

DOWN TO EARTH

Poor Civic Sanitation In City

By A. S. M. Nurunnabi

Even to casual observers, it is apparent that the overall sanitary situation in the city is too deplorable. In some areas, a steady deterioration in the situation is noticeable, making the affected areas nauseating to approach. With the advent of the monsoon, the situation has aggravated.

Outside the posh and semi-posh areas in the newer parts of the city, there are very few areas in old Dhaka where the sanitary situation is free from complaint. In some areas, for example, near Jhigatola bazar, the sewers are blocked with pits over flowing, particularly in the rainy season. The overflow goes into the open sewers on either side of the road, subjecting the passers-by and neighbours to the torment of the overpowering stench. In such localities, the distinction between underground sewers for sewage and ordinary roadside drains meant mainly for rainwater disappears. There is another hazard: Some of the man-hole covers being missing, the over-flooding makes it impossible for the pedestrian and vehicular traffic to locate the open man-holes, thereby making themselves liable to fall into potential death-traps.

When the sewers are blocked, residents of some neighbourhoods resort to the expedience of cutting a chan-

nel between street drains and domestic pits. The reason offered is that it is safer for the households concerned to let the over-flow into street drains than to allow it to accumulate within the households. Petitions and representations to solve the problem are said to be ineffective. In such circumstances, the victims of the City Corporation's neglect take the plea that, though illegal, they are left with no alternative but to take the law into their hands. This course, however, has its dangers. It is always fraught with the risk of outbreak of various diseases.

The risk has another dimension. In many of the neighbourhoods there are cateries, some of which cook food over fires close to the filthy street drains. Flies from these drains and dust from the roads settle on the food trays from which customers are served. But the City Corporation seems to pay scant attention to these noxious practices. Such indifference in many cases even borders on the criminal.

Some of the underground sewers date back to the Twenties. Their replacement is long overdue, since leakage or breakdown of the system is always possible, posing a serious threat to public health. It is rather fortunate that we

have had no floods during the last two years, or else the threat of stinking filth spreading over large areas and increasing the risk of epidemics would have been all too real. Nevertheless, the threat exists even after a flash flood in the wake of a heavy downpour.

The authorities seem to fail to appreciate that these are basic needs which cannot be subordinated to any ambitious plan to improve the capital city, build new parks and playgrounds, set up better lighting arrangements in the streets and so on. But both the City Corporation and the WASA which, between them, share the responsibility of supplying the citizens' basic needs, seem to suffer from a sense of misplaced priorities. Some observers believe that an efficient sewerage system is far more important from the hygienic point of view than even good carpeted roads.

However much we spend on beautification of the city, its appeal will be negated by the absence of proper civic sanitation. Against the backdrop of the existing situation, some raise questions: Who wants gardens in stinking surroundings, and what use more powerful street lights if people have to walk by piles of uncleared sewage and garbage in the midst of malodorous air?

SAARC members agree to fight AIDS unitedly

NEW DELHI, June 25: An official seminar of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries concluded here on Thursday has stressed the necessity to use the regional organization as a forum to share each other's experiences and expertise in controlling the deadly disease AIDS, reports Xinhua.

Delegates from the member countries of SAARC said that the common geographical, language and cultural factors would make the task easier.

They agreed that there should be a common strategy to fight the epidemic and channelize international programme from within this broad framework devised by the member countries.

The number of detected cases is 1000 in India, 24 in Pakistan and 23 in Sri Lanka, while none have been reported in Bangladesh, Bhutan and the Maldives as yet.

Labour bodies

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Meanwhile, the national convention of the SKOP in the city yesterday heard delegates from across the country criticising the leadership because "no effective steps were taken so far to make the labour agitation fruitful."

In the convention, held at the Wapda auditorium, the central leaders of the SKOP also came under fire for "not honouring the views to exclude the labour wings of three right-wing parties — the ruling BNP, and the opposition Awami League and Jatiya Party — from the SKOP."

Chaired by the AL-backed Jatiya Samik League chief Rahmat Ullah, the day-long convention was addressed by as many as 40 delegates. A central leader, Nurul Islam, opened the deliberations while other central leaders were also present to listen to the representatives.

Day Against Drug

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The Narcotics Control Department will also hold a discussion at the national museum auditorium at 11 am.

The United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) will hold a discussion at its office at 55 Dilkusha at 6pm. Eminent educationist Prof Salahuddin Ahmed will preside over the function.

ESDP, and anti-drug organisation of Jahangirnagar University, will hold "anti-drug convention" '93 in the university campus.

Bangladesh Anti-Drug Federation of NGOs has taken up different programmes including discussion in observance of the day.

Dhaka Ahsania Mission in collaboration with the United Nations Information Centre will hold discussion at the United Nations Information Centre hall at 4.30 pm.

Bonn considering ban on Kurdish militants

BONN, June 25: The German government promised tougher security today and considered a ban on Kurdish militants after harsh criticism from Ankara that they failed to give protection against Kurdish attacks on Turkish property, reports Reuters.

Kurdish separatists carried out a coordinated series of attacks across western Europe on Thursday, including at least 13 in Germany, among them a 14-hour hostage-taking in the Turkish consulate in Munich.

"We have to do everything to develop a strategy to stop such actions before they happen", government spokesman Dieter Vogel told a news conference.

KPM

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The Karnaphuli Paper Mills had undergone BMRE (balancing, modernisation, rehabilitation and expansion) in 1984 and another BMRE was overdue, Ishaq said. This would increase its production capacity to 48 thousand tonnes per year from the present capacity of 30 thousand metric tonnes, the MD said.

He disclosed that the government had already been requested to re-fix the tariff value on raw materials, withdraw VAT from paper products, supply gas and electricity at reduced rates and bring down the royalty imposed on bamboo and wood.

Imported pulp

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He added that at present the KPM has to import a limited amount of pulp from abroad to maintain the quality of some of its products.

The KPM also had to buy 8-10 thousand tons of pulp from the Sylhet Pulp and Paper Mills each year to meet its demand of about 80 thousand tonnes per year.

The Karnaphuli Paper Mills is now facing severe crisis since collection of bamboo and wood had become difficult from its old sources.

At present, the mills produces writing paper, printing paper, wrapping paper, packing paper, bitumin paper and various types of boards. It meets about 60 per cent of the country's total paper demands.

New land management

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registration of all property exchanged during 1947 would be completed within June 30.

Instructions have already been sent to all the Deputy Commissioners asking them to dispose off the property exchange cases having clear right and title, the minister said.

The disposal would be made on the spot and by written order, he added.

Under the new policy being planned by the government, the owners would retain their rights for 20 years over their property eroded by a river, Hossain informed.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on land would meet on July 10 to review proposed amendments in the Vested Property Act, he said.

Explaining the government plan on settlement and em-

Depression weakens

The monsoon depression over northwest angle Bay and adjoining area moved northwards and crossed north Orissa-West Bengal coast near Medinipur at 9 am yesterday and lay as a land depression near Jamshedpur, reports UNB.

A Met Office special bulletin Friday afternoon said the depression is likely to move north-westwards for some time and may recurve in north, north-easterly direction and weaken gradually.

Two killed in city incidents

By DMCH correspondent

Two persons were killed and two others were injured in separate incidents in the city yesterday.

Tara Mia, 32, a baby taxi driver, was injured severely when a truck hit his vehicle at Banani yesterday.

In another incident, Tarek, 32, a resident of 528, South Goran of Sabujbag was electrocuted. He was taken to the DMCH where doctors declared him dead.

Book importers

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printed on the book jackets." There are about 60 to 70 consignments of books, imported from India, which are awaiting release at the Benapole customs godown since the budget was placed in the Sangsad, according to the importers.

There are also some consignments which are awaiting release at Chittagong port.

A major importer in the city said, "Interestingly enough, the Zia International Airport (ZIA) custom are fixing duties against the actual (discount) prices."

"Now if we pay duty on the cover prices," another importer and an official of the newly-formed Bangladesh Book Importers' and Exporters' council S A S M Faisal said, "The shelf prices would be absurd and nobody would buy them."

Strangely, prices of foreign books have already gone up by 10 to 15 per cent although no new consignment has been released since the budget speech.

Until the new budget, importers used to pay a 2.5 per cent advance income tax and 2.5 per cent license fees. These changes have been retained.

Bangladesh imports books worth Tk 8 to 12 crore annually, the importers informed, adding that there were not more than 20 major and about 50 small importers.

The importers also revealed that 50 per cent of the total imported books are from Britain, 10 per cent from the United States, 5 per cent from Holland, 2 per cent from Japan and the rest from India.

Textbooks head the list of imports followed by reference books and fiction.

"Inclusion of this subject in the tax net will not bring even one crore taka to the national exchequer," confessed an NBR official. "Yet, as a reader, I feel students and readers will suffer because of this small tax income for the government," he lamented.



A children's drawing competition was organised by the Nature Society at the Shishu Academy yesterday on the occasion of World Environment Day, observed last June 5.

—Star photo

Baku Parliament ousts President

MOSCOW, June 25: Embattled Azerbaijani President Abdulfaz Elchibey was ousted by the Baku parliament late Thursday, the Interfax news agency reported today, reports AFP.

With 37 of the Baku legislature's 51 members taking part in the vote, 33 backed Elchibey's sacking, three voted against and one abstained.

"Parliament has just completed the coup started in Gyandzha in early June, Ibrahim Ibrahimov, a lawmaker loyal to Elchibey said after the vote.

Ten deputies of Elchibey's popular front walked out in protest at the vote Thursday, Elchibey denounced the unfolding vents as a coup d'etat, as lawmakers in Baku voted to transfer his powers to parliament Speaker and former communist party boss, Geidar Aliyev.

Denouncing a state coup on Russian television monitored by the BBC in London, Elchibey said he would continue to carry out his functions of head of state, and would resign only if the entire Azerbaijani people wanted this.

Elchibey fled Baku last week after a military rebellion in the second city of Gyandzha, and went into hiding in Nakhichevan, his home republic on the border with Turkey and Iran.

The Itar-Tass news agency in Moscow said the lawmakers in Baku handed power to Aliyev after rejecting a proposal by Elchibey that only some his powers be transferred.

Under the crisis-ridden country's constitution, the parliament speaker becomes the interim head of state in the case of a power vacuum, Itar-Tass said.

Earlier in the day Thursday lawmakers had discussed the possibility of holding a referendum on Elchibey's future. He has lost much support in parliament, many lawmakers condemning his flight from the capital.

A mission will also be set up in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, to maintain cooperation with the six new Muslim republics in the Central Asia which had emerged following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Foreign Minister Kabuan Mutoboldy predicted that the opposition parties would be unable to form a ruling coalition after the polls because of policy differences.

The basic policy differences between the opposition parties and the newly floated parties are over security and foreign policy issues.

The SDRP is against Japan's participation in United Nations peacekeeping missions. But the party led by Hata advocates a revision of the Constitution to allow participation in peacekeeping efforts.

However, Muto also acknowledged that the LDP would have a hard time trying to maintain its majority in the Lower House. Both Kometo and the DSP supported the move to send peacekeepers to Cambodia earlier last year.

It has been reported that Prime Minister Kiuchi Miyazawa, who is also the president of LDP, expressed determination "to protect a political system that we have built for decades."

However, many political analysts are also writing off Miyazawa, saying that it would be difficult for him to remain in power after the elections.

Although Miyazawa will preside over the July 7-8 summit of G-7 in Tokyo, nobody believes he will remain prime minister after the election," observed Yoshitaka Sasaki, a senior political analyst at the Asahi Shimbun. "The poll should end 38 years of single-handed LDP rule."

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The Midnight File

Mandela for arrest of Hartzenberg, Viljoen

JOHANNESBURG, June 25: African National Congress (ANC) President Nelson Mandela today called for the immediate arrest of right-wing political leaders Ferdie Hartzenberg and Constand Viljoen. "We demand the immediate arrest of all the perpetrators of this deed," Mandela told a press conference at the World Trade Center, referring to the armed attack by white extremists earlier in the day against the venue of South Africa's democracy talks, reports AFP.

IAEA experts reach Iraq

BAGHDAD, June 25: International Atomic Energy (IAEA) experts arrived in Iraq today to prepare for the removal of 40 kilograms (8.8 pounds) of enriched Uranium, and search for more nuclear secrets. "We are going to work with the Iraqis to try to arrange for the removal of irradiated fuel from Iraq," Bob Kelley, the American head of the 10-member IAEA team, said, reports AFP.

7 killed in Kabul rocket attack

ISLAMABAD, June 25: At least seven people were killed and 19 injured in a rocket attack on Kabul today, Afghanistan's state-run radio said. A Kabul radio broadcast monitored here said that the attack was mounted from the southern edge of the capital. The attack resulted in the destruction of two houses in a residential area. It said that a total of 15 rockets slammed into the city causing widespread damage to property, reports AFP.

Pak Parliament

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solve the assembly when the Chief Minister Manzoor Watto was threatened by a no-confidence motion.

But, as both Hussain and Watto belong to the President's camp, there are fears that the governor might urge the President to impose emergency rule so that he could run the government affairs.

Some sources indicated today that Sharif's federal government might lose the opportunity to seek parliamentary approval to directly rule the provinces.

It could also introduce a bill to strip the President of his discretionary powers, the sources said.

But observers said the success of any such move would depend on cooperation from main opposition leader Benazir Bhutto as Sharif lacks the two-thirds majority he needs in the National Assembly to amend the constitution.

Sharif's ministers have ruled out the possibility of impeachment of the President at the forthcoming session of the parliament.

PM: FP plan

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The desired success in the field of family planning could not be achieved due to the lack of accountability in the implementation of family planning programme, Begum Zia said.

The lack of correct evaluation and supervision had also attributed to this failure, she added.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal ibne Yusuf, Deputy Minister for Health and Family Welfare Sirajul Haq, Health and Family Welfare Secretary Sayed Ahmed spoke on the occasion.

The Prime Minister said her government wanted to create such and congenial environment where the people would accept the family planning programme as a welfare-oriented one.

Passage of budget plan victory for Americans, says Clinton

WASHINGTON, June 25: President Bill Clinton today hailed the Senate's passage of his budget plan as a "victory for the American people" which showed that America was prepared to put its fiscal house in order, reports Reuters.

Clinton said in a written statement that the Senate voted for growth over gridlock and that the vote met his challenges to cut the deficit, balance tax increases with spending cuts, tax more from the wealthy and encourage the movement of people from welfare to work.

"That's why this vote is a victory for the American people," he said.

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DSE chief

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creating greater confidence in investors," he observed.

Khan was, however, critical of the government's slow privatisation programme and said this has been hampering the development of the capital market.

"It is high time the government off loaded the shares of profitable state-owned enterprises to help the flow of securities in the capital market," Khan suggested.

"Almost all the stock markets of South and Southeast Asia are booming because of pragmatic government policies," he pointed out, and added, "Our government, too, has liberalised the economy and opened up the market to the foreigners."

Aminul Islam Khan concluded by saying that the unles steps are taken to make projects equity-oriented rather than debt-oriented, the capital market will not develop.

In this context he deemed the proposed budget was more debt-oriented than equity-oriented.

ঢাকা ওয়াসা জরুরী বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সময় বর্ধিত করার ব্যাপারে গ্রাহকদের নিকট হতে অসংখ্য অনুরোধের প্রেক্ষিতে এককালীন সমুদয় বকেয়া পরিশোধ সাপেক্ষে সারচার্জ ব্যতীত বিল পরিশোধের সময়সীমা বিশেষ বিবেচনায় সর্বশেষ ৩০শে জুন '৯৩ ইং পর্যন্ত বর্ধিত করা হয়েছে।

ঢাকা ওয়াসার ম্যাজিস্ট্রেটের নেতৃত্বে সকল জোনের আওতাভুক্ত এলাকাসমূহে ৩০ শে জুন '৯৩ইং পর্যন্ত প্রতিদিন বেলা ২-৩০ মিঃ হতে সন্ধ্যা ৬টা পর্যন্ত সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্নকারী দল প্রয়োজনীয় সংখ্যক পুলিশসহ ভ্রাম্যমাণ আদালত পরিচালনার মাধ্যমে খেলাপী গ্রাহকদের সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্ন করণসহ পি ডি আর এ্যাঙ্কের অধীনে যথাযথ আইনানুগ ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করবেন।

বিল না পেয়ে থাকলে আজই নারায়ণগঞ্জ অফিসসহ সংশ্লিষ্ট আঞ্চলিক অফিস অথবা ওয়াসা ভবনে বাণিজ্যিক ব্যবস্থাপক (ফোন : ৩২৭২৪৫) বা সদস্য (অর্থ) (ফোন : ৮১৬৭৯৯) এর সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্ন ও আইনানুগ কঠোর ব্যবস্থা এড়াবার জন্য এবং সারচার্জ ব্যতীত বিল পরিশোধের সুযোগ গ্রহণের নিমিত্ত আজই বকেয়াসহ হালনাগাদ পানি/পয়ঃ বিল পরিশোধ করুন। খেলাপী গ্রাহকদের সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্নের এই বিজ্ঞপ্তিই চূড়ান্ত নোটিশ বলে গণ্য হবে।



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