

## Ailing Health Sector

A bill seeking imposition of punishment like imprisonment for maximum two years or a fine amounting up to Tk one lakh or both for medical malpractices and their promotion was placed in the Jatiya Sangsad by the health and family welfare minister. When our aim should be to bring the whole nation under a modern and scientific healthcare system, some self-proclaimed healers of various descriptions are trying to divert common and unsuspecting people's attention to the opposite direction. Advertisements, hand bills, brochures, etc, full of objectionable and indecent language and outlandish claims are being circulated indiscriminately and crudely just to draw people's attention. Even national dailies are found to have carried such rubbish.

So, there is a need for reining in activities of the fake healers. We welcome the move. But we also feel that the indigenous medical knowledge that draws its strength from centuries of experience of and close contact with nature and is based on medicinal qualities of herbs, shrubs and plants must not be affected by the proposed law. We would like to see that the concerns raised by an opposition MP at the time of the placing of the bill get properly addressed. In the proposed amendment to section 21 of the Drugs (control) Ordinance of 1982 a new provision for severe punishment has been proposed; but without amending section 22 the exercise will just prove futile because the latter does not take the crimes under discussion into cognizance and can at best be referred to the drug court. This means that the provision of section 21 could be cancelled out by section 22.

The question of medical malpractices, we strongly feel, should not be confined to just the fake healing points. What about the government hospitals and private health centres where various irregularities, corruption and lack of management or proper equipment or facilities deprive patients of the treatment and care they deserve? It has to be admitted that poor service and too much of commercialisation of the medical profession and facilities have to a large extent been responsible for opening opportunities for the fake healers to stay in business. Had the graduates from the country's medical colleges done their job properly, such quackery would hardly have had any wind to its sail. When representatives of modern healthcare are found to be at fault, they must be meted out even a severer punishment. Only then order can be restored in the health sector.

## Bad Plan, Bad Execution

Right on July 1 Bangladesh's generation of electric power will be augmented by one-third of what the nation is at present consuming. Unfortunately, although that will mean that the Chittagong power district will have on that date a surplus of a fantastic quantum of 466 mw, the whole nation's problem would stay exactly where it is now. For want of transmission lines to the national power grid system, the 466 mw power would remain unused. Not for a day or two or even a few months. The nation will, as things are, have to suffer from power shortage till November, 1998 although in 11 days' time it will have the capacity to not to do so.

A 230 kv Chittagong-Comilla transmission line was slated to be completed in time to carry this surplus power to the national grid. Whereas the 210 mw second unit of the Raozan Power Plant is all ready to be commissioned in less than two weeks' time, the 230kv line will need another 16 months to be able to carry the Raozan surplus. Work on the transmission line has dangerously been delayed.

We do not simply accept that this will take that long. What happened to the Ashugani-Bakhrabad gas line? Nationwide blackout forced the energy-wallahs to go into an overdrive and complete the thing in double-quick fashion. We demand the government put all its strength to string that 230kv line by the end of this year and not the next. We believe this is possible if the government puts its heart into the matter. A matter of another overdrive only. It nevertheless will also be a test for the government's seriousness about the power situation.

The CPD report which laid bare this unpleasant scenario had also some harsh observations on the siting of the 210mw plant at Raozan. It was technically wrong and economically sinful, it said. That amounts to saying that unsound considerations made the then government to set up the plant there. This is unfortunate and must be avoided in all future decisions involving core national enterprises and facilities.

## A Test of Sincerity

We never suspected that 237 persons were killed in road accidents every month since June, '96. This beats our imagination. But it is true coming as it does from Communications Minister Anwar Hossain. If this is astounding the other fact he enlightened the Jatiya Sangsad with on Tuesday is even more so. There were 4721 road accidents in the past eleven months starting June, 1996 but the route permit of none of the vehicles involved was cancelled. Strange! Because of some peculiarity of the automobile act, it is difficult to get a tough sentence out of the court for even the most negligent driving causing multiple death. But why should transport authorities suffer from the same limitation?

The question can be broadened to ask if ever any kind of punitive action has been taken against any vehicle and its owner and his company involved in road killings known as accidents. If the transport operators have any part in this massive killing by the thousand the government seems to have had a bigger part in this stunning undiminished continuing death toll. We have on our part been maintaining, time and again, that most of these accidents are not accidents at all. The operators give a damn to the road regulations — they overload and overspeed their death-traps, long past their road-worthy years and driven by young novices and goons who have just not learnt to value other people's lives patently because they do not value their own. If a defective machine whizzes out at 70 kph with a load of 100 passengers and tons of goods besides on a tortuous road, its brake leaking or tyrod acting weirdly — you cannot call it an accident if it hits the bridge rails or another bus or truck. If governments had only cared, only fit vehicles would be there on the roads, driven by genuine and capable drivers knowing the road regulations as good as the driving manual.

# Contributions of Army to Development: Possibilities and Prospects

*A very important and useful function they carry out is the one in times of natural calamities. They are disciplined, dedicated and have developed a system which promptly brings welcome relief and succour to the people in distress.*

THE Prime Minister recently called upon the Armed Forces to take due part in country's development process. It is a welcome statement, though made in general fashion without specifics. Nevertheless, it does manifest the wishes and hopes underlying her thoughts and these are shared by many. The thoughts are noble. One needs to assess how far it is practicable to translate these thoughts into reality.

The idea is not novel and does naturally come to one's mind from time to time. In some countries, the Armed Forces do play a significant role in their development activities. However, in the major part of the industrial world, the practice is to maintain a relatively small standing army. They rely mostly on the calling up of reserved forces, conscripting in times of need those who had undergone compulsory military training and service. The question of putting in substantial input by these well-trained men-in-uniform having acquired expertise in the use of sophisticated weaponry, to non-combat civilian activities does not generally arise. Yet, to cite an example, the Walter Reed Military Hospital in Washington DC treats civilian patients in peacetime. The possibility of deploying armed forces personnel in development work, therefore, can be better explored in other countries with substan-

tial personnel in uniform whose time and energy could be partly spared for further use. President Zia, during his state visit to China in 1980 while I was assigned there, was impressed with the Chinese system and wondered about introducing it in Bangladesh. The Red Army in those days were deeply involved in nation-building activities. The Army had three functions to carry out. Firstly, its primary duty was to train and prepare itself as an alert combat force. Secondly, it channelled a good segment of its activities to productivity. And finally, the Army partly provided the source of labour in various sectors of the nation.

The versatile Chinese Red Army had been engaged in multimodal activities and acted in many areas, in collaboration with and supplementary to civilian authorities. They were in the forefront of building roads, highways and bridges. They worked in close concert with government engineers and common folks in building dams, constructing factories and even erecting residential buildings. To remain available for security duty and to render prompt services in the event of natural calamities were among their prime responsibilities.

The responsibility of the upkeep of cantonments includes establishment and maintenance of various facilities that are needed by the troops living in the Cantonment itself. These various facilities include the shape of clothes and shoe factories, dairy, fishery, poultry, duckery, pigsty, etc. They grew orchards and timber producing plants. They even produced foodgrains

One does not have to copy entirely from the methods employed in a particular country. The example set by one or more countries can provide ideas to the people of another country so that the latter can tailor their attire in keeping with their needs, resources and priorities. During a visit to Dhaka on home leave or on consultation,

wrath of the General who is none other than the Army Chief himself. I think I was prudent. It then dawned on me that President Zia could not have introduced a system relating to the Army without the consent of the Chief of Army Staff.

The Bangladesh Army does get involved in many activities, which, strictly speaking, do not fall within the purview of their normal duties and functions. The nomenclature, Army, here, in fact, is loosely used to mean the Armed Forces, which include the Navy and the Air Force. A very important and useful function they carry out is the one in times of natural calamities. They are disciplined, dedicated and have developed a system which promptly brings welcome relief and succour to the people in distress.

The Corps of Engineers have been traditionally helping in the construction of bridges, roads, culverts, etc. The Bailey bridge has almost been synonymous with the Army. It is no secret that a major portion of the road network in the Chittagong Hill Tracts has been built by them. It is also understood that the Army has now undertaken the task of installing additional facilities to enable vehicular traffic to ply

on the existing rail tracks on the Hardinge bridge over the Padma.

The Army Medical Corps can likewise render some useful service to civilians in peacetime. The Combined Military Hospitals already cater to the needs of some civilian patients. Perhaps, the Army Field Hospitals can, at times, visit civilian areas away from their cantonment stations. One may explore how the other branches of the Armed Forces could act in aid of civil power, being called upon to do so, except, of course, in the form of imposition of Martial Law. The Signals and the Military Police, specially deployed on regulating traffic, may also contribute to train civilians in their respective fields. In the process, one should not, however, forget to guard against the fact that too much and too long close association with the civilians should not degenerate and corrupt the otherwise generally puritan members of the Armed Forces.

We are aware that the Armed Forces carry the largest chunk of country's revenue budget. It, therefore, naturally enjoins upon them to render as much service as possible to commensurate with the hard earned resources of a resourceless people. The nation is confident that the conscientious members of our Armed Services will live up to the hopes and expectations of their compatriots.



## Currents and Crosscurrents

by M M Rezaul Karim

I had an occasion to broach this subject to our then Chief of Staff, General Ershad. He dismissed the issue even before I could raise it properly. He interrupted me by saying that this type of system would not work in our country. I thought I would say one could at least examine the system in order to ascertain if we could derive some benefit out of even a part of it, may be with some modification. But I refrained myself from doing so. I normally try not to annoy anyone. To insist on this issue, could have invited

and cash crops. All the produce that remained surplus after meeting their own requirements were to be sold in the market, generating liquidity and earning profit. The Red Army troops had even been seen, on occasions, at peacetime, tilling common land to grow crops. All these were undertaken without hindering the prime and foremost duty of soldiers to remain in full alert, at short notice, with battle readiness. But some of these activities have since been curtailed or reduced, for various

# Public Sector Enterprises: CBA and Other Factors

by Md Asadullah Khan

*Precisely told, government interference makes it all but impossible to run a public sector company efficiently. Reference can be cited about India's state owned steel plants which together produce eight million tons of steel a year employing 200,000 workers, while a single plant in South Korea produces 10 million tons with only 14,000 workers.*

REPORTS quoting the Standing Committee of the Public Accounts Body formed by the National Parliament in the recent past carried a frightening news that almost all the autonomous institutions including banks, factories and business houses in the public sector are hostages to the CBA (commercial bargaining agents). The Parliamentary Standing Committee in the recent past carried a frightening news that almost all the autonomous institutions including banks, factories and business houses in the public sector are hostages to the CBA (commercial bargaining agents). The Parliamentary Standing Committee in the recent past carried a frightening news that almost all the autonomous institutions including banks, factories and business houses in the public sector are hostages to the CBA (commercial bargaining agents).

Right on July 1 Bangladesh's generation of electric power will be augmented by one-third of what the nation is at present consuming. Unfortunately, although that will mean that the Chittagong power district will have on that date a surplus of a fantastic quantum of 466 mw, the whole nation's problem would stay exactly where it is now. For want of transmission lines to the national power grid system, the 466 mw power would remain unused. Not for a day or two or even a few months. The nation will, as things are, have to suffer from power shortage till November, 1998 although in 11 days' time it will have the capacity to not to do so.

A 230 kv Chittagong-Comilla transmission line was slated to be completed in time to carry this surplus power to the national grid. Whereas the 210 mw second unit of the Raozan Power Plant is all ready to be commissioned in less than two weeks' time, the 230kv line will need another 16 months to be able to carry the Raozan surplus. Work on the transmission line has dangerously been delayed.

We do not simply accept that this will take that long. What happened to the Ashugani-Bakhrabad gas line? Nationwide blackout forced the energy-wallahs to go into an overdrive and complete the thing in double-quick fashion. We demand the government put all its strength to string that 230kv line by the end of this year and not the next. We believe this is possible if the government puts its heart into the matter. A matter of another overdrive only. It nevertheless will also be a test for the government's seriousness about the power situation.

The CPD report which laid bare this unpleasant scenario had also some harsh observations on the siting of the 210mw plant at Raozan. It was technically wrong and economically sinful, it said. That amounts to saying that unsound considerations made the then government to set up the plant there. This is unfortunate and must be avoided in all future decisions involving core national enterprises and facilities.

A Test of Sincerity

tised more in these places than anywhere else. But these days that philosophy triggers more disdain than praise. Socialism as its cheer-leaders practised earned a bad name for the 'ism' itself. Even Karl Marx did not intend for the workers to get something for nothing, 'from each according to his ability', he wrote, 'to each according to his need.' That is not quite the way it has worked out in jute and textile sectors. Adamjee Jute Mills, the biggest jute industry in the Asian region and once a profit-making enterprise, suddenly turned into a basket case. The textile sector in the last five years has sustained a loss of 532 crore taka. The original idea was to socialise profits from the public sector, but now most people realise that instead we ended up socialising the public sector's losses. Says the Industries Minister, Mr Tofail Ahmed, in a recent interview with the press that the public sector losses grabbing Tk 2500 crore every year is an intolerable burden on the national treasury. Shockingly, previous governments failed to cut back state funds being funneled to unprofitable firms.

In an effort to overhaul the economy and in order to generate more productivity and more wealth, the money drain in the losing public sector must stop. The government at the same time must sell at least 20 per cent of its interest in a select group of profitable companies. Sick units may be asked with proper authority and power invested in the chief-executives of these enterprises to raise money privately by selling bonds or seeking joint ventures. The government must, beforehand, curtail its role in actual operation of public sector companies. Some chief-executives of public sector organisations I talked to, opined that with total disbanding of CBA and proper authority invested in the chief-executives, some of these sick units could still be salvaged. True, as Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of Pakistan once told, the government's job is to create an atmosphere of business and government must not be doing business itself.

Taking the case of Chittagong Steel Mills that, in spite

of built-in design fault, earned profits for 11 fiscal years went into red since 1989 because of government policy of taxes and duties evasion on ship scraps. The low-cost reinforcing bars produced by direct re-rolling of the ship scraps eased the market demand despite the fact that concerns were expressed by the experts at that time to stop their entry into the market. On the other hand, duties and taxes on the inputs of the Chittagong Steel Mills were not brought down to allow this industry to make its products competitive and acceptable in the market. This pushed the better quality products out of the market making room for the lower quality reinforcing bars that ultimately put the CSM at peril and a perpetual sickness from which it could never recover.

In another case, government decision to allow import of foreign newsprint that are, of course, of better quality has almost forced the closure of the Khulna Newsprint Mill. There is no buyer for its comparatively inferior quality newsprint. It was learnt from reports carried by the media in the recent past that about four thousand tons of newsprint remained stockpiled in the mill's godown with only one machine out of three operating now because of poor market demand.

It was further learnt that the newspaper industries in the country consumed about 20,000 metric tons in a year and a substantial amount of the newsprint produced by the mill was used by the publishers of books and periodicals. But after opening the market to the outside world, local markets have been flooded by the better quality newsprint imported from abroad creating a glut of newsprint in the mills premises. Despite the fact that BCIC refused the price per ton at Tk 17,000.00 from its previous price of Tk 18,500 per ton, the situation has not improved.

As it turns out, this situation would force the mill to a total closure pushing almost 2500 employees out of employment. The inept administration of BCIC could never have envisioned the sophistication in production mechanism the world outside our country has achieved. And when the gov-

ernment has gone for marketisation the buyer would select the commodity on two aspects quality vis-a-vis the price. And in most cases the buyer would opt for quality at the expense of a little price differential when general acceptability of quality is something very important. BCIC sources say that efforts to improve the quality of the newsprint would need re-structuring, balancing and modernisation (BMR) of the plant involving heavy expenses which the Corporation can't afford now. In the process, the life and living of some 15,000 members (2500x6 persons per family) plus the future of a pride organisation of this country that used to serve the local needs with locally grown wood from the Suadabans not far from the mills premises, now hangs in the balance. Finally, the government may be tiptoeing toward the politically most-difficult decision of all: shutting down the firm because it is hemorrhaging money.

The situation in all these Public Sector companies gradually precipitated into a crisis just in the way cited above. People all around the country are advocating for closing down sick companies and selling off state's majority stake in most of the successful ones. Sensible citizenry in the country has observed that government interference makes it all but impossible to run a public sector company efficiently. Strong dissent to the programme comes from a dwindling number of proponents of the old system which fears that more private ownerships will put workers out of jobs.

It was further learnt that strong protest and demonstrations causing blockade of roads and railways were being planned by the employees' federation against the decision of privatising the sugar mills which had been sustaining losses for years. Unsurprisingly, these sugar mills did not go into red all on a sudden, just in a month or in some years even. Red signal had been there long since. Even when these enterprises were hemorrhaging due to under-utilisation of capacity and ageing equipment, the oversized labour force was being paid

overtime allowances(!), bonuses and other facilities. More than this, ageing machinery and under utilisation of capacity for non-availability of sugar cane pushed up the overhead cost, and that in its wake pushed up pricing of sugar in the market. Some time in the past, it was so learnt that corporation's reluctance and adamant attitude not to lift the price tag below the price fixed by it in an effort to make the product competitive with the market price caused a glut of sugar in the Corporation's godowns often dissolving the sugar bags into 'carbats'-sacks due to long storage especially in the rainy season.

As it stands to-day, the solution to these long standing problems that have rendered these SOEs into losing enterprises lies in distancing these firms as much as possible from the government and that is the only way to make them efficient.

Precisely told, government interference makes it all but impossible to run a public sector company efficiently. Reference can be cited about India's state owned steel plants which together produce eight million tons of steel a year employing 200,000 workers, while a single plant in South Korea produces 10 million tons with only 14,000 workers.

Labour Unions often working under a political umbrella will not be impressed by all those arguments. Labour in this country has earned a notoriety of bargaining, staging protest and demonstrations often leading to bloody conflict with the mills management causing dislocation of production. Unions argue that because the country has no social safety net, laying off employees is unfair, and so they protest. Most unions have party affiliations and powerful political godfathers to back them. Studies by a certain sector of the concerned citizenry as well as the Public Accounts Body set up by the National Parliament note that the country's public sector labour is a powerful, exploitative chunk of the society and to be sure, they are so powerful that the authorities can do practically nothing to impose control and discipline on them.

The hard fact is that reformers will have to short-circuit

politicians and bureaucrats who preside over public sector companies. Politicians derive power and privilege from the public sector by using it for patronage — jobs and contracts for constituents — while bureaucrats often exercise such obsessive oversight that company managers as all but suffocated. Ironically, sometimes, spouses of sector corporation bosses outstrip the real bosses in matters of appointment, transfer and posting of certain employees, workers and managers. So says an executive, "the corporation treats the public sector units under it as a cash cow."

Political interference is present at every level but is perhaps at its worst in the selection of top managers. Company chiefs are allegedly replaced frequently at the whims of top brasses resulting in very little continuity in management planning. Top positions remain vacant for months because of political wrangling over choice jobs. Sudden and frequent transfer of an official from a certain sector leads to scotching of the plans the existing boss had taken to put his ideas into practice.

Inefficiency, inertia of immobility and fiddling with inaction or no action of the public sector managers stem from the fact that they have to cope with a steady stream of queries from ministers, bureaucrats, members of the Parliament. Glumly says an executive of a plant, "For every action you take, whether big or small, you are answerable to everyone, the minister, the secretary, the Parliament, the unions. We write volumes to justify our actions and to save ourselves from the wrath of the bosses."

At the present moment it would prove to be a tough and painful job in either selling these sick units or privatising them. What is desperately needed is a leadership that is concerned with the interests of the nation and not with his/her own image. Such a leadership urgent task would be to dismantle the corrupt and suffocating system of regulations and bottlenecks that has prevented the country from realising its economic goal. The leadership must break the shackles around the country's enterprises. There must be a political commitment to the market economy that we want to put in practice now. Half-way or half-hearted measures won't do. We have had political democracy for the last few years. Now let us institute a genuine economic democracy.

## To the Editor...

### Grameen phone

Sir, Grameen Phone Company has already sold out thousands of mobile telephone sets without making proper arrangements for their use. In most of the cases T&T connections could not be reached if dialled from these mobile sets. When I dial my own T&T phone number, my mobile set either shows "No Connection" on its screen or a voice says, "the number you dialled is no more in use" which is incorrect, as my own T&T phone I dialled to it very well in use.

However, a call from the T&T phone reaches the mobile set in a very limited area. When tried from T&T phone from my house at Banani, Dhaka, I could not get the call just after Tongi in the north, Adamji Nagar in Narayanganj in the East. I purchased the mobile set for use at Konabari, Gazipur in the north and Narayanganj in the east. I would request the Grameen authorities to first make arrangements to obtain T&T connections from mobile sets and widen the coverage up to and beyond 35 km from Dhaka which they claimed while selling the sets and then to make such lavish advertisement to attract the buyers.

Mohammed S Islam  
Banani, P-35 Road No. 4  
Dhaka-1213

### Holiday syndrome

Sir, Unlike the developed countries, the underdeveloped ones are enjoying more holidays, throwing posh parties, observing so many birth and death anniversaries and of course staging so-called hartals often leading to industrial layoffs. We have a reputation of being idle and shirking duties and responsibilities. Our people do not want to work hard, they skip off during duty hours and are rather up to gaining money overnight by even indulging in unfair means. They do not want to engage themselves in any activity that involves labour and skill. In every walk of our social and political life, there is inefficiency, negligence and failure and our youths suffer from despair and depression which ultimately plunge them into a world of vice, anarchy and lawlessness.

Since its election, the Awami League government has been, apparently making sincere endeavour to bring back normalcy to economic, social, agricultural and political spheres, and in some cases it has achieved success. The signing of Ganges Water Sharing treaty with India is one that we can boast about. The PM is sincere, straight forward and pragmatic in her stance on different national and international issues. She may also de-

serve praise for her bold decision to declare a two-day weekend.

Everything has its merits and demerits. The rationale behind this holiday decision is perhaps accepted by the majority of the people. The new arrangement of weekly holidays will supposedly increase efficiency, productivity and dynamism in the performance at offices. And in the process, it will help the government to decrease fuel and electricity consumption and thus help our environment get rid of pollution to a certain extent. The people will get more time to look after their domestic and private chores and maintain social commitments. Our home-sick people will have a chance to visit their kith and kin in their countryside home and even they may utilise the time to do some agricultural works. The demerit is that the bulk of government employees will be deprived of the extra income they used to earn by doing work outside their normal duty (in the afternoon). Secondly, the new time table will aggravate transport and traffic problems (all offices starting and closing at the same time). Thirdly, the nation will be denied access to commercial and international network of economic globalisation to an extent (three days, Friday-Saturday locally and Sunday abroad) and finally it

will have an adverse effect on our export-oriented industries. However, we can tide over all the problems and snags that have popped up by our sincerity, honesty, integrity and devotion to work. And only then will we have more advantages and benefits than we lose due to the new arrangement.

Following the Pakistan governments, decision to make Sunday as weekly holiday instead of Friday, similar demand from some quarters here was raised. The logic behind this demand is not sustainable enough. They say to keep pace with the economic and commercial globalisation, Sunday needs to be made weekly holiday instead of Friday. Again we are overcome by a nimbis of colonisation. Aping and imitating the western life and culture have become a fashion with our people. They seem to be poised to sacrifice their true identities at the altar of so-called modernisation. Shifting day does not pay. The importance must be attached not to Friday or Sunday but to how we can develop our potential natural resources, export-oriented industries, our overall economic condition and how to create atmosphere conducive to inviting more foreign investment in the country. It is time we rose from slumber to get down to work — to work hard — to attain the position our

neighbouring countries are in today.

Ours is a nation fraught with holidays and hartals causing serious bottlenecks in smooth development of our economy. We must come out of so many holidays and hartals. From now onward the government should cancel all unnecessary holidays. There may be no holidays for the birth and death anniversaries of leaders.

To sum up, government's decision is a good and constructive one. The success of the new arrangement will depend on how the people behave in their way of doing things. No plan will be crowned with success unless and until it receives co-operation from the people.

Md Abdul Awal Miah  
Administrative Officer  
Asiatic Society of Bangladesh,  
Dhaka

### Lame excuses

Sir, The government utterly surprised people by announcing two days holiday. Except a small section, majority of the people are apprehensive, fearing this step will do more harm than good.

The government put forward a few reasons for this move, stating it would save electricity and telephone expenses, cut

down fuel consumption and the atmosphere will remain pollution-free. But, to these seem very lame excuses. If one thinks deeply it would be clear.

First, about electricity, as working hours will not decrease I don't understand how electricity consumption will be less. In winter, dusk sets in very early, so lights have to be on for quite some time before offices close down at 5pm. So, actually expenses in that sector will go up.

Second, about telephone. Telephone are installed for exchanging information, and many important works could be done with its help without wasting time. If telephones in government offices are used for daily gossiping with friends and relatives, then certainly it may save in that sector, on second thought it may not it the wake of two days holiday they may call their friends more than other days.

Third, about fuel consumption. Though staff buses will be off the road to enjoy two-day holiday, other vehicles will be more in use. So the result will be negative in that aspect also.

Our people are naturally lazy — whether two days rest will boost their energy for work or they will become lethargic time will tell.

Nur Jahan  
East Nasirabad, Chittagong