta, a senior member of the Hindu revivalist BJP, placed a revolver against his ear and shot him through the head, BJP officials here said.

The murder took place in Chandigarh, the joint capital of Punjab and Haryana states.

The attack on Gupta, 40, a former secretary of the BJP's Chandigarh chapter, was witnessed by his daughter and son, the news agency said.

The BJP oppose the Sikh campaign for a homeland in Punjab and has lost several of its middle-ranking leaders in separatist violence.

Award implementation

From Page 1 Col. 8

the award inoperative and thereby deprive the journalists, press workers and general employees of their legitimate dues.

The legitimate rights of the working journalists, press workers and general employees had been established with the rejection of the writ petition of BSP by the Division Bench of the High Court, they said.

Calling upon the owners to implement the awards without further delay, the leaders said that the owners would be responsible for any undesirable situation in the industry in case they (owners) adopted any dilly-dallying tactics in implementing the awards.

The signatories of the statement include: Reazuddin Ahmed and Amanullah Kabir, President and Secretary General of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), Zahurul Huq and Ruhul Amin Gazi, President and General Secretary of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ), Fazle Imam and Bazlur Rahman Milon, President and Secretary General of the Bangladesh Sangbadpatria Press Samikha Federation and Jahangir Kabir and Mir Mozammel, President and Secretary General of

Bangladesh Sangbadpatria Karmachari Federation (BSKF).

Rally tomorrow

Meanwhile, a joint rally of the working journalists, press workers and general employees will be held tomorrow (Saturday) at 10 a m at the National Press Club premises to press home the demands for implementation of the Wage Board Award.

The union leaders called upon all concerned to attend the rally which will be followed by a procession.

In another press release Dhaka Union of Journalists had requested all Unit Chiefs of the Union to take effective measures for realisation of the Wage Board Award with retrospective effect in their respective organisations.

Lanka declares British envoy persona non grata

COLOMBO, May 30: Sri Lanka has declared the British High Commissioner (Ambassador), David Gladstone, persona non grata, the Sri Lankan government said today.

ইস্টার্ন হাউজিং লিমিটেড-এর আবারিক প্রকল্প

নিম্নের প্রকল্পগুলিতে জমি বরাদ্দ চলছে:

- নিকেতন : গুলশান মডেল টাউন সংলগ্ন।
- বনশ্রী : রামপুরা গিডি ভবনের উত্তর পূর্ব দিকে।
- গোড়ান : মাদারটেক-এর শেব গ্রাউন্ড।
- পার্বী বিত্তীয় পর্ব : পার্বী প্রধান সড়ক থেকে ১ কিলোমিটার, বোটানিক্যাল গার্ডেন সংলগ্ন।
- শীশমহল : মিরপুর বুদ্ধিজীবী শহীদ মিনার সড়কটে

যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা : ইস্টার্ন হাউজিং লিমিটেড (মাতা)

জাপানার বাসস্থানের নির্ভরযোগ্য বন্ধু

ইসলাম চেম্বার (৯ম তলা)

১২৫/এ মতিঝিল বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, ঢাকা-১০০০

ফোন : ২৩৫৬৬৮, ২৪১২২৭, ৮৬২৫২৯

বিঃদ্রঃ নিকেতন, গোড়ান, মহানগর, পোস্তগোলা প্রকল্পের স্ট প্লেনের জন্য যে সময় সমাপিত হোকবতকে ডাকযোগে চিঠি পাঠানো হলেও তাদেরকে ৩ মাসের প্লেনের সময় সত্ত্বে সেবার জন্য আবেদন সাধে যোগাযোগ করতে অনুমতি করা যাবে।

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Zia : Nationalist spirit

From Page 1 Col. 4

Academy in the afternoon. Prime Minister Begum Zia attended the meeting while Education Minister Prof Badruddoza Choudhury, LGRD Minister and BNP Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukder, Editor of the daily Ittefaq, Akhter-ul-Alam, Editor of the Dainik Bangla, Ahmed Humayun, former pro-Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University, Dr Emajuddin Ahmed, former president of Mukti Juddha Sangsad, Mahfuzur Rahman and JASAS leaders Jahid Hassan Churnu and MA Malek took part in the discussion. JASAS chief Khurshid Ali Mollah presided.

The speakers said President Zia played a historic role at a crucial hour of the nation and stressed the need for carrying on his development-oriented programmes to achieve the cherished goal of last nine years' struggle against autocracy.

Prof Badruddoza Choudhury said Zia inspired the people by introducing nationalist politics which stood the test of time. Deep patriotism led the great leader to proclaim independence, wage liberation war and take over state power at a crucial time of the nation, he observed.

Prof Choudhury said the present Government must complete Zia's unfinished tasks being inspired by his ideas.

people against national and international conspiracies against the nationalist forces.

Dr Emajuddin pointed out that Zia's fundamental contribution to the national politics was the policy of national development through mass participation. He did not believe in imposing anything on the people, he added.

Akhter-ul-Alam pointed out that President Zia reflected through his politics people's nationalist spirit in the 70s what the world leaders did in the 90s. He also warned the people against the enemies of democracy.

Ahmed Humayun said Zia gave the nation a democratic system.

Leaders of Jatyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) placed wreaths and offered fatiha at the mazar of President Zia.

The JCD leaders along with the leaders of the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) leaders also attended a milad mahfil at the mazar premises.

Later the JCD held a rally near the Arts Faculty building which was addressed by JCD joint convener Fajul Haq Milon. DUCSU AGS Nazimuddin Alam and Habibun-Nabi Sohel.

Speakers at the rally said President Zia was a nationalist leader, reformer, and dedicated freedom fighter. Recalling his contributions the speakers said Zia worked ceaselessly for the economic emancipation of commonman during his lifetime.

Our Narayanganj

Correspondent reports : Day-long Quran khwani, milad mahfil, feeding of the destitute were arranged at the local BNP office. Besides, a discussion meeting was also held. Jannatul Ferdous chaired the meeting.

JCD factions clash in Kishoreganj

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, May 30: Six persons were injured when two groups of Jatyatabadi Chhatra Dal clashed in the town this evening.

Of the injured, Vice President of Gurudayal Government College Students Union Khaled Saifullah Sohel, Abu Hanif and Abdullah Al-Mamun Farid were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital in a critical condition. They were first admitted to Kishoreganj Sadar Hospital but were rushed to Mymensingh as their condition deteriorated.

Fazlur Rahman Rafiq and Rafiqul Islam Dulal were admitted to Kishoreganj Sadar Hospital. Khadimuzzaman was given first aid.

Kaifu allows rice imports

TOKYO, May 30: Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu has decided to allow rice imports, conceding to demands from the United States and other countries, a newspaper reported Thursday, says AP.