The World on Time

DOWN TO EARTH

City's Environmental Conundrum

By AS M Nurunnabi

of reported absence of necessary

Want of desirable assistance

from the members of the law

enforcing agency is also said to

take away the cutting edge from

tion in Dhaka city has reached

such a stage that it has been

lately observed at an interna-

tional seminar that within a

few years Dhaka could be far

too disorderly for traffic man-

agement. Lately we had a wel-

come piece of news that the gov-

ernment has decided to recast

the transport system of the city

in the light of the needs of peo-

ple. The government has re-

portedly initiated a 121.7 mil-

ion US dollar Dhaka Urban

Transport Project to improve

the city's communication net-

work. The project is due to be

launched with funding from the

World Bank. It is early now to

form definite ideas of the pro-

details of the project prepara-

tion studies expected to be com-

pleted in three phases in 1997

are known. At the moment, we

are interested in the short-term

objectives of the project which

seek to streamline the mass

transport facilities with partic-

ular emphasis on increasing

the number of private sector

The phenomenon, as ob-

served by the World Bank and

which has been assuming stag-

gering proportions, is that the

rickshaw-plagued traffic is a

major factor discouraging pri-

vate bus operators to invest in

premium services on city

routes. Low or no profit in a dic-

tated tariff environment has

been identified as another ma-

jor factor behind the absence of

quality bus transport in Dhaka

city. Though, perhaps on these

accounts the government lately

relaxed control on tariff struc-

ture for buses offering premium

services, paving the way for the

announcement that luxury

buses would soon be introduced

on selected city routes, the city

commuters are becoming in-

creasingly impatient over delay

in the introduction of such lux-

ury buses because the ram-

posed improvements until the

The state of traffic conges-

their efficiency

equipment and manpower.

Federal Express

It has become a matter of se-

rious concern that the over-all

environmental scenario in

Dhaka city has been assuming

ominous implications. There

are three major areas where the

worsening situation is promi-

nently noticeable: Deepening

air pollution, mounting traffic

congestions and abominable

garbage disposal system. In

none of these areas, there is any

hint of the slightest improve-

trucks have now become a ma-

jor curse that the city dwellers

are plagued with. Early this

year, a sample survey with par-

ticular reference to monitoring

and chemical survey was con-

ducted by the Directorate of

Environment at different parts

of the city. Some of the more

pollution prone areas due to

heavy automobile traffic such

as Gulistan, Motijheel, Paltan,

Asad Gate and Farmgate show

the proportional presence of el-

ements responsible for air pol-

lution, such as suspended par-

ticulates, sulpher dioxides and

nitrogen oxide at per cubic me-

times higher than the accept-

tre rate which is four to five

able level. That the situation in

this respect has been getting

desperate is evidenced by more

general use of face masks by

commuters in the city. Accord-

ing to observers, running away

from pollution by staying off

the more affected areas could be

an exercise in futile, because

pollution has expanded its do-

minion even up to residential

neighbourhoods on account of

that no matter how quickly and

continually the automobiles

are contributing to the whole

process of air pollution, it is

impossible to reverse the trend.

The two most concerned gov-

ernment agencies - Police and

BRTA — do not seem to be fully

alive to their roles in dealing

with the growing problem. Lack

of coordination and sincere ef-

forts seem to be eroding the

functional ability of both. Al-

though the BRTA officials own

their responsibility of keeping

watch on the conditions of ve-

To observers it is quite clear

background concentration.

Emissions from cars and

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mess in which the high proli-

feration of rickshaws plays the

leading part is the virtual glut of

newly-introduced re-conditio-

ned passenger cars on city

streets increasingly restricting

the available road space. New

dealers in re-conditioned cars

are found to open up shops in

increasing numbers in

important city localities. The

stock position of most of these

car dealers is generally ob-

served to be so much volumi-

nous that it seems to burst at

the seams, sometimes causing

the stock to overflow on to the

adjacent road pavements. Ac-

cording to observers, the alarm-

ing growth of the traffic incon-

venience and the inability of

the authorities to do anything

noteworthy in alleviating it

have the potential to be agents

It is common experience that

the city's garbage disposal sys-

tem is highly defective and sub-

ject to callous indifference and

neglect. Not to speak of the less

important side-streets, lanes

and by-lanes, even more select

areas of the city are found to be

victims of irregular garbage

clearance. Last year, The Daily

Star launched the "Save Dhaka"

campaign with a subsequent

Round-table Conference' at

which representatives of city

service organisations took part

The fruits of deliberation of

that conference appeared to

produce little impact in im-

proving the quality of civic life.

has lately introduced jumbo-

sized garbage containers at

many street corners which are

hauled away later by special

type of vehicles later when

filled up. This special type of

contraptions appears to prove

more as inconvenient obstruc-

tion limiting road space and a

source of greater agent of envi-

ronmental pollution, because

the garbage piles are strewn all

around outside the confines of

the garbage containers and are

irregularly cleared away. The

schedules for night-time

garbage collection, said to be in

operation from August 1 last, is

reported to be functioning im-

properly. Even during day-time.

garbage trucks are often seen to

pass through busy traffic routes

Yasmeen

From page 1

The Mohila Parishad and some

other socio-cultural organisa-

tions in Dinajpur have also

taken up a four-day programme

including meetings, rallies,

photo exhibition and cultural

The incident drew interna-

tional attention. Delegates at

the fourth World Conference on

Women in Beijing in Septem-

ber, 1995, expressed outrage at

the incident. A special protest

demonstration was organised

by the South Asian Women's

Groups on Violence Against

Women at the NGO Forum site

incident, the CID chargesheeted

six policemen under the Women

and Child Repression Act of

1995 in May last. Later, the ac-

cused persons filed a criminal

revision case with the High

Court praying for transfer of

the case to Bogra, according to

Nari Samaj and other local

women's groups are protesting

the probable transfer of the case

from Dinajpur District and

Sessions Judge Court to a spe-

cial tribunal in Bogra. They are

also demanding that trial of the

of the case and said that justice

would not be done in the trial if

the case is transferred. "This

will only serve the interest of

The people of Dinajpur, the

After investigation into the

in the conference.

functions to observe the day.

at peak hours.

The Dhaka City Corporation

of total chaos in public life.

The Baily Star Bullish trend at Dhaka, Ctg stock markets Star Report

The average turnover was The stock markets in Dhaka 5.12335 in volume and Tk 10.37

the capital market through the

Investment Corporation o

Bangladesh (ICB), impacting the

stock markets positively," said

Imtiaz Hossen, chairman of the

funds in private sector and

other positive measures taken

by the government have helped

growth of the stock market. He

expected that the upward trend

would continue in the coming

secretary and a councillor of

the DSE however said that

market indicators went up be-

cause prices of many issues.

went up without any "logicar

7 hurt as AL, JP

workers clash

in Pirojpur

people were injured, three of

them seriously, in a clash be-

tween the activists of ruling

Awami League and Jatiya Party

at Kaukhali today, reports UNB.

were rushed to Kaukhali Thana

Health Complex while four

others were released after first

erupted at about 11 am follow-

ing altercation between Kauk-

hali thana AL leader Advocate

Nurul Haq and Shialkathi uni-

on JP president Hemayet over

the coming by-election.

aid, police said.

The three seriously injured

Witnesses said the clash

PIROJPUR. Aug 23: Seven

M A Hug Hawlader, former

weeks.

He said allowing mutual

and Chittagong witnessed a bullish trend last week as prices crore in value. of a number of blue chip issues Out of 116 issues traded on increased, pushing all market an average, 65 gained and 44 suffered losses while 6 issues indicators up.

Share trading gained moremained unchanged. The All Share Price Index at mentum on the floors of Dhaka and Chittagong stock exchanges late last week after a bearish Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE) marked a rise of 11.75 trend in the previous week. points over the previous week's

The All Share Price Index at the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) increased by 28 points to reach 1156.79 points on Thursday, the closing day of the week from the previous week's closing-day position of 1128.44

points. The market capitalisation of the bourse reached Tk 7956.74 crore which is Tk 214 crore higher than that of the previous

week's closing-day record. A total of 30,74,015 shares started soaring since Tuesday and debentures valued at more last, gaining more than 16 than Tk 62.24 crore exchanged points in one-day trading. hands during the week's busi-On Wednesday, the price in-

British minister

Director General of the European desk in the Foreign Ministry Nazin U Chowhdury and out-going British High Commissioner Peter J Fowler. who was due to leave Bangladesh later in the day. were present at the Zia Interna

tional Airport to see Dr Fox off. Emphasising that political stability was an essential prerequisite for attracting both domestic and foreign investors. Dr Fox expressed "cautious optimism" about the present state of economic and democratic progress in Bangladesh.

He said firm and decisive ac tions are required to be taken to ensure quicker reforms and economic strides

The British Under-Secretary of State said he had personally seen the procedure of work of the British immigration and consular officials during his visit here. The British High Commission, he said, would thoroughly examine all visa and immigration applications and try to reduce the length of time to process all cases.

In reply to a question, he said, there is no immediate plan to open visa or consular office in Sylhet from where many people immigrate to Britain.

He told another questioner that the current percentage of visa rejections from Bangladesh stood at around 39 per

Referring to the cost of visa processing, which had been re ported to be high. Dr Fox said it is not possible to reduce the fees as it is a worldwide scheme

About his meetings with several ministers during the visit. he said he was satisfied at the discussions and was "impressed about their general understanding of our problems."

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PHILIPS



I'rime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing high officials of Rajshahi division at the Uttara -PID photo Ganabhaban in Natore yesterday.

Emergency declared: Army called out

Heavy rains cripple Lahore: 25 killed

LAHORE, Aug 23: A state of emergency declared today in the Punjab capital of Lahore and the army called out as heavy rains caused widespread devastation, killing at least 20 people around the province, officials said, reports AFP.

The torrential rains have claimed at least 25 lives in Lahore, with the toll likely to rise as residents reported that hundreds of houses had collapsed. Doctors have been asked to

remain on duty round the clock, the officials said. Leave has been cancelled for

police, social security and civil defence employees as well as education department staff. they said. Under the emergency orders,

the civil servants have been asked to "report immediately" to rescue operation areas, offi

Khaleda From page 1

it was in power and said BNP believed in the politics of development and would continue its efforts to improve the lot of people even while in the opposition.

Speaking on the plans of her party to develop the education sector, the BNP Chairperson said female education would be made free upto higher secondary level of enable the poor students to get higher education.

She said BNP being the biggest opposition party in the parliament would continue to strongly pursue the government to make balanced development of all parts of the country.

Mirpur clash

From page 1 sources said. Two photo journalists were also injured in the

The clash erupted as a large number of youths could not enter the stadium even after buy ing tickets, police sources said The concert was sponsored by Coca Cola.

The youths went on a ram page outside the stadium and pelted stones at police posted

Police resorted to baton charge and lobbed about 10 tear gas shells to disperse the mob and bring the situation under

Pallabi police picked up four persons from the spot. A large number of policemen were deployed in the area following the incident.

VC's deadline From page 1

last night. Prof Imajuddin however, evaded a direct reply when asked whether he would resign today if he did not get any response from the government and said "let the time expire and see what happens.

Meanwhile, the situation on the campus remained tense vesterday though there was no

are scheduled to resume today. The university authorities had earlier suspended classes following clashes between JCD and police on Wednesday.

"The entire police force is out on the streets to help out the affected people." Kamran Lashari, Lahore's administration chief, said.

"We are trying our best to save human lives," he said. adding that army troops had been summoned to aid the emergency effort.

Residents said the rain had "crippled Lahore," Pakistan's second largest-city with more than seven million people. Several localities were under six feet (about two meters) of water.

Doctors at the city's general hospital said patients had been shifted to the first and second floors as its ground level was

many roads had been inundated, hampering the movement of police vehicles.

Train service was badly affected and flights were diverted to other airports due to bad weather here, officials said.

services were disrupted in several areas, and the city's pager service was also out of order police and company officials

Jamalpur project

Refinement Study is expected to be completed early next year when WARPO hopes to initiate a competitive bidding process to contract out the job.

A consortium of consultants, led by Halcrow and Partners, is conducting the studies to design and refine the original

The Jamuna Char Integrated Development Project (JCDP) and a Jamalpur-based NGO Unnavan Sangha were jointly

component. The first phase, covering the sample areas, was completed during April-June. Information centres under the guidance of local NGOs were opened in five strategic spots in the project area to disseminate project-related information for about

were amazed to see the depth of popular knowledge at the grassroots level when they gave their views on such a complex project involving engineering designs and other issues.

were implemented. The second phase of people's

participation which involves 298 mouzas is about to begin. They said that the first phase covered 25 sample mouzas extensively, with a rapid anthropological appraisal for each mouza before holding two successive meetings in each of those. Finally, the meetings were also held at the union

Hasina From page 1

which no development is possible, according to UNB. We want to generate more

power for increasing local and foreign investment," Hasina said. "We're thinking of generating power using the coals of Barapukuria." Hasma also laid emphasis

on improving the communication network for overall development of the country. In this regard, she said the development activities of the northern region would be accel-

erated after the completion of the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge next year. About future plans of her new government, the Prime

Minister told the officials that they wanted to remove illiteracy from the country within 10 She also directed the con-

cerned officials to work sincerely to ensure health for all by the year 2000. This government has also

given priority to agriculture and that's why kept a budgetary provision of Tk 100 crore for giving subsidy to the sector. Hasina said. "You'll have to remain alert so that farmers do not suffer for anything at any time," she told the officials.

The Prime Minister also stressed the need for massive afforestation and called upon everyone to plant at least two saplings during the planting seasons.

Later addressing the Awami League leaders and workers at another meeting here in the afternoon the Prime Minister said that a certain political party has started acts of terrorism to create law and order situation in the country.

"That party is hatching conspiracy in a planned way to deteriorate law and order," she said referring to the Thursday's Bogra incident in which one police and two students were

killed in armed violence. She also blamed the BNP for hatching conspiracy to make the parliament inoperative and

ineffective. She alleged that the BNP disrupted the business of the House by creating hue and cry without any cause. They did not allow

the ministers to tell anything in the House. The Awami League President called upon the party leaders and workers to mobilise opin-

ing against terrorism and build up resistance against the evil She said: "You'll have to go to the people to make them aware

of their social duties, you have to involve yourself in a massive way to remove terrorism from the society. Earlier, the Awami League

candidates in the region for the September 5 by-election were introduced to the party workers at the gathering.

Faroog

From page 1

officer "very clever" and said it is a tough job for the investigators to open his mouth on jail killing and other issues. The team included Special

Super (Crime) Shahidullah Khan and investigation officer of the case ASP Abdul Kahhar Akand of CID, ASP Khalilur Rahman of SB and a Deputy Director of the NSI.

The retired army officer was brought on police remand on Thursday from Dhaka Central Jail to the Police Control Room.



বাংলাদেশ পোশাক প্রস্তুতকারক ও রপ্তানীকারক সমিতি

শিশু শ্রমিক সংক্রান্ত জরুরী সভা

বিজিএমইএ'র সকল সদস্যকে জানানো যাচেছ যে বিজিএমইএ, ইউনিসেফ ও আইএলও এর মধ্যে স্বাক্ষরিত সমঝোতা স্মারক (এমওইউ) অনুসারে পোশাক শিল্প কারখানায় কর্মরত শিশু শ্রমিকদের বিষয় আলোচনার জন্য একটি জরুরী সভা আগামী ২৫ আগষ্ট ১৯৯৬ তারিখে বিকাল ৪ ঘটিকায় হোটেল সোনারগাঁয়ে (বল রুম) অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

পোশাক শিল্পকে বাচাঁনোর লক্ষ্যে উক্ত সভায় বিজিএমইএ'র সকল সম্মানিত সদস্যকে যোগদান

ভারপ্রাপ্ত সচিব

hicles plying on the streets, shackle transport system of the they are said to stop short in the city has been fast going downarea of performance on account hill. Compounding the traffic

From page 1

authorities 'failed' to maintain neutrality and the hall administrations 'succumbed' to the pressure of the student wings of political parties in the last few

"We are passing through an uncertain situation on the campus," the DUTA leader said while talking to The Daily Star

last night. . A section of teachers and students of the DU also alleged that the 'capture' of halls might have some links with the election of the Dhaka University Central Students' Union

(DUCSU), pending for long. The pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) swept the last DUCSU elections held in 1990. At that time, JCD was dominant in most of the resi-

dential halls. Attempts by the university authorities to hold DUCSU polls in the last five-year failed, due to violent activities of the two major student organisations in this connection, sources concerned pointed out.

During the BNP rule for the last five years, JCD maintained control over eight halls out of eleven for male students. The Awami League-backed Chhatra League (BCL) controlled only Jagannath Hall and the re-

WB suggestions

From page 1 Bangladesh for back-sliding in broadening the coverage of VAT in 1996 financial year. On the contrary, it pointed out, the government generated new VAT exemptions to some agricultural inputs with the fiscal year 1996 budget based on an argument that this would help competitiveness of the concerned

activities and tax revenue losses would be negligible. The bank said such backsliding jeopardised the achievement of wider VAT coverage, weakened VAT's incentive neutrality and invited growing pressure from vested interests on the integrity of the tax, encouraging more requests

for exemption. It also criticised the government for leaving out locally produced textile outside VAT net. The government was justifying the VAT exemption for textiles arguing that not much is lost since many domestic textile mills are incurring losses anyway, but the bank argued this rationale could result in plethora of exemptions.

Violence on DU campus maining two, however, were under the control of a faction of BCL known as Montu group, al-

> When the caretaker administration took over on March 30, this year, BCL regained control of the two halls which were under the control of Montu

> tial halls after the new government took over. The BCL capcame to power in 1991, the

sources mentioned. Both the BCL and the JCD blamed each other for the present violence on the campus.

JCD blamed alleged that the law enforcing agencies were helping the BCL militants in their bid to capture the DU

halls. BCL leaders denied this and said that the campus situation turned volatile due to factional rivalry in the JCD. A faction of JCD had already joined BCL a

KMC students continue strike

KHULNA, Aug 23: Khulna Medical College (KMC) remained closed for the 7th day today as the students continued their strike to press for withdrawal of transfer order of the principal, reports UNB.

The strike began on August 17 following the transfer order of Principal M Zobair Hossain to Dinajpur Medical College as Prof of Gynaecology.

The students said they would continue their strike till the cancellation of the transfer or-

sain has taken over the charge of the Principal Ministry issued the transfer order of Prof Zobair directing him to hand over his charges to a senior professor and join the

Otherwise, his job would ausigned from his post after re-

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legedly backed by the BNP, they

Capturing the Shahidullah Hall last month, BCL started its move to occupy other residentured three other halls - Sir F Rahman Hall, Mohsin Hall and Fazlul Huq Hall - till Thursday. These halls went under the control of the JCD, when BNP

few days back, they claimed.

Meanwhile, Dr Delwar Hos-

On August 12, the Health Gynaecology department of the

Dinajpur Medical College by ceiving the transfer order.

case be held in Dinajpur. The Nari Samaj at a press conference at the Jatiya Press tomatically be terminated, the order said. He, however, re-Club in the city last week protested the probable transfer

the accused persons", a Nari Samaj leader had said. Earlier, in June, lawyers and leaders of different socio-cultural and political parties in Dinajpur formed a legal aid committee for the case and protested its probable transfer.

Snowstorm kills 40 Hindu pilgrims in Kashmir

JAMMU, India, Aug 23: Forty Hindu pilgrims were dead and thousands were in danger as monsoon rains and a freak snowstorm swept across the Himalayas during their annual pilgrimage to a mountain temple, authorities said Friday, re-

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuinyan addressing a public meeting in front of

the Jatiya Press Club yesterday protesting alleged 'repression' on BNP workers.

ports AP. An estimated 80,000 people were in the mountains when the storm struck, sending rain onto slippery lower slopes and six inches of snow into colder higher elevations.

Eight people died today alone, and heavy snow was still falling, authorities said. The state of Jammu-Kashmir government tried to send

helicopters to rescue pilgrims

who were very cold or sick from

the exertion, but bad weather prevented any flights, Press Trust of India news agency said Authorities on Friday called off the annual pilgrimage to the ancient Amarnath caves to pray at the temple of Lord Shiva, asking than 10,000

Titas Gas From page 1

Hindu worshipers not to leave

where he died at about 1:20 pm yesterday, police added. The reason behind the

killing could not be known immediately. The body of Mostafiz was handed over to his family yesterday afternoon after autopsy at the DMCH, police said,

Chuadanga for burial. A case has been filed with the Ramna thana. However, none was arrested till last

adding the body was sent to

Jammu, the summer capital of the northern state. But more than 115,000 people had already left. The pil-

grimage began August 16 and

-Star photo

includes a long bus ride and an arduous 3-day trek to the temple 13,500 feet high. Much of the route to the Amarnath cave was buried under snow, making it difficult for

It was believed about 35,000 worshipers had completed the journey and returned, but there

From page 1 der Rauzan thana on July 7 and

three lakh. about a week.

abductors. Sources said that the alleged ring leader along with his gangmates are now moving

coity and illegal toll collection went up alarmingly, sources in

demanded a ransom of Taka

other means, rounded up the father of the alleged ring leader of

Fatikchhari areas, cases of da-

eas have reportedly left their village homes and are staying in rented houses in Chittagong city to escape the wrath of toll coflectors and dacoits, sources also informed.

In Rauzan, Hathazari and

Many villagers in Rauzan, Hathazari and Fatikchhari ar-

the pilgrims to return to safer fresh clash. The classes at the university was no officials estimate.

Ctg: Terrorism

Police searched for Bhola for The terrorists released the victim when police, finding no

freely in the locality.

submerged. A senior police official said

Telephone and electricity

From page 1

given the people's participation

seven months. JCDP officials said they

> WARPO officials also said that people would be involved during the operation and maintenance of different project components when they

বস্ত্র ভবন, ৭-৯ কাওরান বাজার, ঢাকা-১২১৫

করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।