

# SAVE DHAKA

With the scarcity of water prevailing in most areas, mobile vans of the Dhaka WASA, have become a common sight in the city, particularly during the summer.

The Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) has a full-fledged department equipped with adequate manpower and vehicles for supplying water to any institution or household which may need water.

Many of the consumers, who are deprived of the normal supply of water, have to depend on water supply through WASA's mobile vans.

There is not only inordinate delay but often, uncertainty from the time a customer places an order at the local WASA office and till the water-carrying van finally arrives. And this happens despite the fact that a consumer pays a 'high price' for the water supplied at his place.

Allegations are rampant that a section of WASA employees are engaged in making money on the miseries of the city dwellers.

"No ordinary city dweller can expect service from WASA's emergency water supply system unless he or she pays some extra money, besides the normal charges, for this service," said an inhabitant of Manipurpara where water crisis is acute.

An official of the WASA, seeking anonymity, admitted this saying, "The persons engaged in reaching water to the houses of people by vehicles usually get tips."

"But these people have no right to choose who would get water from the emergency supply system," he said. "Services must be offered on first come first serve basis."

Some residents of Moghbazar area alleged that they had to pay two or three times the original rate.

"We are compelled to do this because we cannot afford to go without water," one of the sufferers said.

## CIVIC AMENITIES: Part -2

### WASA's 'booming' water trade

By Krishna P Roy

Giving an example, one resident said that he saw a WASA vehicle supplying water to a residential hotel, a few yards from his residence, just after the WASA people concerned gave an excuse that they had no vehicles at the time.

Official sources said, the WASA has 26 trucks and 13 trolleys to supply water to the city people on emergency basis. Of these, 11 trucks and 10 trolleys are now operative. The capacity of the trucks varies from 1200 to 2200 gallons, while that of trolleys are between 250 to 800 gallons.

Emergency water services generally become essential in the winter and summer since WASA's normal water supply falls in different areas during these seasons.

The WASA is supposed to reach water to those who ask for it at its zonal offices.

An WASA official said they gave priority to those who call first. "We do not go for any discrimination in selecting persons to offer emergency water service," he said.

When his attention was drawn to the allegations, he said, "It is difficult to catch the drivers of vehicles since they deal with the subscribers directly."

If requests were received from five consumers for emergency water supply, the drivers had the scope to decide as to whom they would offer services first, the official explained.

For 2200 or 1600 gallons of water carried by a truck, a subscriber has to pay Tk 150 and for 1200 gallons Tk 100. For 800, 400 and 250 gallons of water carried by trolleys subscribers have to pay Tk 150, 100 and 50 respectively.

Meanwhile, the WASA has taken up an interim project to immediately increase supply of water by 35 crore litres a day. Some 40 deep tubewells would be installed under the project, expected to be implemented



**JOSTLING FOR A JUGFUL:** A daily chore for thousands of people in this city which lacks a proper water supply system.

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## Computer firms say

### Voters' ID cards can be prepared in 6 months

By Staff Correspondent

A consortium of some 25 computer firms yesterday said they would be able to prepare identity (ID) cards to all the 60 million voters before the next general elections, due early next year.

"We want to assure that we are capable of preparing ID cards for all the voters within six months from the time we get work order," Nurul Islam told a press conference on behalf of the consortium.

Nurul Islam, who is also managing director of Flora Limited, said, "over 5,000 engineers and thousands of people would be employed in the process."

The EC had invited pre-qualification bids in March and wanted to know whether we could prepare ID cards within six months and most of us said we could. But there is no progress in this regard so far," he said.

Saif Shahid of CITECH Co Limited said if the EC did not take any immediate decision in this regard, it would put them in a difficult situation.

"Delay by one week would cost extra two million US dollars to implement the project," he said. It would take one and half a month to begin the work even if the EC floated tender within two or three days, he added.

Abu Mohammed of IBCS-PRIMAX Software Bangladesh Limited said non-availability of electricity would not hamper their work because they would have alternative arrangements.

Replying to questions, they said their estimated cost would be Taka 300 crore. Some 3,000 computer sets would be needed to accomplish the task, they said.

The computer companies also included Aegis International Corporation, AT & T, Development Design Consultant Ltd, Hi-Tech Computers Ltd, Abacus & Automation Ltd, Computer Village, Automation Engineers, Applied Computer Technology, Development Planners & Consultant Ltd, Dolphin Computers Ltd and Computer Shop Ltd.

## Faults in Mirpur sub-station

### Power disruption in some city areas to continue

Star Report

Frequent power disruptions in different areas in the new part of the city may persist for a couple of weeks due to major faults developed in the 132/33 KV sub-station at Mirpur.

Sources in the Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) told The Daily Star that DESA had already approached the Power Development Board (PDB) for providing it with a 50 mw transformer immediately to overcome the current power crisis.

Following the collapse of a 50 mw transformer in Mirpur Grid Saturday night, Dhanmudi, Mirpur, Banani, Cantonment, Badda, Mohakhali and some other areas of the city were facing serious disruption of power supply.

DESA sources said it has gone for power rationing in the areas concerned from yesterday as an interim arrangement and it will continue till the transformer, that went out of order, is replaced by a fresh one.

"It may take even three weeks to restore the Mirpur sub-station and the inconvenience to the consumers for such a long time is regretted," said a DESA source, expressing unwillingness to be named.

However, power supply from a new 2x50/75 MVA sub-station at Basundhara beginning from today will reduce the sufferings of the residents of Banani, Gulshan, Cantonment, Badda and Baridhara areas, said Khan Lodhi Saiful Haq, Executive Engineer of DESA's High-Voltage Sub-station Division in Gulshan.

Problems of electricity supply in Mirpur area would be resolved to a great extent after the installation of a sub-station at Kalyanpur by June 30, he added.

According to a DESA source, there is a remote plan to link the Kabirpur Grid in Manikganj to the Mirpur Grid and once it is done, there will be an end to power disruptions in the new part of the city.

Besides the domestic consumers, the industries, particularly, a large number of export-led garment factories situated in Mirpur area, have been badly affected by the latest power failures.

Owners of garment factories in Mirpur area alleged that timely shipment of their products to the foreign buyers could not be ensured due to power disruptions for hours together everyday.

## S Korean investment

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company has embarked on establishing a cement factory having an annual production capacity of 2,50,000 tons. The work is going on ahead of schedule and the factory is expected to go into production in November, Farooq Sobhan said.

Hyundai had also been asked to consider investing in other heavy industrial sectors, including steel and engineering and the government has offered to enter into a management contract with it for the running of the Chittagong Steel Mills.

Besides, there had been fruitful meetings with South Korean business leaders and investment groups on investments in shoe, leather, railways and telecommunications sectors. Investors also showed interest in pulp manufacturing from green juice.

Bangladesh, the Foreign Secretary said, has excellent bilateral ties with South Korea

and has extended support to it for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

Discussions also took place for establishing air-link between Dhaka and Seoul. It would be examined if the existing flight to Tokyo could be re-routed through Seoul.

South Korea also expressed its desire to take more manpower from Bangladesh and assured of giving top priority to Dhaka in recruiting manpower. A delegation from the Ministry of Labour and Manpower shall shortly visit South Korea for discussions in this regard.

During the Prime Minister's visit, three accords were signed on scientific cooperation, cultural exchange programme and for setting up a friendship hospital near Savar.

## Writ filed

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opportunity to become eligible voters despite having reached the legal age of 18 years, he said.

The lawyer also referred to Serial or Item 11 of the voter registration form No 2 which allowed a voter an option to cast his vote from an area his choice.

But a later directive of the Election Commission said a voter will have to fill up the registration form from the place where he intends to cast his vote.

This latest directive is contrary to Serial 11 of the registration form No 2, inconsistent with the rule and violative of a voter's choice to exercise his right of franchise, Advocate Islam said.

The petitioner sought a rule from the court. After hearing the petitioner's lawyer, the High Court bench comprising Justice Ismail Uddin Sarkar and Justice Abu Sayeed Ahmad, asked the Attorney General to make his submission today.

The court is expected to give its decision after hearing the Attorney General. Advocate Nurul Islam was assisted by Maudud Ahmed, Rabeya Bhuiyan, K S Nabi, Habiba Islam Bhuiyan, Amin Mahfuzur Rahman, Abdus Salam Mandal, Alauddin Khalid and Farah Mahmud.

## Transport strike

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However, a few buses dared to run with police escort.

In the morning, several crackers exploded at the Sayedabad terminal in which at least five persons were injured.

The organisers of the strike claimed that their Rajshahi office was damaged by the anti-strike workers.

## The Midnight File

### Delhi to extend president's rule in Kashmir

**NEW DELHI, May 29:** The union government tonight decided to extend president's rule in Jammu and Kashmir beyond July 17. The union cabinet, which met here under the chairmanship of prime minister, P V Narasimha Rao, is understood to have decided that the extension for the time being shall be only for six months beyond July 17 when the present term of the president's rule expires, reports PTI.

## Child labour issue

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dures they follow when placing orders with a garment factory.

Majority of the buyers' representatives said that before placing any orders they verify that the factories do not employ any under-aged workers, the sources said.

Meanwhile, in a letter to the BGMEA president, the Co-Chairperson of the Child Labour Coalition (CLC), Pharis J Harvey, said that the organisation would postpone its earlier announced boycott campaign against Bangladeshi garments in the US for one week starting from the date the letter was written, on May 26. A copy of the letter was also faxed to The Daily Star.

The CLC had earlier threatened to launch the boycott campaign after the BGMEA rejected an earlier MOU on the phased elimination of child labour on May 17.

In the letter, Harvey said that the CLC would suspend the next phase of its campaign and stop sending out packets of information about the boycott to the press and the public. He, however, added that the organisation would not suspend the boycott programme itself, but would postpone for one week the 'next, mass phase of our work.'

"If, in this week, significant progress is being made toward a new MOU, we will continue the suspension and inform our members of the progress," Harvey said in the letter. "If, however, there has not been significant progress, our plans will proceed as earlier designed."

## Workers' appeal

Meanwhile, a BSS report said, the president of the Bangladesh Garments Sramik Kalyan Samity (BGSKS), Tanvir Siraj yesterday made a fervent appeal to all foreign buyers of garment products in the USA, Europe and Asia not to be misguided by the propaganda be-

## Push-in

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deporting people and none can just be pushed out by being given a label of Bengali or some other name.

Asked about the Indian Foreign Secretary's visit to Dhaka to discuss the water-sharing issue, Farooq Sobhan said: "We are still waiting for a date from the Indian side."

About Pakistani special envoy Prof ND Khan's current visit, he said the envoy has come to discuss the situation in Kashmir and also share their concern about the Charar-e-Sharif incident.

He said that Bangladesh has already condemned the destruction of the Muslim shrine.

The Foreign Secretary refused to comment on the Indian move for holding elections in Kashmir.

## Pak envoy

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agency meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Islamic countries to discuss the matter.

"Pakistan wants implementation of the UN resolution on Kashmir," which calls for allowing the Kashmiris to determine their own destiny, Professor Khan said.

Begum Zia made Bangladesh's stand clear reminding that Bangladesh had already condemned the destruction of the holy Charar-e-Sharif shrine and expressed deep concern over the violation of human rights.

Prof ND Khan said Pakistan deeply appreciated the position of Bangladesh.

During the meeting, the envoy conveyed regards of the Pakistani Prime Minister to Begum Zia and said the people of Pakistan also had great respect for her.

## Prof Yunus

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present as chief guest at the function, attended by 900 guests from 30 countries.

The Freedom Prize is given for the outstanding contribution in science, politics, and social activities.

Prof Yunus got the prize for mobilising private initiative to overcome the vicious circle of poverty. Without regard to prevailing financing practices, he offers partnership to those whose only assets are their will and determination, says the citation.

Convinced that poverty has to be overcome by the poor themselves, he created a bank for the common people, making mini-loans available particularly to women, in order to increase the opportunities for work, prosperity and greater dignity.

ing made by a section of NGOs against the garment industry on the issue of child labour.

The BGSKS leaders said the garment sector in Bangladesh had already earned a good name in the international market and alleged that a section of NGOs had resorted to conspiracies to foil the promising industry.

Instead of serving the purpose of the labourers, these NGOs had engaged in seeking their vested interests.

The BGSKS leaders said these quarters were trying to put 15 lakh garment employees in the country out of jobs.

The leaders said the BGSKS could not allow the destruction of the industry in an independent country like Bangladesh and warned the so-called NGOs not to indulge themselves in any further conspiracy against the garment industry.

They also requested them not to poke their noses regarding the demands of the workers in the country. As regards the demand of the labourers, they said, "We have our own labour, organisations, the government and the BGMEA to settle the matter."

Siraj presided over an emergency meeting of the association at the BGSKS office here. BGSKS leaders including Dr Syed Zakir Hossain, Akhi Khanom, Upendra Chandra Roy, Mohammad Hanif, M A Matin, Helel Akhand, Sohrab Hossain Babu, Bina, Rumana, Raju Hossain, Hiral Sarkar and Advocate Jasim Uddin addressed the meeting.

## 24 more killed in Kashmir battles

**SRINAGAR (India), May 29:** Eighteen Muslim separatist guerrillas and six civilians died in separate gunbattles overnight in this northern Indian state of Kashmir, police said here today, reports AFP.

Army soldiers gunned down six Muslim insurgents after they crossed over to the Indian zone of Kashmir early Monday from the Pakistan-administered part of the divided Himalayan state, an official spokesman here said.

PTI adds: Pakistani troops today fired five rockets on Poonch town from across the line of control (LOC) but there were no casualties, officials said.

## Zia's death

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The Jatiyatabadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangstha (JASAS) will show documentary films on Zia's life and works and hold a photography exhibition at the academy.

The Bangladesh Shishu Academy will place wreaths at Zia's mazar this morning and hold a discussion and *milad mahfil* at 4 pm.

The central committee of the Zia Forum will hold a discussion meeting and a *milad mahfil* at the mazar premises at 4 pm tomorrow.

The BNP has arranged playing the recorded speeches of the late president in different localities of the city.

In a message on the occasion President Abdur Rahman Biswas has called for showing respect of Ziaur Rahman by implementing the ideals and goals of the late president for the welfare of the people and the country.

By restoring the multi-party system Ziaur Rahman had infused dynamism in the otherwise stale politics of the day, the President said.

## AL rejects

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controversial item three days after the start of the country-wide registration made things more complicated.

The AL leader mentioned that he has been receiving complaints from all over the country that most of the enumerators were chosen from the supporters of ruling party.

He suspected that about 80 per cent of the enumerators might belong to the BNP.

Zillur demanded simplification of the registration process to ensure the enlistment of all eligible voters and suggested extension of the time for the job.

Asked whether his party would reject the new voter list, the AL leader said, "We are observing the situation."

Sources close to the AL high command said that the party has been closely monitoring the registration process and has taken a wait-and-see policy before taking a stand on the issue.

## Next budget to focus on rural development: Saifur

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday said poverty alleviation and rural development would be the 'focal point' in the next budget and Annual Development Programme, reports UNB.

"Poverty alleviation is essential for the sustenance of democracy because democracy and intolerable poverty cannot go side by side," Rahman said talking to MPs at the NEC Bhawan in the city.

The meeting was part of the ongoing pre-budget policy dialogue with public representatives, manufacturers, members of the business community, economists, and intellectuals to elicit their opinion on the forthcoming 1995-96 budget and Annual Development Programme.

State Minister for Planning Dr A Moeen Khan, State Minister for Finance Mojibur Rahman and a number of MPs, including Ebadur Rahman, Abdul Majid and Sharfuddin Khasru who recently joined BNP from Jatiya Party, took part in the

dialogue.

As some MPs suggested additional taxes on certain importable consumer items to protect local industries, the Finance Minister said efforts would be made in the next budget to harmonise the interest of the local manufacturers and importers.

"In a free market economy, market force would decide everything and we must not ignore consumers' interest. But at the same time the government is not also ignoring its obligations towards genuine indigenous industries," he told the lawmakers.

"We have to bring a balance among various conflicting interest groups in the present socio-economic condition of the country," he said.

Participating in the dialogue, the ruling party MPs suggested more allocation in education, agriculture, poverty alleviation, rural development, and social infrastructure sectors.

They also urged the Finance Minister to formulate a well-

fare-oriented budget from the political point of view.

The MPs appreciated the girls' stipend and food for education programme of the government which, they observed, is a unique education expansion cum poverty alleviation programme.

Also they stressed linking macro stability with achievements at micro level for long-term economic development of the nation.

About maintaining the stability of the price of rice, the Finance Minister said the food price should be contained to such extent where consumers enjoy and affordable price and farmers are also encouraged to grow rice.

To another suggestion by some MPs, the Finance Minister said the government would always try to contain inflation to a certain limit. Because, he argued, inflation is the invisible huge tax imposed on the people which cannot be allowed to rise in a free market economy.

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## Ctg jetties

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to seven days to reach Chittagong from Singapore, these days it often takes double the time for the consignment to reach Dhaka.

To ease the crisis, Redwan suggested that the fork Lifts lying idle at Mongla could be diverted to Chittagong. Also additional space for storage of containers, urgent procurement of container-handling machinery and immediate clearance of all undelivered and unclaimed import FCL containers and unclaimed empty containers could be arranged and the ship owners and agents permitted to bring their own equipment to handle their containers.

One official at the country's major port which handles about 1200 ships annually told our man in Chittagong that now six berths have been reserved for foodgrain vessels instead of the earlier three, aggravating the situation.

However, the Port Authority hopes the log-jam will automatically clear once the foodgrain imports decrease.

Although the port was supposed to handle four lakh tons of foodgrain in the current fiscal, it has already handled around 16 lakh tons in the 11 months from July '94. Port sources said.

Another four lakh tons are likely to be handled in the next month, the sources added.

## Barisal Medical

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failed. On July 10 last year, the Academic Council of this college had decided not to allow students' politics in the college for the next three years and the students agreed to that.

**3 arrested for beating up servant**  
By DMCH Correspondent

Three people were arrested in the city for allegedly torturing and beating up a young domestic servant.

Nizam, an 11-year-old boy who used to work at a house in Madhubazar area, was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday with grievous injuries. He also bore signs of burns all over his back, hospital sources said.

According to Dhanmandi police, Nizam was severely assaulted by his master, Ripon, 25, and two other inmates of the house on suspicion of stealing on Sunday.

But Nizam's mother, who lodged a case with the police, said her child was mercilessly beaten up for having misplaced a set of keys.

Dhanmudi police arrested Ripon, Musa Harun and Nurul Alam in this connection.

Pappu was admitted to the DMCH in a critical condition.

Sources said, gunmen from a jeep fired on Pappu when he was crossing the area in a motor bike.

Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader, Golum Mustafa Pappu, 22, near the T&T office at Maghbazar yesterday afternoon.

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