

DOWN TO EARTH

Water-logging haunts city dwellers

By Khalilur Rahman

People who come with their sick animals to the central veterinary hospital near Fulbaria in the metropolis are the worst sufferers. Sometimes they were through ankle-deep raw sewage that remains stagnant in front of the hospital at Kazi Alauddin Road. The situation further aggravates during the monsoons when rain water submerges the adjoining areas. This happens as both the underground sewer lines, one for carrying off sewage and the other for draining out rainwa-

(DCC). But the Public Works Department (PWD) which carried out work on the expansion project did not take up the matter with those authorities. Moreover, the architectural design of the hospital buildings had faults, he alleged. Explaining the disadvantages of the newly constructed hospital building, an official of the hospital said that the corridors and the rooms of the three-storey building are drenched during rains as there are no sheds. Rain water en-

A section of the main thoroughfare from the old railway hospital to the central veterinary hospital poses a particular inconvenience to the road users. This busiest portion of the road has developed big ditches and depressions and waste water remains stagnant almost round the year. The accumulation of waste materials not flushed out because of faulty drainage system emits an unbearable stench. The overall atmosphere in the locality appears to be suffocating.

With regard to the new construction at the hospital complex, a PWD source said that there was no fault in the design of the buildings and that the construction was carefully carried out. He, however, admitted that rain water finds its way into the corridors and parts of the rooms in the absence of sunshades. Necessary measures are being taken in this regard, the source added. The source categorically said that the problems arising out of the blockage in sewer lines was absolutely the job of WASA to look after and that the PWD had nothing to do about it.

When contacted, a senior official of the WASA told The Daily Star that water-logging of city areas was a general problem and required concerted efforts to solve it. Over the years the storm sewers which drain out rain and waste water in the metropolis have become choked at different points. Proper maintenance and cleaning of the underground lines are utterly lacking. The lone pump station at Narinda has lost 60 per cent of its efficiency in draining out waste water. The length of the storm sewer lines is about 265 kilometers (km) of which half is under the management of WASA and the other half is maintained by DCC. This has given rise to fresh complications. The DCC has inadequate skilled manpower for maintaining underground sewer pipes which were so long operated by the Public Health Engineering (PHE) under the Ministry of Local Government. It was handed over to the DCC a few years ago. Inadequate maintenance of storm sewer lines by the DCC has contributed to water-logging, sources said.

But all these are minor causes responsible for stagnation of water in the city during rains, a senior WASA engineer told The Star. The major cause of water-logging is the closure of natural outlets and canals in the metropolis over the last three decades, he pointed out. The sewage disposal system is also under heavy pressure due to the alarming rise of the city population and limited facilities available with WASA in terms of men, materials and resources, WASA sources said. This has resulted in the overflowing of sewer lines much to the inconvenience of the city dwellers, he stated.



ter, fail to function.

The problem of sewage disposal facing the central veterinary hospital for quite a long time did never get due attention of the concerned authorities, hospital sources told The Daily Star. Unsound planning and lack of initiative have all through stood in the way of proper development of this lone institution set up by Nawab Sir Ahsanullah.

The expansion programme of the hospital complex including the staff quarters completed last year at a cost of Taka 3.35 crore by the authorities also ignored the basic problem of faulty drainage system, according to an official of the Livestock Directorate. The official said that the crisis could be resolved with the help of WASA (Water Supply and Sewerage Authority) and the Dhaka City Corporation

ters the rooms as if these were open places, he resented. Before the construction was undertaken the probable faults in design were brought to the notice of the relevant government agency by the livestock official. But the hospital staff complained that the observation of the Livestock Department on the building design was not liked by the government architect. One of the architects politely reminded the livestock official that their task was to deal with animals and not the building construction, an aggrieved hospital staff said. Medical equipment and other materials, therefore, cannot be kept or stored on the floors due to flowing in of rain water. Separate tables are needed for placing some of the equipment to protect those from water, another official reported.

BNP questions

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a non-partisan candidate should be elected as president on the basis of national consensus, was not reasonable.

He said newspaper reports showed that the third and the fourth largest parties in the parliament — Jatiya Party and Jamaat — were ignorant about the nomination of Justice Chowdhury, and thus he was not a candidate of the combined opposition.

Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar said either Justice Chowdhury was not told the truth at the time of obtaining his signature on the nomination paper, or he accepted the consensus of the Awami League as a 'national consensus'. If the first was correct, Justice Chowdhury was subjected to injustice. If the second was correct he has done injustice to people's mandate, he said.

He termed as unfortunate the contention that Justice Chowdhury has become a candidate to protest against the discourteousness of the BNP and said it was difficult to believe that a man who considered himself to be competent to become president could side with a camp opposed to a democratically elected government.

Salam Talukdar posed a question that if Justice Chowdhury's nomination from

party and the idea he floated had already not made him (Justice Chowdhury) controversial, would the post of president not become controversial if Justice Chowdhury were elected?

He said there was no constitutional provision for a non-partisan president nor did the party that has nominated Justice Chowdhury propose the insertion of any such provision in the Constitution. Thus by nominating a partyman BNP has not committed such an 'illegal act' that Justice Chowdhury had to protest by making himself a candidate.

Salam Talukdar said BNP had many other people in the Jatiya Sangsad who were competent to become president, but it did not nominate them because the party wanted to strengthen parliamentary democracy.

BNP believed there were many more people outside Parliament who were competent to become president. But since it could nominate only one candidate it had no option but to forget about the others.

Salam Talukdar said that the anger of Justice Chowdhury would go as soon as he would understand this and realise that a certain quarter was using his image as a 'pawn of so-called challenge.'

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Left student alliance formed

By DU Correspondent

A new student alliance, "Democratic Student Alliance (DSA)", was formed with eight left-leaning student organisations pledging to gear up a progressive student movement.

The formation of the DSA was announced at a press conference held Thursday at the Madhu's Canteen of the Dhaka University.

The student organisations that formed the alliance are Chhatra League (N-S), Chhatra Union (BCU), Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF), Chhatra Mottree (BCM), Chhatra Federation (BCF), Chhatra League (S-S), Gonatantrik Chhatra Union (GCU), and Chhatra Samity (BCS).

The new student alliance vowed to root-out terrorism from the educational institutions and gear up the movement for realising the ten-points prepared by the now defunct All Party Students Unity (APSU).

The press conference blamed the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Chhatra League (S-A) for the disunity among the students and the dissolution of APSU.

BCL activist stabbed

By DMCH Correspondent

A BCL activist was stabbed by unidentified miscreants at Elephant Road on Wednesday night.



Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed addressing high military officials at Armed Forces headquarters on Thursday.

Shahabuddin

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thanked the Acting President for his guidance as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. Chief of Naval Staff Rear Admiral Muhammad Muhaimeed Islam, Chief of Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Altuf Hussain Chowdhury and PSO of the Supreme Commander Brigadier M S A Bhuiyan were present.

Earlier, the Acting President was given a ceremonial Guard of Honour by a smartly turned-out contingent drawn from the three services at the BAF Base Bashur in the Old Air Port. On arrival he was received by the chiefs of three services. The Acting President took salute and inspected the guard.

Downpour

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Basabo, part of Rampura went under knee-deep water.

Movement of traffic came to a standstill during the rainfall. Office-goers had the most difficulty in attending their duties.

Attendance in the government, semi-government and autonomous bodies was thin. The worst sufferers were the students particularly those who had to appear at examinations in some city schools.

Rain water submerged dwellings in many low-lying areas in the city. Residents were found staying on 'machans' in their inundated house. At Minto Road, water remained stagnant in the compounds of many VIPs till late in the evening.

In some places, reports of water contamination due to leakage in the main supply lines were received.

This has exposed the inhabitants to serious health hazards, a resident of Faridabad told The Daily Star.

An official of the Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (WASA) said that faulty drainage system was responsible for slow disposal of rain water.

The natural outlets and canals that used to drain out rain water from the city to the river Buriganga and Shitalakhyia were filled up over the years. Closure of these outlets, mainly 13 canals, is largely responsible for the accumulation of water, the WASA official pointed out.

He also admitted that the storm sewers were not functioning smoothly as these were blocked at many points due to the absence of proper maintenance.

Nomination papers

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tion of the nomination papers. The last date for withdrawal of candidature has been fixed on September 30. The time for withdrawal of candidature will expire at 2.30 pm.

The polling will take place on October 8 between 2 pm and 5 pm in the Assembly Hall of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban. Members of the 330-seat Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) will vote to elect the President.

On behalf of the candidature of Abdur Rahman Biswas, BNP leaders and ministers including Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar, Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah, Barrister Jamrudin Sirar, Major Gen. (Retd) Majidul Huq, Deputy Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali, Sadek Hossain Khoka, Whip Khondker Delwar Hossain, and Syed Shahidul Islam Zaman, MP, were present during the scrutiny.

On behalf of Justice Badrul Haider Chowdhury, Awami League leaders including Abdus Samad Azad, who is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad, and Tofael Ahmed, MP, were present, while on behalf of Al-Haj Muhammad Mokbul Hossain, Shahjahan Khan, MP, (Al-Madaripur) was present during the examination of nomination papers.

The Chief Election Commissioner, Justice Abdur Rouf, was assisted by Election Commissioner Justice Syed Meshbaul Hossain and Secretary of the Election Commission Secretariat, Ayubur Rahman, during the scrutiny.

It is reported that the Corporation has fallen defaulting to over 60 such repairing companies, most of those at Singapore that may lead to more such incidents.

The Midnight File

Romanian PM forced to resign

BUCHAREST, Sept 26 : Thousands of Romanian coal miners paraded through Bucharest today rejecting after forcing Prime Minister Petre Roman's government to resign and shouted that President Ion Iliescu must go with him. The demonstrators, besieged the Romanian television station in northern Bucharest tonight and bombarded it with petrol bombs, eyewitnesses said, reports Reuter.

Pak newsman killed in Kashmir

ISLAMABAD, Sept 26 : Mohammad Basharat Abbas, a Pakistani journalist has been killed by security forces in Indian-administered Kashmir. Meanwhile Pakistani newspapers are to observe a oneday strike Sunday to protest violence against reporters, the All-Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) President, Farhad Zaidi, said here Thursday, reports AFP.

Unusual low

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dhury, Director, Bangladesh Meteorological Department told The Daily Star the trough of low extending from the Arabian Sea is persisting as it is repeatedly getting activated by incursion of moisture from the Bay of Bengal.

Again steering winds at upper air has been very weak for some time. The flow of strong steering wind would have helped faster movement of the system towards the north east. In the absence of strong steering wind the movement of the system has been very slow. As it continues to get energized by incursion of moisture it continues to cause precipitation.

Weather experts have the impression that the trough of low is likely to cause heavy rainfall in the central part of Bangladesh for another two days.

The rainfall induced by the system has so far remained concentrated to Rajshahi division, part of Jessore, Dhaka, Mymensingh and Sylhet regions. Some northern districts in Rangpur, Dinajpur region and the southern districts of the country remained largely unaffected by it.

Radar images on Thursday showed that the system moved a bit south-eastwards. It is likely to move to Assam in India. If the system causes maximum precipitations in Assam too, another wave of flash floods from the rivers in the Meghna basin is likely.

Biswas

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Rahman Biswas. With Jamaat's 20 votes BNP nominee's votes will rise to 190.

There is every possibility that two independent members — Major (retd) Hafizuddin and Nurul Islam Moni — would vote for Abdur Rahman Biswas. Both of them and Biswas hail from Barisal.

Besides the independent members, Workers Party MP Rashed Khan Menon, NDP MP Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, JSD MP Shahjahan Siraj and Islamic Oikya Jote MP Maulana Obaidullah also may vote for Biswas. If these six votes tilt toward the ruling party candidate, Biswas is likely get 196 votes.

Awami League and its allies have 99 votes and Jatiya Party 35. If Jatiya Party votes for Badrul Haider Chowdhury, the combined strength of Awami League and Jatiya Party will be 134.

'US impeding Korean reunification'

By Staff Correspondent

A visiting high ranking North Korean official said in Dhaka yesterday that after the Gulf war the United States has become more arrogant and is shipping nuclear weapons to South Korea.

"After the Gulf war the US has become more haughty and is shipping to South Korea new nuclear weapons and binary nuclear weapons where it has already deployed 40,000 troops and 1,000 nuclear weapons," Chon Yon Ok, Vice-President of the Cultural Committee for Foreign Countries of the DPRK said as chief guest at a seminar in the auditorium of the National Press Club.

The seminar organised by the Bangladesh National Committee for Korean Reunification was presided over by Rashed Khan Menon, President of the Committee.

It was also addressed by North Korean Ambassador in Dhaka Kang Dol Sun, Hasanul Huq Inu, Nurunnabi, Mahbulul Huq, Garib Nawaz, Ahmed Rafiq and Dilip Barua.

Ms Chon said that the US has already mapped out a '120-day Korean war scenario' and was staging nuclear war exercises and provocative military moves to attack the DPRK first.

She alleged that the United States is trying to control the Republic of North Korea and other South Asian countries by deploying nuclear weapons in South Korea. The deployment of weapons in S Korea was an outrageous infringement on the sovereignty of the DPRK, she said.

She said that if the South Korean authorities sincerely wanted reunification, they should accept the fair and reasonable reunification proposal.

Ambassador Kang Dol Sun said that the seminar would give great inspiration to the people of the DPRK in the campaign for reunification.

Rashed Khan Menon said that the United States was instrumental in delaying the process of reunification. He extended the cooperation of 11 crore Bangladeshis in the process.

Hasanul Huq Inu said after the changeover in the Soviet Union the imperialist was stretching its reaches worldwide to destroy all peace programme.

The other left leaders also condemned US role in the reunification process of the Koreans.

Rangpur medical

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After a small contingent of police force had failed to control the situation, the college authorities sought the help of the BDR who managed to bring the situation under control. Members of the BDR remain deployed in the college campus.

The injured were identified as Anwar Hossain, a second-year student of Rajshahi University, Taufiqur Rahman Ripon, a first-year student of the management department of Carmichael College and Mahmud Hossain, a BCL activist. All three have been admitted to the Rangpur Medical College Hospital and their condition was stated to be critical, according to hospital sources.

Police arrested 12 persons in this connection and recovered a loaded pistol, a cut-rifle, 23 Chinese axes, 12 large knives, one 'ram dao'.

Diarrhoea

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chari says : Diarrhoea claimed nine more lives in Mohalchari and Luxmichari upazilas of the district during the last week raising the death toll to 30 in greater Chittagong Hill Tracts.

According to informed sources, five died in Mohalchari and four in Luxmichari. The two upazilas are the worst affected.

Hospital source said more than 300 people have been affected by the disease at village Goraichari and Dhumnighat in Mohalchari upazila while several hundreds were attacked in Luxmichari upazila.

A large number of patients have been coming from affected areas everyday to the Sadar hospital and upazila health complexes for treatment.

Firing, blasts ransacking on DU campus : 1 hurt

By DU Correspondent

A group of armed youths firing shots and bursting bombs ransacked a snackbar and beat up its employees on Dhaka University campus Thursday. One teaboy was also injured in blast.

The teaboy, Iqbal, was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with head injury from the bomb splinters.

Witnesses said the armed youths ransacked the DUS (Dhaka University Snacks) near TSC protesting tearing of posters earlier hung on the shop walls demanding release of Masudur Rahman, a Chhatra League activists.