

# SAVE DHAKA

## TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT : Part - 2

### When roads become lanes

By Krishna P Roy



This big pothole in the city's Khilgaon Sipahibagh Road has been left unrepaired for quite sometime now. — Star photo

Random parking of vehicles on busy streets, unauthorised bus stops and encroachment of the footpaths by hawkers have narrowed down most of the city's main roads, contributing to traffic congestion. Commercial areas like Motijheel, Dilkusha, New Market, Gausia, Mirpur Road, Elephant Road, Green Road, North-South Road, Mitford Road, the Gulistan-crossing, Bangabandhu Avenue, Mouchhak, Maghbaraz and Farmgate areas daily witness a jungle of cars during the daytime. Most of these roads are crowded with vehicles parked in a haphazard manner. Hundreds of trucks occupy the road from Siddiq Bazar to Mitford, Fulbaria to Chankarpool. The number of markets is increasing everyday, but most of them have no parking space of their own. Most multi-storied buildings in Motijheel have no proper space to accommodate vehicles, as a result of which cars remain parked on the roads. The City Corporation (DCC) has 90 markets including 22 supermarkets. Almost all of them have no parking place. Hundreds of vehicles remain parked in front of Gausia, Mouchhak, the Century Arcade, Farmview market, Green Supermarket, Dhanmondi Hawkers Market, Gulshan Supermarket and Eastern Plaza.

terminal. Bus owners and drivers are of the opinion that they have been compelled to set up a terminal at Fulbaria since there is no central downtown terminal for vehicles operating on the town service. Thus, the Gulistan-Fulbaria area has been of necessity turned into a terminal for the town service buses. There are, however, four authorised terminals in the city, for use by the inter-district buses. Over the past years, a bus stand has also emerged at Inner Circular Road (Fakirerpool) for particular use by the big airconditioned Dhaka-Chittagong buses. Some 20 different bus operators have set up their offices in this area. An office-bearer of the AC Bus-Coach Owners Association, Mohammad Ali, defended the parking of their vehicles on the roads by saying that there is no alternative option. "We have called upon the government to provide us with a suitable place. If the government obliges, we shall leave the roads," he said matter-of-factly. He said, "Crores of taka are involved in our business. We do not want to keep our valuable buses on the roads." In this connection he said the BRTC depot in Kamalapur or the vacant place which once

housed the Hardeo Glass Factory in Hatkhola could be provided for the luxurious buses. Such costly buses cannot be parked in the existing terminals due to security problem, Ali said. He further said the police are benefitting from this 'illegal' parking of buses on the roads. Hawkers, street vendors and even the established businessmen have occupied almost 60 per cent of the 163 kms of footpaths of the capital city, barring those on the VIP roads. Not only the footpaths, the vendors now have extended their reach to streets also, particularly in the Gulistan, Motijheel, Sadarghat areas and the older parts of city, as well as Mirpur Sections 1 and 10, thus contributing to a reduction of road space for vehicular movement. One can buy almost everything from these hawkers. In the Kataban area, there is no space for pedestrians on the footpaths because the businessmen of the University Market occupy the pavements with their business items. Prof Nazrul Islam of the USP said both the poor and the rich capture the pavements for their personal interests. The offence of the established businessmen is more serious than that of the poor

hawkers, he said. He also blamed the town planners for not considering the traffic problem while making their plans. A city cannot be built in a proper way without good planning, he added. Absence of a comprehensive plan would create indiscipline everywhere, Prof Nazrul said, adding that the planners must first define the criteria of land use. The DC (Traffic) said his men could not go for action against the hawkers because the DCC is silent about the encroachment of the footpaths and roads. A DCC official, however, said they are looking for alternative places for the rehabilitation of hawkers. The problem could not be solved overnight. There are many factors," he said without elaborating. The DC (Traffic), not known for his liking of sports, suggested that the Gulistan Park, the Gandaria-Dhupkhola ground and the Dhanmondi Club ground could be possible alternative places for hawkers' markets. He also talked about underground markets. However, he could not say for certain if the hawkers would give up the streets once alternative rehabilitation was found for them.

### 3 killed, 23 hurt in road accidents

KHULNA, May 15: Three people were killed and four others injured when an autorickshaw collided head-on with a bus carrying newspapers today on Khulna-Jessore highway near the Phultala health complex, 16 kilometres away from city. According to police and eye-witnesses, drivers of both the bus and the autorickshaw lost control over their vehicles. The autorickshaw was totally smashed. Babu, 20, Minto, 25, and Zaman, 45, died on the spot. Souy, Russel, Namul and Hasan were admitted to the Phultala health complex and KNM health complex with injuries. Police seized the bus, but its driver managed to escape. BSS adds from Comilla: Nineteen persons were wounded seriously in two separate road accidents on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway near Comilla town today. In the first accident in the morning seven persons were wounded when two passenger buses collided head-on at Beltoli, four kilometres south of the town. In the second accident in the afternoon 12 persons were wounded when the driver of a Dhaka-Sonaimori bus lost control and turned turtle at Korpai, 12 kilometres west of Comilla town. The wounded persons were admitted to the local hospital.

### BNP proposes dialogue

From Page 1 especially with the Leader of the parliamentary Opposition, to end the impasse and pave the way for the next general elections. "On this point the Prime Minister is very clear and candid and she is always ready to sit for talks." Asked about a possible meeting soon, between Begum Zia and Sheikh Hasina, Barrister Talukdar, who is also the minister for local government and cooperatives, said such a meeting may take place provided the groundwork is done properly. The two leaders cannot just suddenly decide to sit across the table and achieve a result unless the spadework has been done. In reply to another query, the BNP secretary said efforts should be made so that the two sides could start discussions before the next session of Parliament. The budget session is due early next month. "We should move cautiously since, you know, there are often a lot of hurdles to be crossed for doing something good."

### Dhaka condemns

From Page 1 in Kashmir, said a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry at a weekly regular press briefing. "It condemns strongly the regrettable destruction last week of a revered shrine and a mosque in Charar-e-Sharif, considered, very holy by the Muslims not only of Kashmir in India but also the world over," he told newsmen. The spokesman also said the government deeply regretted the loss of lives which resulted from this act. Dhaka hoped that the Indian government would take all necessary measures to bring the perpetrators of this heinous act to task and protect and preserve the sanctity of the holy places. "The government of Bangladesh will continue to follow the situation closely," he added. When his attention was drawn to the OIC Secretary General's statement, holding the Indian military operation responsible for the tragic incident, the spokesman said, "Its Secretary General's statement,

### 39 more killed in Lankan

COLOMBO, May 15: At least 39 people, including three civilians and 13 soldiers, were killed in fighting between Tamil rebels and government troops in northeastern Sri Lanka, the military said today, reports AP. The soldiers were killed when rebels ambushed them early Monday morning in Tiriyai in Trincomalee district, a military statement said. Troops retaliated and killed 16 rebels in the attack.

### US immigrant visas

From Page 1 tions of corruption. We have discovered that there have been allegations of photo substitution in passports and taking children repeatedly." He emphasised that there were no allegations of complicity of embassy officials and suggested that any sort of complaints of wrongdoing should be reported. Dreher admitted that Bangladesh has been classified as a "High Fraud High Risk" (HFHR) country by the concerned department because of largescale visa complications. He, however, refused to name what other countries, if any, have been given this label. Replying to a question on eligibility under the different DV programmes, Dreher said that perhaps half the people who applied did not meet the basic requirements, including not having education upto 12th grade and two years' work experience. He said, the rules were made clear before the DV programmes were announced and there was no scope for any misunderstanding. "We discourage the ineligible even from applying so as not to lose money." David R Dreher, a former academic, informed that US law allows seven lakh people to emigrate annually, although the number reaches nearly a million, including refugees. "The United States admits more legal immigrants than any other nation in the world." The journalists were later

## Don't be misled by false commitments : PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday urged the people not to be misled by false commitments and assurances of the opposition political parties, reports UNB. In an oblique reference to Sheikh Hasina's assurance that she will waive taxes on 25 big-ha land, the Prime Minister reminded that the present BNP government had already done that soon after coming to power. Pointing at the Awami League leader's assurance to give subsidy on agriculture, Begum Zia said the BNP government is already providing subsidy to this sector. Begum Zia was addressing a gathering of newcomers to her party at her Hare Road office last night. About 2,000 leaders and workers of the Awami League, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and CPB as well as union parishad chairmen and members from Mithapukur thana of Rangpur district formally joined the BNP yesterday. Welcoming the newcomers, she said that the BNP is the party of the common people. Recalling the misrule of the nine years of autocratic regime, Begum Zia said the corruption and misappropriation during the past regime pushed the country into economic disaster. Referring to the development efforts of her government, Begum Zia asked the local leaders to ensure speedy implementation of the development programmes. Former leader of the local Awami League Prof Fazlul Huq Monju Jatiya Party leaders Mohammad Farazuddin Miah, Abu Wares Miah, Dulari Begum, Tajul Islam of Jamaat, Communist Party worker Mohammad Sadequul Bari, UP chairman Mohammad Khalilur Rahman and member Mohammad Abdul Ghani were among the newcomers who spoke on the occasion. Former Awami League leader Motur Rahman who recently joined the BNP alleged that the activities and politics of Sheikh Hasina were aimed at destroying the country's economy and democracy. Food Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Labour and Manpower Minister Mir Shawkat Ali were present at the function.

### Kashmir

From Page 1 The opposition pilloried the government for planning to hold elections in the state, saying that with emotions running high over the shrine's destruction, the timing was not right. "There is no conducive situation for polls in Jammu and Kashmir," Vajpayee said. Meanwhile, hundreds of protesters today attempted to march to the shrine in Kashmir and threw stones at paramilitary forces and attacked government buildings, officials said. At least 50 incidents were reported as an indefinite curfew was relaxed from three to five hours in various towns and villages in Kashmir valley to help people stock up on food, officials said. Police fired tear gas and beat up the demonstrators with sticks, injuring 45 people, officials said. At least a dozen government offices and private homes were set ablaze by the protesters in the state. Angry agitators also burnt an effigy of Prime Minister Rao near Lal Chowk, Srinagar's main shopping centre, blaming him for the destruction of the mosque, police said. In Islamabad, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto declared next Friday a national day of mourning for the destroyed shrine. "Hindu fanatics are promoting war phobia in the region, but we will not allow them to do so," Bhutto was quoted in the English-language daily, the News. On Sunday Bhutto called a special meeting of her Cabinet to map out a protest strategy. The Cabinet agreed to declare Friday a 'black day', fly the flag at half mast, hold protest rallies and offer funeral prayers for the Muslim militants who died in the attack on the mosque. On Thursday, Bhutto will address the nation on television. Pakistan also will send envoys to Muslim and European countries to drum up opposition to India's military attempts to crush the violent separatist movement in its only Muslim-dominated state of Jammu and Kashmir.

### Delimitation

From Page 1 Panchagarh 2 — Boda and Debiganj thana of Panchagarh district Thakurgaon 1 — Thakurgaon Sadar thana of Thakurgaon district, Thakurgaon 2 — Balladanga thana of Thakurgaon district, Dharmagar and Kashipur union of Ranisangkal thana and Haripur thana of the district, Thakurgaon-3 Pirganj thana and Ranisangkal thana excluding Dharmagar and Kashipur union of Thakurgaon district. Dinajpur-1 Birganj and Kaharol thana of Dinajpur district, Dinajpur-2 Bochaganj and Birol thana of Dinajpur district, Dinajpur-3 Dinajpur Sadar thana, Dinajpur-4 Khansama and Chir bandar thanas of Dinajpur district, Dinajpur-5 Parbatipur and Fulbari thanas of Dinajpur district, Dinajpur-6 Nababganj, Brampur, Hakimpur and Ghoraghat thanas of Dinajpur district. Nilphamari-1 Domar and Dmla thanas of Nilphamari district, Nilphamari-2 Nilphamari Sadar thana, Nilphamari-3 Jaldhaka thana and Ranachandi, Borovita and Putimari unions under Kishoreganj thana of Nilphamari district, Nilphamari-4 Syedpur thana and Kishoreganj thana excluding Ranachandi, Borovita and Putimari unions of Nilphamari district. The hearing on delimitations of the constituencies of Rangpur, Kurigram and Gaibandha districts will be held today, while the hearing on the districts of Meherpur, Kushtia, Chuadanga and Jessore will be held tomorrow.

## The Midnight File

### US regrets China's N-test

WASHINGTON, May 15: The United States regrets China's latest nuclear test and urges Beijing to follow other nuclear powers in observing a moratorium, US officials said today. China conducted the underground test earlier today, its first since last October. The blast came just days after China and more than 170 other countries agreed to indefinite extension of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, reports Reuters.

### Pak envoy leaves for Nepal

ISLAMABAD, May 15: A special envoy of Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto left for Kathmandu today for talks with Nepalese leaders, officials said. The emissary, Khalid Ahmed Khan Kharal, Information Minister in Benazir's government, told reporters before leaving that his talks in Kathmandu would cover different issues, including the situation in Kashmir, reports AFP.

## Hasina pledges to set up agro-based industries

KUAKATA, May 15: Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina today said if voted to power the Awami League will set up export oriented agro-based industries and run the local administration with elected representatives for the real benefit of the people, reports UNB. The Awami League President who is now on a tour of southern districts told a public meeting at Kuakata Mahipur ground that her party would reopen closed mills and arrange new employments without retrenching workers. She promised to establish one primary school at each of 68 thousand villages, one health complex at every union as well as thana level hospitals. To ensure services from administration for the common people, the Awami League chief said, she would introduce administrative system with people's elected representatives at union, thana, district and division. She told the crowds that "I have lost everything and have nothing to gain... My only mission is to bring smile to each house of the country, as dream by my father," Hasina said in an emotion-charged voice.

## Imran-Jemima

From Page 1 The Daily Mirror took a more in-depth approach, hunting down, interviewing and photographing a London woman, identified as Bashira Rosser-Owen. "One of the thousands of British women who have converted to Islam," Rosser-Owen is pictured in a headscarf and very somber clothing covering everything but her face and hands, which are out stretched, plams-up. She does not, in this particular photo, appear to be overjoyed about her conversion. Next to her is a photo of the ever-grinning Goldsmith, flaxen locks tumbling over naked shoulders—in a little white number whose neckline reaches to around kidney level. Can a party girl like Imran's new love give up champagne and versace, then pray to Allah like me? Rosser-Owen inquires in the Daily Mirror headline. Goldsmith's life, says the accompanying text, is a giddy whirl of parties, champagne and revealing designer dresses, an endless round of chic night spots and glitzy, star-studded gatherings. Rosser-Owen's life, one infers from the text, is none of those things. The more serious Times informs that "Pakistanis would like to know what, in Allah's name, Imran is doing marrying a westerner, the daughter of a half-Jewish, half-Catholic millionaire financier?" The Times offers the Pakistanis no answer to this question, but does supply some telling quotes. Bride-to-be: "I am so happy." Bridegroom-to-be: "I have found someone who shares my ideals in life." The Daily Mirror warns, she will never be able to drink champagne again.

## 60 killed

From Page 1 Safety would conduct an inquiry into the accident, the minister added. The drivers of both trains were among the 60 people killed in the accident. Rescuers were continuing to pull bodies from the wreckage of the trains this afternoon and Railway Minister Sharief was personally supervising the rescue operation, PTI said.

## Mystery fumes

From Page 1 been on alert since sarin nerve gas was released into the Tokyo subway system on March 20 killing 12 people and injuring 5,000. Doctors at a Yokohama hospital where two men and a woman were taken said the victims were not in serious condition. The fumes were concentrated near the entrance to the New Yokohama Station and broke out at about 9.10 pm (1210 GMT).

### ঢাকা ওয়াসা বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বকেয়া পরিশোধের নিমিত্ত রেডিও, টি, ভি, এবং সংবাদপত্রে তাগিদ দেয়া সত্ত্বেও বকেয়া পরিশোধে ব্যর্থ গ্রাহকদের সংযোগ বিশেষ অভিযান পরিচালনার মাধ্যমে তৎক্ষণিকভাবে বিচ্ছিন্ন করা হচ্ছে। বকেয়া অনাদায়ের কারণে গত দুই দিনে বিভিন্ন এলাকায় ৫৪টি হোজিয়ারের পানি সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্ন করা হয়েছে। তদাধো মোটা অংকের খেলাপি গ্রাহকদের হোজিওগুলো হচ্ছে—১৫/৪/৫ ও ১৭, হাটখোলা রোড, ২২, জয় চন্দ্র ঘোষ লেন, ১৫/১২ ও ২৬/১৩, শেরশাহসুরী রোড, ৬-সি, ৪/১৫, মিরপুর, ৩৫/বি, বক্র-জি, রোড-৭, বনানী, ২৬০/সি, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা, ৪, চৌধুরীপাড়া (পঃ হাজি পাড়া) এবং ৩৩, কাওরান বাজার। উল্লেখ্য যে, খেলাপি গ্রাহকদের সংযোগ তৎক্ষণিকভাবে বিচ্ছিন্নকরণের জন্য বিশেষ অভিযানের কার্যক্রম জোরদার করা হয়েছে।

সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্নসহ মামলার বিঘ্ননা এড়ানোর জন্য আজই বকেয়াসই হালনাগাদ পানি ও পয়ঃ অভিষ্কার পরিশোধ করুন।

ওয়াসা ঢাকা ওয়াসা

### IRBD report

From Page 1 World Bank, Finance Secretary Nasimuddin Ahmed and advisor of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) Dr Zaidi Sattar. They will dwell on macro-economy and fiscal sectors. Later, a general discussion will be held which will be participated by politicians, parliamentarians, officials and donor agencies' representatives. On the second day, discussions will be held on industries and external sector, agriculture sector, health, population and education sector and poverty alleviation.