

Dhaka Day by Day

Dream for a Piece of Dhaka

by Samia Islam



Pitiable condition of Circuit House Road. — Star photo

Circuit House Road used to be a very tranquil, homely street even as recently as two years ago. It was clean, free of noise and traffic congestion. Residents never had to face any shortfall in water supply, nor was there ever frequent power failures and fluctuations like some other parts of the capital. However, in the past couple of years a lot has changed and all for the worse. There are six more multi-storied apartment complexes on the same street this year, home to about 80 new households. More are on the way since several plots along the road are in the process of development. Most of the old residents have given up their family homes to make way for newer and higher columns of concrete to be built. This is easily the street with the highest number of housing complexes in the city now. But with all the development, in the race for profits, the area has been reduced to just a shadow of its former self.

The infamous Shantinagar water-logging has spread its wings into Circuit House road, which is always partially under water now even when there hasn't been any rain in the past 15 days! The constant stagnation of water has damaged the road to such an extent in places that walking or taking a three wheeler could prove fatal for any unsuspecting individual. On top of that there are the regular excavations for telephone lines, which show no sign of being completed. Every day at least half a dozen rickshaws fall (or is it capsize?) into the deep craters at the intersection with Shantinagar, where the road is worse because of the Garden City monolith that is being constructed in that particular corner.

This Garden City, with something as preposterous as a sky garden in the proposed design, is being built on a plot which used to be a pond. So

it is not impossible for someone with even a layman's knowledge about structures, foundations and building construction methods to figure out that the present sorry state of Circuit House road has a lot to do with the imposition of this dream complex. The water drained out from the pond has to cause some sort of irregularity in the life of the people who live in and around the area, it just can't evaporate into thin air! The construction of the super structure has also affected major sewerage lines, making the stagnant water fouler. The gutters are all jammed up, due to all the construction run-offs, the electricity is erratic, every day a transformer somewhere or the other blows up and the power takes about 3/4 hours to be restored. Water crisis has reared its ugly head. All this in an area which used to be virtually free of all these problems even a couple of years ago. So who can say what it will be like in the next two years? The builders will have completed their work, new residents will have moved into their dream houses — a piece of Dhaka to call their own, isn't it all about the dream? But will it be worth destroying everything else around in the process?

The city is developing at a much faster rate than is safe and not along any planned guidelines. Seven-story apartment complexes crumble down these days in this very capital. And all because everybody is obsessed with the dream and nobody has the time for details. Sometime back a fire broke out in one of the newer apartment buildings on the street and it was then that residents realised how trapped they were in their own homes, how unsafe it was a good thing that the fire was contained in about 15 minutes. But the houses are so close together, what if one of these days they don't get so lucky?

Technological dev must to face challenges of 21st century : PM

Diploma engineers' convention begins

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said the country needs huge technical manpower to free it from poverty and hunger, attract foreign investment and ensure proper utilisation of resources, reports UNB.

She called for overcoming the country's shortcomings in the field of technology in order to face the challenges of the ensuing new millennium. "It will be impossible for us to compete in the free market economy in the coming 21st century if technological mismanagement and backwardness continue," Hasina said while inaugurating the 11th National Convention of the Diploma Engineers at Kakrail in the city yesterday. Institute of Diploma Engineers has organised the four-day national convention, which is being participated by diploma engineers from all over the country.

Addressing the function, the Prime Minister said the next century would be the most flourishing era of technological advancement.

"The world of the 21st century will be more dependent on technology and we have to take all-out preparation from now on to face the challenges of the century," she said.

Hasina termed the theme of the convention for this year — Technical Education for Livelihood and Development — very much timely, "because the country needs huge number of technologists." Recalling last year's theme of the convention, "Water for Life and Development," she said there is no alternative to water for development and life and for preservation of the environment.

The previous governments were negligent in the use and

preservation of water, she said, adding that the present government will introduce a water policy, emphasising the use of surface water, to ensure proper utilisation.

The government has already taken all-out initiative to realise the due share of water through bilateral discussion with the neighbouring countries," she told the diploma engineers.

On the power issue, the Prime Minister said the sufferings of the people were increasing day by day and mills and factories were facing severe losses due to irregular and inadequate supply of electricity.

System loss in the power sector is about 40 per cent, she said, calling upon the diploma engineers to put in their all-out efforts to reduce the system loss to a tolerable level.

What's on today....

Painting exhibition: The 4th solo exhibition of paintings by A Muqtadir will be inaugurated. Venue: La Galerie, 54, Kemal Ataturk Avenue, third floor, Banani C/A. Time: 5:45 pm. The exhibition will remain open till November 18 from 9 am to 6 pm.

Birth anniversary of Iqbal: A discussion meeting and recitation from Iqbal's poetry will be held. Venue: Allama Iqbal Society Office, 380/B, Mirpur Road (2nd floor). Time: 4 pm.

Musical evening: The Bangladesh Shashtriyi Sangeetan will hold its monthly musical evening. Venue: Moushumi auditorium, 55, Central Road (opposite to Ideal College). Time: 7 pm.

Shaheed Nur Hossain Day: Nur Hossain Sangsad has organised a discussion meeting. Venue: Awami League office, at 23, Bangabandhu Avenue. Time: 11 am.

PIB training course: A training course on 'Bangla Language in Newspapers' will begin. Venue: PIB auditorium.

Drama: The North-South University Cine and Drama Club will stage two dramas. Venue: American International School auditorium. Time: 7:30 pm. The dramas are 'The Dead Peacock' and 'Bidagha Romonikul'.

Rotary Club of Dhanmondi: The weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 5:30 pm.

Rotary Club of Greater Dhaka: The weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Officers Club, Baily Road. Time: 5:15 pm.

Seminar on 'empowerment of women' held

Minister for Agriculture, Food and Disaster Management and Relief Begum Matia Chowdhury yesterday stressed the need for expansion of activities of the country's women organisations, reports BSS. She was inaugurating a seminar on 'empowerment of women', organised by Business and Professional Women's Club in the city. The minister urged all concerned to play their role in solving the problems faced by the country's working women.

The function was also addressed by Rokeya Maman, Prof. Latifa Akhand and Razia Matin Chowdhury. MP. Mahmuda Islam of Dhaka University presented the keynote paper while Prof. Hamida Akhter Begum, principal Hamida Ali and Maleka Begum participated in the discussion.

Kali Puja today

By Staff Correspondent. The country's Hindu community will celebrate 'Kali Puja' today. In observance of the puja various temples have taken different programmes. The puja is held on the last day of the dark fortnight of Bangla month of Kartik, said a press release.

City's Sree Sree Bardeshwari Kali Mata and Swasthani Committee will hold a religious discussion at Rajarbagh in the afternoon. Satish Chandra Roy, the state minister for Fisheries and Livestock and Moulana Nurul Islam, state minister for Religious Affairs are expected to attend the function.

158 held

Police arrested 158 people from different parts of the city on various charges during the last 24 hours till 8 pm yesterday, reports UNB. Of the arrested, 21 were wanted criminals and 35 were held for killing, robbery and snatching.

100 city's phone lines to be restored

About 100 defective telephone lines of the city's New Bailey road and Circuit House road are expected to be restored on Tuesday, reports UNB.

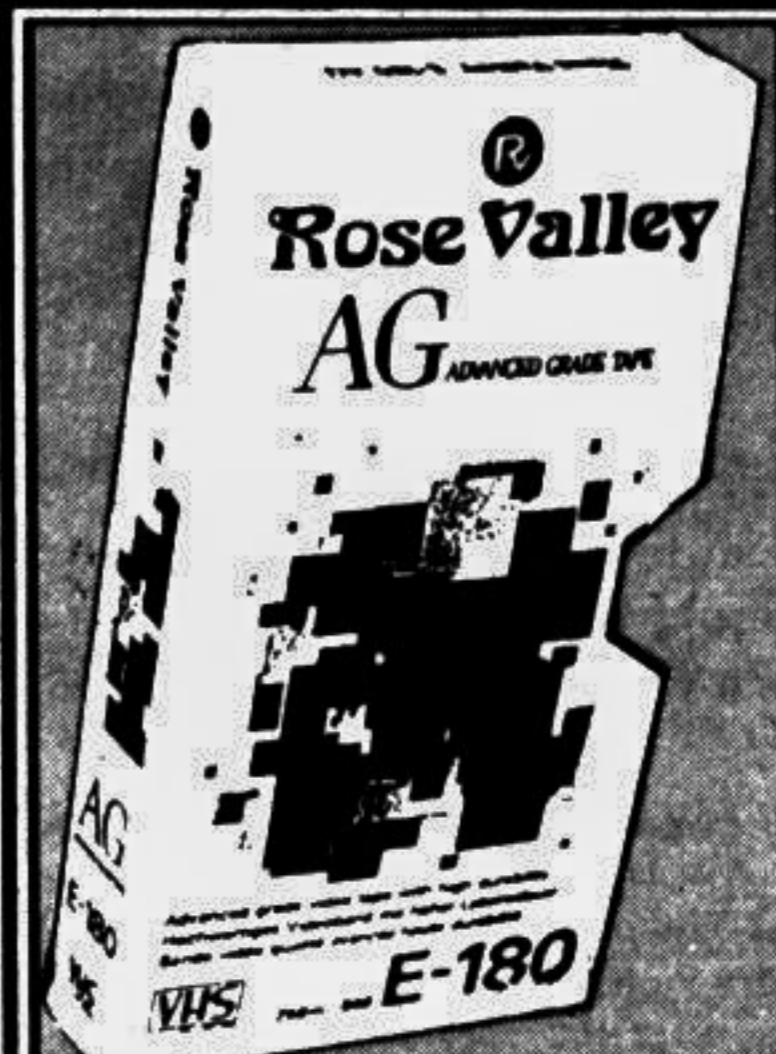
Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board in a statement said the telephone lines went out of order as 250 pairs of underground primary-cable were damaged by WASA during its development works.

The Board regretted the inconvenience to its valued subscribers.

Tender Cancellation Notice

This is for general information of all concerned that the Tender No. 1/96-97 circulated vide this office Memo. No. T-12/1242 dated 19.10.96 for the works of 'Re-excavation of Archi River and Branch Khals Project' is hereby cancelled for unavoidable circumstances.

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Gumti Water Dev Division
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ADMISSION NOTICE

Applications are invited from eligible female candidates for admission into the 1st year MBBS Class of Z.H. Sikder Women's Medical College, Dhaka. The application forms will be available from the office of the Rector on payment of Tk.500/- (Non-refundable).

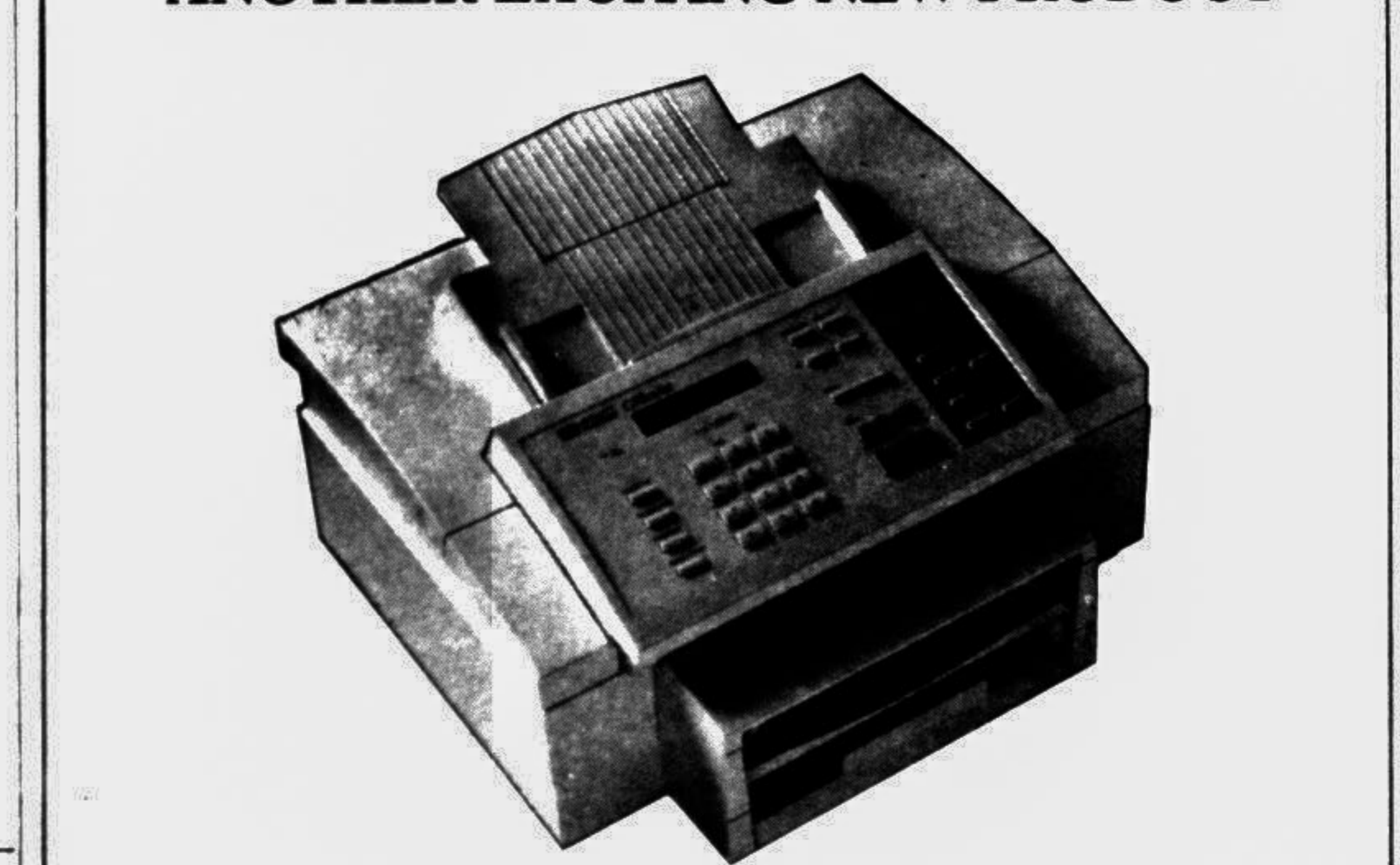
Candidates with a total of 1200 marks in S S C & H S C examinations (with no third division) and having Physics, Chemistry & Biology in the HSC examination are eligible to apply.

Candidates will be selected on the basis of competitive written and viva-voce examinations. Applications forms duly filled in will be received by the College Office upto 21st December, 1996 from local students. The written examination will be held on the 26th December, 1996 from 10.00 AM to 12.00 Noon for selection of candidates. The classes will commence from the 15th January, 1997.

Further information may be obtained from the College Office from 8.30 AM to 4.30 PM on all working days.

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Discussions at a seminar on 'empowerment of women' organised by Dhaka Business and Professional Women's Club at the WVA auditorium in the city yesterday. — Star photo

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