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Bodies to probe illegal filling up, encroachment upon 4 lakes

By Staff Correspondent
Rajuk has formed three committees, two of which would investigate the illegal filling up of and encroachment upon Gulshan, Banani, Baridhara and Uttara lakes.

The other committee headed by the Member, Planning, would monitor activities of the two committees which would be involved in field work, Rajuk sources said.

Meanwhile, all earth-filling and construction work along the lake remained suspended. Rajuk sources said after identifying the 'problematic' structures, steps would be taken to demolish those.

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UP chairmen's confce: Venue, date shifted

By Staff Correspondent
The government yesterday, changed the venue of the conference of Union Parishad chairmen and members from the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban area to the International Trade Fair site.

The move followed a report in The Daily Star yesterday. The report said that a government department was erecting a huge pandal, spiking the lush green garden at the South Plaza of the monumental Sangsad Bhaban and that workers were digging the soil to make 100 open-pit latrines for the ex-

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AL champion of signing unequal accords: Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent
BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia has asked her partymen to take all up preparations for the scheduled May 20 hunger strike at the district headquarters and June 9 long march towards the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

The leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad had earlier announced the hunger strike and long march programmes demanding abolition of the CHT accord and the bills passed for its implementation.

Begum Zia was addressing a gathering of her party leaders and workers from Bagerhat, Comilla, Rangpur and Gopalganj at her Minto Road official residence in the city yesterday.

The former prime minister said that the CHT accord was

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Cabinet okays target for wheat procurement

The Cabinet has approved the proposal for increasing the target of wheat procurement during the current season from 1.5 lakh metric tons to two lakh metric tons, reports UNB.

The approval was given at a cabinet meeting at the Secretariat yesterday with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Alleged attempt to rape minor girl: One held

By Staff Correspondent
An elderly man was caught by some people when he allegedly attempted to violate a 9-year-old child in Kalapani area under Pallabi thana in the city yesterday.

Police arrested the man, Abdul Motin, reportedly a tea vendor. He was a resident of Balurghat slum in Pallabi.

Police said Motin lured the child showing a ten-taka note and took her behind a bush at Choker Jhop. Some local people saw it, caught him and handed him over to Pallabi police.

Motin is likely to be produced before the CMM's Court today, police added.

The mother of the girl filed a case with Pallabi thana.

Small industries in bad shape Inflation worries Finance Minister's advisors

By Inam Ahmed
The finance minister's advisory committee yesterday warned that early steps should be taken to check the rising inflationary pressure on the economy.

The committee met yesterday with Finance Minister SAMS Kibria at the ministry. The advisors expressed concern over the inflation situation and drew the attention of the minister that inflationary pressure is growing in the non-food sector, according to sources.

Present in the meeting were Prof Rehman Sobhan, Binayak Sen, Dr Amirul Islam, Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, Dr Farahuddin, Sazzad Zahir, Dr Ali Rashid and Nasrin Khondaker.

According to the IMF, the annual rate of inflation stood at eight per cent in February this year.

The economists also advised that rural-based and pro-poor projects should be kept intact if this year's ADP is reduced. They said low priority projects should be dropped in case of ADP cuts.

They also observed that the country is being deprived of a chunk of concessional foreign aid because of failure to properly implement the ADP. The advisors said that the government should tighten up its belt to utilise the funds available in the foreign-aided development programme.

The economists also observed that the budget deficit would come down this year because of the projected ADP shortfall. But they pointed out that the money to finance the deficit should not go for current expenditure. Rather, it should be pro-investment in nature, they said.

The economists also expressed concern over the rising trend in current expenditure. The finance minister at this

stage reportedly said that this has resulted from a transfer of manpower from different projects to the revenue budget. He also reportedly said that there has been stiff political pressure to accommodate manpower from development projects to the revenue budget.

Dwelling on the issue of business confidence, the advisors said the government should have a long term tariff rationalisation plan, instead of any ad-hoc adjustments, so that businessmen can have a vision of the business environment. This would help the business people to plan their strategies, they said.

About industrial sector development, the economists said the nature of growth in the sector is uneven as the industrial recovery is not broad-based. They said some sectors like garments, iron and steel and soft drinks are doing well, but

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News Analysis CHT bills & President's options

By A Special Correspondent
All eyes are focused on what the President will do regarding the four CHT related Bills that the parliament has recently passed. These have been sent to the President on 13 May. According to the Constitution he has fifteen days within which to select his course of action, which is by the 27th of this month.

Those who are opposed to the Bills want the President to use his Constitutional powers to withhold assent and thereby either refuse to enact these Bills into laws or at least to disassociate himself with the process of turning these Bills into laws.

What the opposition, especially the BNP and Jamaat want the President to do is to send the bills back to the parliament asking them to be reviewed. If the parliament should send them back without any changes then the President should allow according to them, the automatic process of assent to operate - by not doing anything within the permissible 7 days so that the Bill is 'deemed' to have been assented to. In this way the President will have distanced himself from these Bills.

Now the big question is what are the President's options? The relevant Articles of the Constitution that can guide us in this matter are Articles 80, 81 and 82, of which the first is the most important. Paragraph 3 of Article 80 says:

"The President, within fifteen days after a Bill is presented to him, shall assent to the Bill or, in the case of a Bill other than Money Bill may return it to the Parliament with a message requesting that the Bill or any particular provision thereof be reconsidered, and that any amendments specified by him in the message be considered; and if he fails to do so he shall be deemed to have assented to the Bill at the expiration of that period."

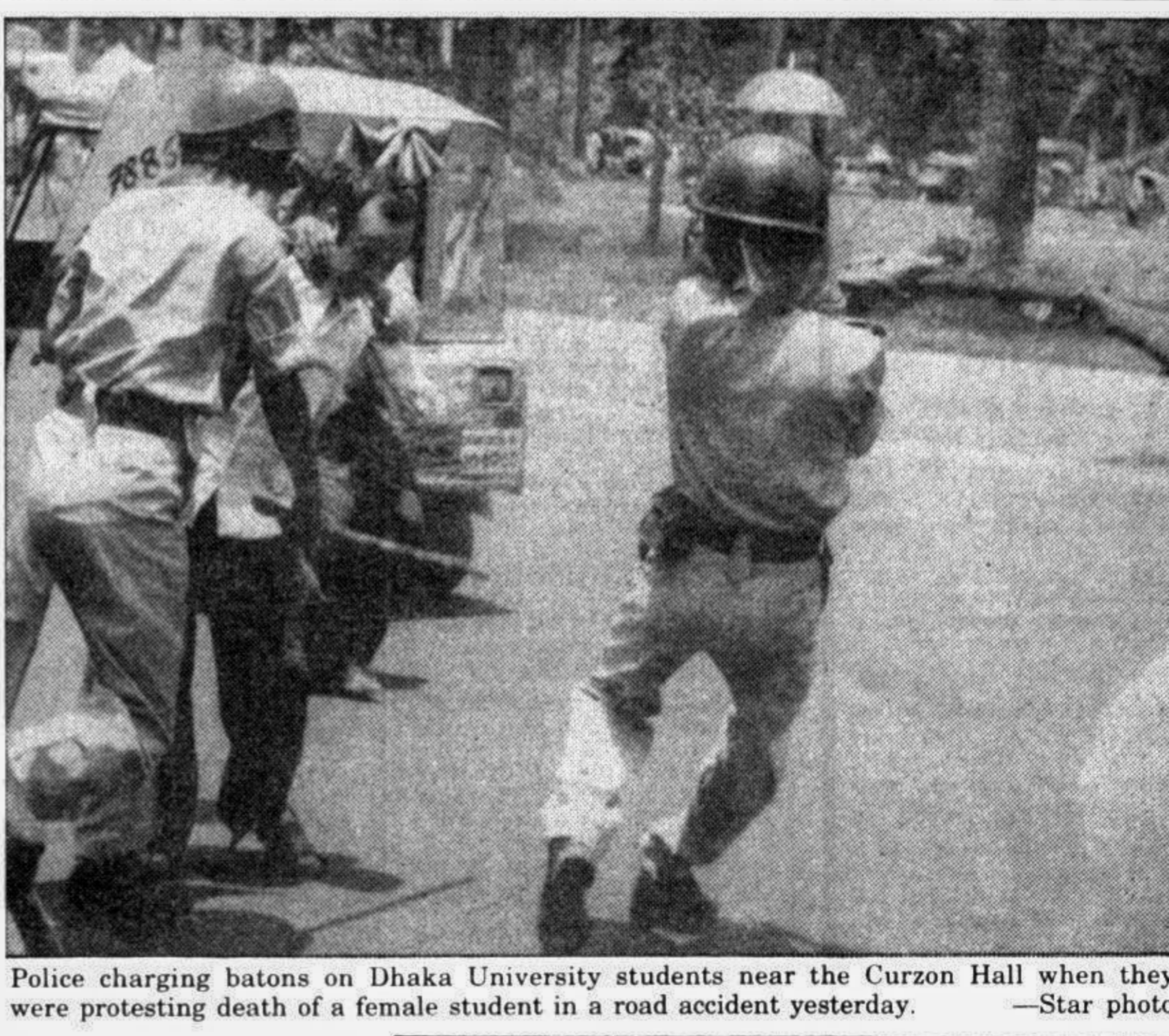
There are TWO crucial points in this Article: first is that there are two categories of Bills, Money Bills and the rest; second that the President's power to send back a Bill for reconsideration exists in cases of ALL BILLS SAVE MONEY BILLS. In the case of latter, as cited above, the Constitution clearly says that the President "shall assent to the Bill" within fifteen days.

The fact to take note of here is that the four Bills on the Chittagong Hill Tracts have been sent to the President AS MONEY BILLS. This means that the President's power to send them back for reconsideration by the parliament or not to assent does NOT exist in this case. He does not even have the option of withholding his assent because the Constitution obliges him to sign with the word "shall".

Article 81(3) says "Every Money Bill shall, when it is presented to the President for his assent, bear a certificate under the hand of the Speaker that it is a Money Bill, and such certificate shall be conclusive for all purposes and shall not be questioned in any court." The four Bills that have been sent to the President on the 13th, of this month bear the said certificate of the Speaker.

What is to be noted here is that, according to the Parlia-

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Police charging batons on Dhaka University students near the Curzon Hall when they were protesting death of a female student in a road accident yesterday. —Star photo

Violent protest after road accident kills DU student

By DU Correspondent
A female student of the Dhaka University was killed when hit by a Premium bus on the VIP Road in front of Zia Colony in Cantonment area in the city yesterday, police said.

Asma Ahmed, a second year student of Library Science, was hit by the bus while she was crossing the road to avail a university bus at about 10 am.

She was rushed to CMH where doctors declared her dead. She was the daughter of one Abdul Aziz.

Police arrested driver Abkai Huq and seized the bus.

As the news of her death spread on the campus, students damaged several vehicles and blocked the roads through the university, disrupting road communication. Police lobbed several rounds of tear gas shells and resorted to baton charge near the Curzon Hall area to bring the situation under control.

CU staff bus ambushed Gunmen shoot CMC student dead

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, May 18: A Chittagong Medical College student was shot dead when unidentified gunmen ambushed a Chittagong University Staff bus at Baitali Bazar this morning, police said.

The university bus bound for the city under police escort, was attacked by the gunmen who fired on it indiscriminately at around 9 am.

Mushfiq-ur Salehin, 21, a student of Chittagong Medical College and son of a university teacher, sustained fatal bullet injuries.

Salehin was rushed to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

Police suspected that Shibir activists may have carried out the attack. But Shibir denied the charge.

UNB adds: Salehin, a first-year student of CMC, was hit by three bullets, two in the head and one in the left arm, when the gunmen sprayed bullets from automatic guns on the university teachers' bus in which he was traveling.

Bus helper Syed Majibur Rahman also sustained bullet injuries in the attack.

Police arrested three youths, one Chhatra Shibir activist, from the spot of the gunfire at Oxygen Road crossing in Panchlala thana.

Passengers, who were traveling in the bus, said the assailants might have opened fire from a nearby building.

Salehin, the eldest son of Dr Kazi Ahmed Nabi, Chairman of the Finance Department of Chittagong University, was sitting beside the driver.

He was immediately rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where doctors operated upon him for about an hour and extracted bullets of rifle from his head and left arm. But he died at 10:30 am.

Three policemen who were posted in the bus for security have been closed by the authorities after the incident.

Salehin stood 7th in last combined merit list in last

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Depression: Shower in Cox's Bazar

Different parts of Cox's Bazar district and Myanmar were experiencing moderate to heavy shower last night due to depression in the Bay of Bengal. Dr A M Choudhury, Chief Scientist of Bangladesh Space Research and Remote Sensing Organisation (SPARRSO) at Agargaon told BSS.

The core of the depression in the Bay of Bengal was centred at 504 kilometers from the Chittagong Port and 557 kilometers from Khulna city, according to the observation of Japanese GMS Satellite at 10:30 pm Bangladesh standard time, he said.

The depression is heralding monsoon in Myanmar which indicates that monsoon will arrive in Bangladesh early this year, he observed.

The highest wind speed at the core of the massive cloud at the depression centre is upto 48 kilometers per hour, according to the GMS observation.

The massive cloud over the Bay may help the depression turn into a tropical cyclone as it is spread over more than one thousand kilometers, mostly over the sea, satellite observation said.

Shazneen murder Investigation to take time: CID

By Staff Correspondent
The CID is continuing its investigation into Shazneen murder as there are 'a lot of things' to examine, officials said.

The CID is still probing the possibility to involvement of more than one person in the brutal killing of Shazneen at their Gulshan residence on the night of April 23.

"It will take time," said a senior CID official.

The investigating team was questioning the servants and other staff at the Gulshan residence of Shazneen's father, Latifur Rahman, chairman of Transcom Ltd.

CID sources said the investigators would also talk to all the persons who were near the spot when the incident took place. Shazneen was found dead inside her bed room with more than 20 stab wounds.

Shahid, a servant at Rahman's house, was arrested.

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CB won't hold fresh exams of two papers

CHITTAGONG, May 18: Chittagong Education Board today decided not to hold fresh SSC examinations of Bengali first paper and English second paper, 1998, earlier scheduled for June 1 and June 3, reports BSS.

According to a press release signed by the Deputy Controller of the Board, the examinations of the two papers held earlier will be treated as valid.

The decision to cancel re-examination was taken following repeated requests from the guardians, who are of the opinion that the majority of the students are not involved in the leakout of question papers, the press release said.

Arrest warrant against Bengal Group chairman

By Court Correspondent
A warrant of arrest was issued against industrialist Abul Khayer Litu yesterday after a cheque for Tk 1.51 crore issued by the Bengal Group chairman was dishonoured by IFIC Bank last month.

An officer of Al Baraka Bank, Rashidul Islam, lodged a case with Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instrument Act as Litu did not respond to a legal notice issued in favour of Al Baraka Bank asking him to pay the amount to the bank.

The Fourth Commercial Court earlier ordered Litu to pay Tk 1.51 crore to the Al Baraka Bank. He issued a cheque for the amount against the IFIC Bank but it was dishonoured.

Tk 147 cr allocated for payment of arrears salaries to non-govt teachers

The government has allocated Tk 146.73 crore for the payment of outstanding salaries to teachers and employees of non-government educational institutions, reports UNB.

With this allocation, new national pay scale will be implemented for 3.39 lakh teachers and employees of non-government schools, colleges and madrasahs and their outstanding salaries from July 1997 to March 1998 will be paid off.

All the necessary papers and instructions regarding the allocation have already been sent to

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Wastage rampant as water crisis persists in city

By Special Correspondent
While the metropolis suffers from a perennial shortage of water, getting only about half of its daily requirement, a section of Dhaka WASA employees earn a quick buck from its varied use.

Illegal connection, unauthorised sale of water and washing of cars and other vehicles at pumping stations, are among the profitable side business of the employees.

Water has become scarce in the metropolis with less than half of the total demand of 1400 million litres supplied by WASA everyday.

But wastage, billed as 'system loss', like a car getting a wash from a hose filling a bowser (as seen in the photograph) also keep the supplies low.

The car got priority at 1-30 pm on Sunday at Eskaton Garden pump station of WASA, delaying a bowser getting filled to provide water to the citizens.

WASA officials say low voltage of power and loadshedding

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Govt preparing to appeal against bail for top criminals

The government is preparing to appeal to the Appellate Division against granting and release of some top criminals on bail by the courts, reports UNB.

Worried about the release of many top-criminals on bail, the government on Sunday constituted a five-member committee headed by Additional Attorney General Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan to scrutinise those cases and file appeal with the Appellate Division.

In last one year, police arrested 40 top terrorists in the city out of the listed 43, but more than one-third of them are now free on bail.

The terrorists have been charged with various crimes, including murder, extortion and violence, and are accused in two to 16 cases each.

Senior police officials said they are in a fix over the frequent granting of bails to the top criminals who are a constant threat to public life and property.

Meanwhile, a recent meeting of the Home Ministry expressed concern after reviewing the list of arrests and bails granted to the top terrorists.

All concerned thanas have been asked verbally to immediately submit charge-sheets in all the cases filed.

If necessary, the Home Ministry meeting even favoured detention against the listed terrorists in case they manage to get bails.

A gang leader, Subrata Kumar Bain, charged with 13 cases, was granted bail recently. But police again sent him to jail on detention.

Another 25 top terrorists, including 'Sweden' Aslam accused in 16 criminal cases, are now in jail. But he has already been granted bail in three cases.

Another terrorist, Munna, was granted bail a few months ago. But police again arrested him with a foreign-made revolver during his bid to extort money.



When most of the city residents are suffering due to water crisis, a car being washed at a WASA pump station in the city yesterday. — Star photo by Sheikh Enamul Haq

Tale of Dhaka's unarmed, unpaid 'investment minister' in London

From Nurul Kabir
That the main thrust of diplomacy for a poor country like Bangladesh should be on, attracting foreign investment. The job of the 'investment minister', he said, would be to promote foreign investment in Bangladesh.

"I have been given a room with four chairs and a table at the high commission office in London, but I have no computer, no staff, no transport, not a sofa for offering a comfortable seat to a potential investor, not even a telephone directory containing telephone numbers of relevant government officials and private sector business establishments in Bangladesh," says a disappointed Joarder.

"I find the job of the investment minister to be like that of a marriage office. I need accurate information about the prospective areas of foreign investment in Bangladesh, the possible rate of profit, the laws and rules relating to investment, financial and managerial ability of local partners and their contact numbers."

"I also have to have information about spirations of potential investors — be it non-resident Bangladeshis or foreigners, their areas of interests and so on."

The service of Joarder is under the Dhaka-based Board of Investment supervised directly by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He wrote to the BOI officials requesting for the logistics at the end of February. He recently learnt from the BOI chief — a former foreign secretary who is now heading a delegation to Britain, USA and Canada — that his salary is being processed. "But nothing concrete about the logistics."

Joarder has been living in the UK for the last 34 years. He worked in important positions

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Army rejects Speaker's call for Suharto's resignation

JAKARTA, May 18: Veteran leader President Suharto fought back against the most serious challenge to his 32-year rule today clinging onto power after the army rejected calls by the parliament Speaker that he should resign, reports AFP.

Armed forces chief and defence minister General Wiranto told journalists after an emergency meeting with top commanders that the call from Speaker Harmoko issued on behalf of parliamentary leaders "does not have a legal basis."

The announcement quashed early jubilation among students and journalists who erupted into cheers at Harmoko's statement believing the ruling clique had cracked irreversibly, and Suharto's rule was finally coming to an end.

A 'calm' Suharto told military intelligence chief Lieutenant General Mutojib that he would make a statement to the nation tomorrow.

But news that the 76-year-old leader was to stay on, was likely to inflict a new battering on the economy after the Rupiah today crashed through the 13,000 to the dollar barrier in Singapore, and stocks closed down 4.2 per cent.

Wiranto's announcement, which was greeted with boos by the waiting press corps, capped a day of political turmoil and rumours which rose to a crescendo after days of speculation about Suharto's fate.

He has faced mounting calls from opposition leaders and students to hand over the reins of power following days of rioting and looting here which left at least 500 dead, and pushed the capital to the brink of anarchy.

The country is bracing for further protests on Wednesday when students have vowed to mobilise on every campus, and Muslim leader Amien Rais has called for a major opposition rally on the streets of Jakarta.

Wiranto called for the cancellation of planned student-led protests, after past demonstrations degenerated into violence and which have prompted foreigners to flee fearing of a repetition of the mob violence that devastated entire city blocks last week.

Popular pressure for Suharto to quit had escalated today as Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Abdul Latief quit the cabinet and hundreds of students converged on parliament to demand the withdrawal of Suharto's mandate.

The Speaker, a longtime Suharto backer, had said the call was supported by his parliamentary vice-chairman, who include the representative of the 75-member military faction in the 500 seat parliament.

He urged Suharto to resign for the sake of national unity, reading a statement calling for

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by Faruq Choudhury
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Supplement

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