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Down to Earth

Encouraging City's Green Belt

By A S M Nurunnabi

The need for a greater expanse of verdure is being increasingly felt for the Dhaka city. The city's geographic location itself is a helpful factor in this regard. Once the city was rich in natural beauty. On its south and east flows the Buriganga; on the other two sides, we have the Turag and Lakhya rivers and inside the city there were many pockets, large and small, of water areas which all contributed to enhancing the natural beauty of the city, in association with the pre-existing wealth of trees and greenery. But we have been witnessing the gradual denudation of the green landscape under the onslaught of the growing urbanisation with its concomitant brick and concrete structures.

The need for a greater expanse of verdure is being increasingly felt for the Dhaka city. The city's geographic location itself is a helpful factor in this regard. Once the city was rich in natural beauty. On its south and east flows the Buriganga; on the other two sides, we have the Turag and Lakhya rivers and inside the city there were many pockets, large and small, of water areas which all contributed to enhancing the natural beauty of the city, in association with the pre-existing wealth of trees and greenery. But we have been witnessing the gradual denudation of the green landscape under the onslaught of the growing urbanisation with its concomitant brick and concrete structures.

It has been observed that people are trying to grow agricultural produce including vegetables on small patches of lands and even on roofs, but apparently this cannot contribute much towards boosting production in this sphere only because space constraint makes it impossible for them to try anything on a large scale. It is felt that it is not too late to look for some places around the city where a green belt can be developed. There is already a notable example in this behalf in the establishment of the large horticultural garden at Kasimpur near Tongi. Similar projects in the private sector can play a significant role in creating a green belt around the city. There are already some encouraging signs of growing interest

in this field by private parties with small projects.

While the experts should decide how a green belt can be developed, there is no doubt that the idea deserves a closer look.

Another dimension to the issue has lately been highlighted by a newspaper report that on account of scarcity of trees and greenery in big cities like ours, birds and animals find reduced opportunities for roosting. According to an expert opinion, the more roosting places a city provides for the bird, the better its physical environment will be. It is said that the answer to our city's environmental deterioration lies in creating paths of artificial forests and parks which are likely to provide abode and sanctuaries for the species under the threat of extinction. Besides helping to enhance the city's natural beauty, these measures may play a positive part in saving whatever rare species of birds and animals there are in getting a new lease of life.

In some big cities of the world, we may find charming existence of green belts around them with many gardens and large stretches of greenery. In our soil, trees grow up even without much care and help. In this situation, if we make planned and coordinated efforts, achieving the objective of creating a green belt for the city with carefully tended tree plantation programmes may not be a difficult proposition.

Arsenic found in water of Faridpur, Tungipara

Experts found excessive level of arsenic in the water of Tungipara thana in Gopalganj district and in eight villages of Faridpur Sadar thana, reports UNB.

The experiment was conducted by experts of Dhaka Community Hospital led by Dr Deepankar Chakrabarti, Director of the School of Environmental Studies of Yadavpur University, India.

The experts tested the water of 65 tubewells in 10 villages of Tungipara thana and detected arsenic above normal level in the water of 47 tubewells, said a press release of the hospital.

The team also tested the water of 69 tubewells of eight villages in Faridpur Sadar thana and detected high level of arsenic in the water of 57 tubewells.

Young man killed in Demra

By Staff Correspondent

A young man was killed by an unidentified gang in Shanir Akhra under Demra thana in the city yesterday.

Police recovered the body of the young man aged about 30 from in front of a super market in Shanir Akhra at about 5 am. The victim could not be identified.

Demra police said a mark of a deep cut injury was seen in the head of the victim. The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

However, none was arrested in this connection till last night.

NCN confce

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cellor of the Dhaka University will preside over the inaugural session.

The conference will discuss consolidation of the spirit of Bangladeshi nationalism and national sovereignty, according to the NCN.

NCN sources said last night that leaders of all political parties including the ruling Awami League have been invited to attend the conference. But the left leaning parties have declined to attend the conference on the ground that the Jamaat-e-Islami would also be there. NCN sources said adding that the Jamaat has already confirmed the organisers that it would attend the conference.

Austrian minister in city

Josef Mayr, Austrian Deputy Minister for Economic Affairs, arrived in the city yesterday on a two-day mission to explore bilateral trade and economic relations, reports BSS.

At present Bangladesh and Austria have no major fields of economic relations and during his stay, the Austrian minister will review the possibilities of his country's investment and establish business link here.

Shine Pukur

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with a view to raising the price of the share at a very high level. This will be evident from the fact that its share price was below par i.e. Tk 73 on 30.6.96, Tk 94 on 31.7.96 but it rose to Tk 754.19 on 28.11.96.

The report dissected the status of share money deposit A/C against the paid up share of the company and its activities in the last two years in which it found violations of rules and regulations of the SEC.

The report deduced, "It thus appears that the management of the company has a tendency to deviate more from rules/regulations/procedures than to follow it strictly. These come with mischief under Section 17 of the Securities and Exchange Ordinance, 1969."

Akram's triumph

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determined captain ended the long chase, hitting the winning runs off Mota with a delicate steer past the gully fielder for three runs.

In an eventful match, Akram, who came in to bat at number five with Bangladesh reeling at 15/4 in reply to a not-so-impressive Holland total of 171, engaged in a brave rescue operation with an experienced Minhazul Abedin Nannu putting on 39 runs for the fifth wicket before heavy rain, a common phenomenon in this part of the world, intervened the proceedings in the 19th over, only to make going difficult for Bangladesh.

But, much to the frustration of this cricket-crazy nation, the rain almost washed out the semifinal hopes of Bangladesh, who after being deprived of a certain victory against Ireland in a rain-affected affair on Wednesday, as it fell for a short period of time, as if to raise the asking run-rate beyond any comfortable chase. When the match resumed after more than two hours of weather-forced injunction, Bangladesh were given an ever daunting task of scoring a run-a-ball 84.

Nannu, who made a fighting 20 off 49 balls, appeared to have wilted under the pressure of the soaring asking run-rate and eventually ran himself out while chasing a non-existing single. Slow left-arm Enamul Haq quickly followed Minhazul leaving Bangladesh at dire straits with 84/6.

But Akram Khan, who has christened himself with the spirit of a true leader, found a much-sought ally in a wily Saiful Islam to guide the rocking boat to the coast, rotating the wheels with immaculate efficiency. Together they put on a priceless 52 runs for the seventh wicket before Saiful departed for an enterprising 18 off 20

Power tower collapse One confesses stealing parts, base plates

PABNA, Apr 4: An accused in the case of Pabna power tower collapse has said two men in mask used to encourage him to steal parts of the tower in exchange of money, reports UNB.

Mohammad Chunnun, in a confessional statement before First Class Magistrate Moly Kumar on Thursday, said he had stolen the base plates and parts of the tower, encouraged by the two masked men who visited him on six occasions at night.

Chunnun claimed that the "masked visitors" had assured him a good amount of money for stealing the tower parts which he sold for Tk 1,600 to a shop owned by Krishna at Radhanagar in the town. Krishna is also a co-accused in the case.

However, Chunnun did not say anything about being paid any money by the "masked visitors" after the "assigned job" was done.

Till Thursday, police interrogated six out of the total eight accused in the tower collapse case.

Rare gesture

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They also hoped, again showing unanimity in their expectations, that the national team will keep up the spirit.

Giving his reaction over the victory, Awami League General Secretary and LGRD Minister Zillur Rahman said it was really a matter of national pride. "Our boys have done a big job," he said, adding that they had distributed sweets to celebrate the victory.

Top ranking BNP leader Khandaker Delwar Hossain told The Daily Star that they were very happy about the victory. "The victory would definitely contribute to raising our status at the global level," Delwar said, and hoped that the Bangladesh team would reach the World Cup tournament.

Jatiya Party Secretary General Anwar Hossain Monju said, "We are really proud about the victory." Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Matur Rahman Nizami was enthusiastic enough to issue a press statement hailing the Bangladesh cricketers' victory.

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Transport strike in Tangail

From Our Correspondent

TANGAIL, Apr 4: Transport services between Tangail and rest of the country, including capital Dhaka remained suspended for the third consecutive day today due to a strike enforced by transport workers.

The transport workers have enforced the strike in 13 different routes, including Tangail-Dhaka since Wednesday last after six buses were damaged allegedly by some students of Sادات University College.

District administration, local units of political parties and transport workers held two rounds of talks last night to resolve the crisis but failed to come out with a solution. No fresh move was taken today.

The crisis ensued after some transport workers had allegedly beaten up a student, Sadek Hussain, on Tuesday night at Puratan Bus Stand in the town. In protest, the college students put up a barricade on Dhaka-Tangail road the next morning.

The district administration also asked the students to join the talks but they demanded such talks be held in the college premises.

Diarrhoea claims 5 in Bhandaria

PIROJPUR, Apr 4: At least five people died of diarrhoea in Bhandaria thana of the district in the last 48 hours ending this evening, unofficial sources said, reports UNB.

Three of the deceased could be identified immediately. They are: Al Amin, 12, of Telikhali village, Nasrin, 11, of Madashi village and Abdul Majid Mia, 65, of Darulhuda village of Bhandaria thana.

Official sources admitted the outbreak of the diarrhoea in the thana but did not confirm the deaths.

Feni killings: 5 held

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cused in the killing of an activist of BNP-backed JCD, Tushar, and a leader of the party's youth front Jubo Dal, Nasir.

Four special squads of police are simultaneously reaching for the accused in every part of the town and other areas in the district, said Kamrul Islam, Officer-in-Charge of Sadar thana.

Asked on the issue, Deputy Commissioner Noor Mohammad told The Daily Star that police was very active to arrest the accused but they were yet to be arrested as they were frequently changing their hide-outs.

The DC, however, hoped that the accused would be arrested within the stipulated time.

Replying to a question, he said that property of the accused would be attached in case of failure to catch them.

Meanwhile, police is considering new strategy for arresting the accused.

In first two days, uniformed police moved in their vehicles while on the third day they used plainclothes and moved in requisitioned private cars. A more effective method would be adopted now, said one of the police officials leading the operation.

General Secretary of the district Awami League Joyal Abedin Hajari, MP denying his party workers' alleged involvement in the killings, said that police was unnecessarily harassing the party workers. "Both the murders are the outcome of intra-party conflicts of the BNP", he told The Daily Star.

He alleged that police was simply creating panic through massive raids for arresting the accused. "They should go for secret operation and refrain from harassing the innocent people", he added.

BNP leader Joyal Abedin condemned the arrest of those not named in the FIRs of the

two murder cases and demanded their immediate release. "We want arrest of only the accused", he said.

The Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong separately met leaders of the rival sides on Wednesday and sought cooperation from both in maintaining peace and stability in the area, both the sides, however, gave 'conditional assurance', said the DC, who was also present at the meetings.

He said both the parties were determined not to let any attack on them go unchallenged.

"I also apprehend fresh trouble if the Opposition deadline can't be maintained", the DC said, adding, he was preparing to face the situation.

Earlier, the DC's move to meet leaders of both the parties together to reach an understanding failed as they did not respond on grounds of their pre-occupation.

Samad Azad

From Page 1

Prime Minister to the ROK President inviting him to visit Bangladesh for which President Kim thanked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister returned home last night.

NAM meet

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economies to refrain from the use of trade and investment to achieve non-economic and/or domestic objectives such as those relating to labour standards, intellectual property rights, human rights, health and environment.

"Such conditionalities on trade and investment pose a danger for the multilateral economic system and the trade and investment prospects of developing countries," the document added.

কেন এই বিদ্যুৎ সংকট. প্রিয় দেশবাসী, এই দেশ আমার, আপনার, আমাদের সবার। দেশের সমস্যা ও সাফল্যে আপনিও সমান অংশীদার। তাই আপনাকে জানাতে চাই - কেন এই বিদ্যুৎ সংকট। বিগত বছরগুলোতে ক্রমবর্ধমান চাহিদার সাথে সঙ্গতি রেখে বিদ্যুৎ উৎপাদন এবং গ্যাস সরবরাহ বৃদ্ধি করা হয়নি। যার ফলে আজ সারা দেশে লোড শেডিং হচ্ছে। এই সংকট মোকাবেলায় বর্তমান সরকার সর্বাঙ্গিক চেষ্টা চালাচ্ছে। এপ্রিল মাসের মধ্যে ৫৮ কিলোমিটার দীর্ঘ আশুগঞ্জ-বাখরাবাদ গ্যাস পাইপ লাইনের কাজ সমাপ্ত হচ্ছে। এর ফলে দেশের উত্তর-পূর্বাঞ্চলের গ্যাস চট্টগ্রাম অঞ্চলে সরবরাহ সম্ভব হবে এবং গ্যাস চালিত বন্ধ বিদ্যুৎ কেন্দ্রগুলো পুনরায় চালু হবে। ফলশ্রুতিতে মে মাসে বিদ্যুৎ উৎপাদন উল্লেখযোগ্যভাবে বৃদ্ধি পাবে। মনোহরদী-নরসিংদী এবং মেঘনা-বাখরাবাদ এই দুইটি গ্যাস পাইপ লাইনের নির্মাণ কাজ দ্রুত সমাপ্তির পথে। এ নির্মাণ কাজ শেষ হলে গ্যাস চালিত বিদ্যুৎ কেন্দ্র সমূহের উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধি পাবে। এ বছরের জুলাই মাসে রাউজান-এর নতুন দ্বিতীয় বিদ্যুৎ উৎপাদন কেন্দ্র চালু এবং বেশ কয়েকটি বিদ্যুৎ উৎপাদন কেন্দ্রের পুনর্বাসন সমাপ্ত হলে শীঘ্রই আরো অতিরিক্ত বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ সম্ভব হবে। এছাড়া সরকারী এবং বেসরকারী উদ্যোগে বিদ্যুৎ উৎপাদন ও গ্যাস সরবরাহ বৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যে ব্যাপক কর্মসূচী হাতে নেওয়া হয়েছে। বিদ্যুতের এই সংকটকালে কৃষ্ণতা সাধন করুন। প্রয়োজনের অতিরিক্ত বাতি, ফ্যান, এয়ারকুলার বন্ধ রেখে বিদ্যুৎ ব্যবহারে মিতব্যয়ী হোন এবং আমাদের সহযোগিতা করুন। এ সংকট কাটবেই। বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড ■ ঢাকা বিদ্যুৎ বিতরণ কর্তৃপক্ষ ■ পল্লী বিদ্যুতায়ন বোর্ড

Regional confce

From Page 1

Sung, Chairman, Youngone Corporation, Sharif M Alzal Hossen, President, BCI, Dr Forest Cookson, President, AMCHAM, YH, Kim, resident representative KORTA, Dhaka, Mr Bamba, resident representative, JETRO, Dhaka, Koya Harhara of ESCAP, M Akhtar Ali, Secretary, Ministry of Industries, Shah A Hannan, Chairman, NBR and Dr Harunur Rashid, Chairman, Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Mannan demands shifting of Abbas to PG Hospital

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday demanded that Jubo Dal president Mirza Abbas be shifted from Dhaka Central Jail to PG Hospital, reports UNB.

In a statement, Bhuiyan expressed deep concern at the sickness of Abbas in prison. He alleged that the government was not making any arrangement for proper treatment of the Jubo Dal leader.

The BNP Secretary General visited the residence of Mirza Abbas in the afternoon and addressed a meeting of the party's Motijheel and Sabujbagh thana units.

Meetings in Ctg

From Page 1

CBA on March 15 to force the authorities to stop the use of equipment brought by a private shipping agency. The strike ended after three days with the postponement of use of private equipment but the port users then started a boycott of port functions demanding permission for use of their own equipment.

The port functions resumed on March 20 when the government announced that it would give a decision on April 5 about the use of private equipment.

PM

From Page 1

In a message sent to the manager, coach and players of the team, now in Kuala Lumpur, she said, "The whole of Bangladesh is with me in congratulating you all at the memorable win. 120 million people are overjoyed and inspired by your victory."

The Prime Minister said the nation is very happy for the team's win showing excellent performance, patience and courage, when the chance of the semi-final berth was almost uncertain in the rain-interrupted match.

"Please accept my personal greetings and that of the countrymen," Hasina said. "May the most merciful Allah be with us."

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