City Rickshaw Pullers' Ways of Life

By AS M Nurunnabi

When we speak of the anarchic traffic situation in the Dhaka city, the teeming rick shaws are mostly blamed for it Rickshaws are Dhaka's special ity. But the way they are prolif erating, they are becoming a cause of our nightmare. According to the estimate of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC). which takes care of rickshaws. their number in the city is about three and a half lakh. nearly four times higher than the licensed ones. Although the DCC reportedly stopped issuing new licences long ago. new arrivals enter the streets through spurious means. Every day their numbers are increasing and the city roads are becoming increasingly less and less traffic worthy.

Yet the stark reality is that in the context of our socioeconomic milieu, they provide far too many jobs and support too many families. Against this backdrop, the men behind the vehicles form an important subject of study

conducted in this behalf under the auspices of the Institute of Social Welfare and Research. Dhaka. The survey provides glimpse of some of the salient features of the life pattern of city rickshaw pullers.

A description of the results on some of the aspects of their life is here attempted on the basis of the statistical data obtained.

Obviously the city rickshaw pullers constitute a substantial part of urban labour force. From the survey it appears that a higher percentage of the rickshaw pullers (about 49 per eent) belong to the age group ranging from 20 to 30 years. A small percentage of persons even of the age group 50-60 years was also found engaged in this profession mainly because in many such families. their adult sons were indifferent or negligent in looking after their parents. A major proportion of the members of their families (65 per cent) has been found to be illiterate and they were not engaged in any occupation.

An important fact that emerged from the survey is that a large proportion of the rickshaw pullers (40.75 per centl possessed no licerice

From Page 1 Col 7

The Brazilians have looked

The Americans also will be

the strongest of all the teams,

their only blemish a 1-1 draw

with Sweden in their group

without defensive midfielder

John Harkes, who picked up a

second yellow card against the

Romanians. That will hurt the

defence, but the Americans

may counter with Roy Wegerle.

an offensive midfielder who

after tearing up his knee in

January in the English league

has only been used as a substi-

In any event, both Argentina

and the tournament will have

to overcome the loss of Diego

Maradona, who has been

banned because of a positive

Thursday night, looking lead-

erless in a 2-0 loss to Bulgaria

that dropped them to third in

the group and a sent them

across the country to play

sence," Argentina coach Alfio

Basile said. "Maradona is the

leader of the team. Today we

had no leader. You could see

that clearly. The team feels

Argentina only have until

Belgium have even less time

to recover. Germany have

known since Monday that they

would play Saturday in Chicago.

Belgium, who looked strong

until Saeed Owairan's twisting

run through their defence on

. Wednesday gave Saudi Arabia a

1-0 upset win, had to sit out

the Group D games Thursday

and will now have to scramble

Degryse, who injured a groin

muscle against Saudi Arabia

and has three days less to pre-

pare than if the Belgians had

managed a mere draw against

Belgian coach Paul Van Himst

overcome miscues that an-

gered coach Berti Vogts in the

first round. They still managed

team knows it can beat them

and we will beat them." Vogts

"We can beat them, the

"We put ourselves in a hole,"

The Germans are looking to

They may be without Marc

to prepare for Germany.

the Saudis.

to win Group C.

quite strongly for Diego."

Sunday to regroup.

"We felt Maradona's ab-

The Argentines couldn't on

England 44 years ago.

play finale.

drug test.

Romania.

The complexities in the for malities in obtaining licences. the high fees and above all some elements of corruption were stated to be responsible for this situation.

Although a very large proportion of them (88 per cent) were previously engaged in other occupations including agriculture, their main motive for taking up rickshaw pulling was stated to be its higher in come. The survey, however, indicated that a good number of those who opted for this profession in preference to other occupations were not happy with their present calling in spite of its comparatively higher income, mainly because it involves strenuous labour. On this account, some of them took to other jobs as part-time occupations like hawking of various articles on footpaths.

In most of the cases (80 per cent), the rickshaw pullers do not own their vehicles. In such cases, they plied vehicles owned by others on fixed payments mostly in half-day shifts. majority of them (68 per cen't) a tendency for saving on a daily basis and normally keep

lived in kutcha houses. Smaller percentages of them earning higher income, (17 & 10 per cent) however lived in semipucca and pucca houses.

In their professional field, a majority of them (59 per cent) frequently fell victims to physical ailments and were subject to harassment by law-enforcing agencies. In solving their professional problems, 50 per cent of them wanted to remain united. A substantial part of them stated that they received support from the owners of their vehicles in case of financial difficulties: A good percentage of them (59 per cent) became members of trade unions and received help from them in case of need. A good percentage of them (48 per cent) cherished the dream of having their own vehicles in future.

On the basis of the data obtained during the survey, some pertinent recommendations were made, which include the following:

though most of the rickshaw pullers earn comparatively higher income, they are not satisfied with the calling mainly because it involves hard labour. Moreover, whatever be their earning from it, it is hardly sufficient to enable them to live with their families free from hardship in these days of rising prices. There is also no guarantee of a stable income from this occupation Besides, the whole profession is ill-organised and ill-disci plined, as a result of which they are often subjected to ha rassment and unfair demands from various quarters.

In this context, it is fel that there is need for their compulsory registration which will ensure their proper con trol, management and regula

2. In order to enable then to earn some additional in come after their daily fixed shifts, scope may be created, at government and non-government levels to provide them with opportunities for obtaining vocational training in such fields as cottage industries. TV and radio repairing and other associated fields.

3. To ensure their social security, such welfare measures as insurance scheme, benevolent funds, etc. may be adopted at government initiative.

4. To improve their housing conditions, low-cost housing schemes on easy loans with low rates of interest may be taken up for them.

5. In order to ensure their protection from harassment and unfair demands from owners and other quarters, there is need for their greater organisation through co-operative societies or unions which may look after their interests not only in the short run by providing financial relief, when needed, but also in the long run when rickshaws will be abolished in the city, with suitable schemes providing them with training, guidance and financial support when the need arises in future for their changing over to other more stable professions like operating mechanised vehicles or working as skilled workers in mills, factories or other

Thursday in Beijing. They also explored ways to enhance further the excellent

and India.

Opposition MPs

Minister for Post and Tele-

communications Tarigul Islam

called on the Vice President of

China Association for Friend-

ship with Foreign Countries

(CAFFC) Chen Hau Su at a hotel

in Beijing yesterday, report

with him matters of mutual in-

terests and how the CAFFC and

ship Society in Bangladesh can

play effective roles in further

strengthening Bangladesh-Chi-

rigul Islam also apprised the

Chinese leader about the ad-

verse effects on the environ-

the Farakka barrage.

ment in Bangladesh caused by

tance for equitable solution of

the Ganges water sharing issue

in the light of friendly rela-

tions existing between China

luncheon in honour of the vis-

iting Bangladesh minister. He

led the Bangladesh delegation

to the conference on "Strate-

gies for Telecom Develop-

ment" which was concluded

The CAFFC later hosted a

He sought China's assis-

During the discussion, Ta-

the Bangladesh-China Friend-

The minister discussed

agencies.

na relations.

From Page 1 Col 4 join the dialogue only if the ruling party accepts the concept of a caretaker govern-

ment. of a caretaker government but the BNP must be ready to accept the provision for a caretaker government in princi-

said that if it a question of fair elections then they had already introduced a bill for strengthening the Election Commission which, he said, would

"The ruling party is, however, ready to accept positive suggestions from the opposition to make the Election Commission more effective,"

From Page 1 Col 5

what do I have to pay. And I

paid. But this time, no. This

time I swear I didn't, take

physical condition.

drugs to play."

He said he was in excellent

"I've never prepared better.

"My whole soul is shat-

In this condition I don't need

tered," Maradona told Buenos

Aires' Channel 13, choking

promised my wife I wouldn't

' "I did not take drugs and

above all I did not let down

those who love me," he said,

ephedrine and four other re-

lated drugs sparked the

biggest crisis in the 64-year

history of the World Cup, and

FIFA, the governing body of the

world's most popular sport,

Ernesto Ugalde he had taken

two medicines bought in Ar-

gentina, Decidex and Nafitizol

to combat an allergy. Ugalde

said their effect would have

out that Maradona had taken

the medicines after the dope

test results came in as posi-

tive, forcing Argentina to

withdraw their inspirational

superstar from the World Cup

the text came back positive

and I asked him what he had

taken," Ugalde said.

cal benefit," he said.

medicines in Argentina.

"I first knew about it after

He said that it was clear

"In the doses he took it re-

Maradona had not been ill

ally produces very little physi-

but had complained of a

"minor allergy," Ugalde added.

Maradona had taken the two

Ugalde said he only found

Maradona told team doctor

was left reeling.

been minimal.

finals.

Maradona's positive test for

denying any wrongdoing.

back tears and adding: "

Dhaka seeks China's help One hurt during hartal dies to solve Ganges issue

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, July 1 Clashes during the hartal yesterday left one killed and three injured in Kasba thana under Brahmanbaria district

- AFP photo

Billal Hossain, 22, report edly Jamaat activist, died at the Comilla Adhumk Hospital last night after he was admitted there in a serious condi-

Witnesses said, the clashes took place between fundamentalists and their rivals in front of the Kasba Biddut Office in the morning. Both the groups used hockey sticks and rods during the clashes that left four persons injured. Billal fa-

The body of Billal was brought back to Kasba from Comilla this morning.

Pabna fans protest ban on Maradona

PABNA, July 1: Some 500 people paraded the main roads of the town today protesting the FIFA decision to expel soccer super-star Diego Maradona of Argentina from the World Cup, reports UNB.

Maradona, idol of millions across the world, was suspended by FIFA, the governing body of world soccer, on Thursday just before Argentina-Bulgaria match for taking a cocktail of drugs containing five banned substances.

Later, addressing a rally a Indara Patty, the speakers said TV viewers in Pabna would not watch the World Cup without Maradona.

They called the latest move to ban Maradona "part of a conspiracy" to discredit the world star.

The rall was addressed by General Secretary of the district unit of the Traders' Unity Council M A Kafi Sarker, district correspondent of Bhorer Kagoj Abdul Kuddus Chadu, UNB district correspondent A B M Fazlur Rahman and Shahidul Karim Mukul, a phar-

nowhere to be seen. Only a few dozen were present in the

Shortly before the end of the closing first phase match in Dallas which left Argentina third in Group D, police sent two cars go guard the headquarters of the Argentine Football Association (AFA) which had withdrawn Maradona from its squad ear-

Most Argentine television that he had merely taken overthe-counter medicine to re-

lieve a stuffy nose. But several of them described this as a silly mistake which had ended up tearing the backbone out of the team.

iated and bitter. "We're a country of 30 million idiots for once again putting our faith in Maradona," said a security guard in Buenos Aires, alluding to the player's

USA '94 president Alan Rothenberg praised FIFA and Argentina's swift action but criticised Maradona

"I would hate for the public

the story of this tournament as I think it's no more than an asterisked footnote," he told reporters. "I don't feel that badly for him. "He's a big boy and should have known better.

The last doping case at a World Cup finals was in 1978

'In Chicago, former German goalkeeper Toni Schumacher. who alleged in 1987 that players use ephedrine, called for an intensive anti-drugs cam-

The Midnight File

20 killed in Brazilian blast

VITORIA. Brazil. July 1: An explosion ripped through three. fireworks stores in a marketplace in the southeast town of Vitoria today killing at least 20 people, officials said. Firefighters were called out to extinguish the biaze which was threatening to engulf the entire Vila Rubim Market, reports AFP.

Mosque bombing: Several arrested in Iran

NICOSIA, July 1: Iranian authorities have arrested several alleged members of the exiled Mujahedeen opposition group in connection with a mosque bombing that killed 26 people, the sate-run media reported Friday. Warrants have been issued for more arrests. Ali Akbar Lisagi, deputy prosecutor of the northeastern city of Mashhad, where the June 20 bombing took place, told Islamic Republic News Agency, reports AP.

Arafat returns to Gaza

From Page 1 Col 4

der by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. Egypt was the first Arab nation to make peace with Israel

Arafat has been condemned by some former Muslim fundamentalist fighters for striking an accord with Israel. But Palestinians in Gaza laid out a hero's welcome amid extremely tight security. Gaza City was decked in

flags and music blared from loudspeakers. Palestinian flags - once banned by Israeli authorities - hung from trees and balconies. Merchants painted storefronts white along Arafat's expected route.

"For the first time we feel we have a president," said Naama Hadawi. "It is a historic

Asked his feelings on returning from 27 years of exile. Arafat recalled his last time in Palestinian territory before fleeing from the Israelis in 1967

"You have to remember that the last time I left, I was there in Palestine secretly," he said in Cairo. Egypt, before heading for the border. "I entered secretly and I left secretly. Now am returning to the first free Palestinian land. You have to imagine how it is moving my heart, my feelings."

Nabil Shaath, the chief PLO peace negotiator, said Arafat would stay in Gaza for four days, then travel to Paris before moving permanently to

Govt used police to protect enemies of Islam: Nizami

Jamaat-e-Islami leader Matiur Rahman Nizami MP yesterday warned the country's anti-Islamic elements of continued agitation by the religious minded people unless they mend their ways or until they are eliminated, reports

Addressing a protest rally at the north gate of Baitul Mukarram yesterday afternoon, Nizami said the successful hartal on Thursday was the spon taneous reaction of the peaceloving, religious-minded people against the anti-Islamic

He criticised police action during hartal hours and said the government used police against Muslims to protect the enemies of Islam.

The Jamaat secretary general also blamed the government for "protecting those unleashing terrorism in the name of progressive politics but hatching conspiracy against Islam."

He alleged that police had attacked the religious-minded, innocent people without any provocation and "even killed a boy to stop the Islamic forces"

Nizami accused the western media and their agents of working against Islam. "They were using a controversial feminist writer as a tool in their fight against Islam," he said.

Presided over by City Ameer A T M Azharul Islam, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Advocate Jasim-uddin Sarker, Saiful Alam Khan and Maulana Abu Taher Mohammad

After the rally, a procession was brought out to protest the killing at Kishoreganj and the countrywide police attack on the pro-Islamic activists during the hartal hours.

BUET

From Page 1 Col 5 third, fourth and fifth years were demanding deferment of the examination dates on the grounds of the World Cup.

Earlier the examination schedule had been shifted to July 3 from June 22 because of the outbreak of the virus fever. the press release said.

.The provosts of the halls, department chairpersons. deans of the faculties and even the vice-chancellor visited all residential halls and asked the students to attend the classes and told the students that the examination schedule would not be changed

The BUET authorities observed that such activities of the students were affecting the academic session of the university.

"If the students continue boycott their classes, drastic action will be taken against them" the press release added.

the Palestinian self-rule areas.

During his stay, Arafat plans to swear in his 19-member cabinet and meet with opposition Muslim fundamentalists, said Freih Abu Medein, a member of the self-rule authority. He will also visit the Jabaliya refugee camp where the Palestinian uprising began in December 1987.

Asked why Arafat chose to go first to Gaza and not to Jericho, the dusty backwater that is the seat of the self-rule government. Shaath said the PLO leader wanted to greet as many of his people as possible

Jericho is the symbol. Gaza is the reality," Shaath said. 'It's where a million people are. I think it's very important that he go into a sea of people first and then the seat of sym-

Meanwhile, the White House hailed Arafat's return to the Gaza strip today as an important step toward further Palestinian self-rule.

Herzog takes oath as FRG president

BERLIN, July 1: Roman Herzog succeeded Richard Von Weizsaecker as President of Germany today when he took the oath of office before both Houses of Parliament in the historic Reichstag building, reports Reuter.

Herzog was until today Chief Justice of Germany's Constitutional Court. As the successor to the popular Von Weizsaecker, Herzog becomes the nation's seventh post-War president.

Herzog, 60, was elected in

New envoy to Japan soon

By Staff Correspondent

Dhaka will shortly name a new ambassador to Japan to replace Mahbubul Huq, who has been recalled.

The new ambassador is likely to be selected from the business community with considerable entrepreneurial and marketing skill, according to

The decision to replace Mahbubul Huq only a few months before his retirement, was taken reportedly because of his lack of initiatives in the

The Bangladesh Economic

sellors would shortly be posted in diplomatic missions abroad.

From Page 1 Col 7 tem should be scrapped fully so that the importers can benefit from the liberalised forex market where good clients can get finer rates from efficient banks.

A high official of the Commerce Ministry told The

Commerce Ministry recently held a number of meetings on the textile and pharmaceutical sectors regarding the passbook system and the meetings also felt the need for scrapping the

the official said.

tem is depriving the clients specially the importers in getting finer rates and competitive service from the banks' counters. When exchange control department of the central bank is being apprised of any LC opening and credit clearance is being taken from different commercial banks before sanctioning and disbursing loans, the passbook system should be immediately scrapped," said a top official of a

"I have not come across any instance where the debt default has been curbed because of the system," he said in reply to a question.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd. 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A. Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-863035. GPO Box No. 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.

1. It has been observed that Knockout stage begins today

said, boldly guaranteeing a

German victory. "We just can't

allow the mistakes we made in earlier games. The Swedes are just looking to survive against the Saudis. Dallas has been the hottest and most humid of the nine venues with temperatures reaching 45 Celsius (120 Fahrenheit). It bothers them that with a noon local kickoff (1700 GMT -2300 hrs BST), the Saudis may be more used to the conditions

than themselves. "I really didn't want to face the Saudis in the second round because they're so used to playing in the heat," striker

Kennet Andersson said. Saudi Arabia also will get back the services of midfielder Fuad Amin, who scored in both of their first two games but had to sit out the Belgian match with a second yellow

The Swiss will have to overlook, or overcome, a 2-0 loss to the Colombians in their final first-round game. Colombia were beaten by both the

Romanians and the Americans. Spain appear to have gotten. stronger. After allowing the South Koreans two goals in the final five minutes of their opener, they drew with Germany and dominated

It will be orange vs green when the Dutch take on the Irish, but a bounty of goals is not expected. The Dutch offense has looked impotent and Ireland have only scored four goals in seven games over the

last two World Cups. The Dutch front looked a little bit better against Morocco, but Ireland will get back the services of defenders Dennis Irwin and Terry Phelan, who were suspended from the last game because of

vellow cards. Nigeria are looking to rally under the flag of African soccer where Cameroon left off in 1990. Daniel Amokachi already has two goals on a team that prides itself on playing attrac-

tive soccer, It seems as though Nigeria can score at will. They needed another goal with time running out against Greece and promptly scored Thursday night to win Group D. They will face a slowly improving Italian team, which still has to cover for the loss of captain-

enterprises.

sweeper Franco Baresi. On the other hand, Roberto Baggio says both a shin bruise and inflamed Achilles tendon

are no longer bothering him. Mexico's biggest worry seems to be their fans. Twice Mexican fans have rioted in Mexico following games, the last time with tragic results.

Bulgaria, who recovered from a 3-0 thrashing by Nigeria in their opener, did so by getting three goals from

At first glance, some matchups don't get the hype or attention. But single elimination has a way of improving a game's importance.

JSD to observe. People's Demand Day August 10

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) leader A S M Abdur Rab yesterday demanded a bicameral parliamentary system composed of public representatives as well as the profes-

At a press conference in the city the JSD leader announced that his party would observe a "People's Demand Day" on August 10 by holding rallies and processions at the upazila

He termed the persisting crisis "an artificial one" and said it had no links with the

true interest of the people. "The crisis has been created to divert the attention of the people from the fundamental issues in a bid to cling

to power," Rab said. The bill on the caretaker government and strengthening the power of the Election Commission had proved that impartial enforcement of law was not possible under the ex-

isting system, he said. · Only a 500-seat legislature could ensure an endurable democratic process and help build a country based on justice and equality, Rab added.

Int'l Cooperative

Day today

The 72nd International Cooperative Day will be observed throughout the country today. The programme of the day will begin in the capital with hoisting of the national and the cooperative flag at the premises of Samabaya Sadan at Motijheel in the city. On this occasion a discussion will be held at the auditorium of Samabaya Sadan at 11 am today, reports BSS.

Hristo Stoichkov.

The navy ship nabbed the boat, MB Al-Khizir, from about five miles south of Kutubdia. "We can discuss the outlines

ple," one AL leader said. But a ruling party leader

help in guaranteeing fair polls.

Mymensingh road mishap MYMENSINGH, July 1: Three people, including a woman and her daughter, were killed in a road accident at Katni in Fulpur thana on My-

Demonstrators holding snakes protest outside the office of the Bangladesh Deputy High

Commissioner in Calcutta yesterday. They carried a banner alleging that recent

fundamentalist attempts, to fan riots in India and Bangladesh through the Babri Mosque or

bilateral ties that already exist

na's role in the region will

have beneficial effect on peace

and stability in Asia which is so

vital for development of our

He said "People of Bangla

countries." the minister said.

desh are very happy that Chi-

nese Premier Li Peng has ac-

cepted Prime Minister Begum

Khaleda Zia's invitation to visit

Bangladesh and that he would

be coming to Bangladesh later

will further bolster our excel-

lent bilateral relations," the

Tariqui Islam left Beijing

yesterday afternoon for Singa-

Smuggled spices

worth Tk 1cr

seized

Bangladesh Navy (BN) ship

Tawheed, during a routine pa-

trol on the night following

Wednesday, seized a mecha-

nised cargo boat and recovered

smuggled spices worth about

boat were also arrested, an

3 killed in

ISPR press release said today.

All of the eight crew of the

Taka one crore, reports BSS.

CHITTAGONG, July 1:

pore en route to Dhaka.

"His eagerly awaited visit

this year.

minister said

"We are confident that Chi

between the two countries.

Taslima Nasreen issues were instigated by the imperialist forces.

mensingh-Haluaghat road today, reports UNB. Witnesses and police said a speeding bus ran over them while trying to save a motorcycle rider.

The victims were identified as: Kulsum Begum, 38, her daughter Helena, 16, and a former UP member Hormuj Ali. I maceuticals executive.

Maradona denies wrongdoing

Ugalde told reporters. "It hurts me a lot because I know how hard he has trained. After each World Cup game, two randomly selected players from each team give a urine sample-which is divided into two. The "B" sample is only

"If he had told me he had

taken the drugs, he would not

have been allowed to play,"

analysed if the "A" sample is positive. Maradona joins

family in Boston BOSTON, July 1: Diego Maradona arrived in Boston this morning where he was met at the airport by his wife and a few friends who left with him for an unknown destination, reports

The Argentine superstar, excluded from the World Cup will no longer travel with the Argentina team. They were due to arrive in Los

Angeles today to prepare for

their second-round match aga-

inst Romania on Sunday. Argentine delegation officials requested that the team's flight number and hotel arrangements be kept secret so they could prepare in peace.

Both the 33-year-old player's samples showed positive after analysis at the UCLA doping laboratory in California. Meanwhile, Argentines blamed Thursday's 2-0 defeat by Bulgaria on the loss of Maradona and predicted a hard struggle ahead.

Luis Menotti, who led the side to victory in 1978. "We weren't good on the attack." The crowds that normally gather in central Buenos Aires when Argentina win were

when Scotland's Willie Johnston was sent home by his

paign.

chilly night.

lier after he tested positive. commentators appeared to believe Maradona's assertions

Many Argentines felt humil

15-month ban in 1991 for cocaine abuse.

to be dwelling on doping as

"Argentina lost a match there was no way it could lose," said former coach Cesar

sources.

economic front. Minister in Tokyo was recalled earlier. Meanwhile, sources said 12 new Economic Coun-

Passbook system

Daily Star that the ministry was also in favour of scrapping the system because the customs authorities were effectively overseeing import situa-The office of CCI&E and the

system.

"But we have not yet come to any concrete decisions,"

Meanwhile, bankers say the credit information bureau of the Bangladesh Bank and the commercial banks own credit control cells are adequately equipped to fight any debt default in the absence of passbook system.

Existence of passbook sys-

foreign bank.

Recently a small survey was

their savings with themselves. A major proportion of them