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tion, energy consumption and

ever-increasing numbers con-

tinues to be the road-users'

fares have lately been made out

of bounds for such slow-moving

contractions. But this seems to

be a small measure of relief,

considering that traffic conges-

tion is now an all-time problem

without any break or lean pe-

WASHINGTON, Nov 20: The

House impeachment inquiry is

A few more city's thorough-

worst nightmare.

city roads.

process.

housing.

agement.





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# Down to Earth

# City's awesome congestion

By AS M Nurunnabi

The Dhaka metropolis, in aided ambitious projects for reterms of population and other lieving the mounting congestion problems of the city by way infrastructural aspects, has been bloating to such an extent of construction of by-passes, fly-overs and so on. Unless that it seems it may be bursting some of such projects are taken up on the ground and they make at the seams. The vastly expanding process has lately asmeaningful progress, they may sumed awesome aspects so all look like mere pipe-dreams much so that the livability of to the city dwellers constantly the city seems to be at stake. bedevilled by the over-con-The foremost alarming aspects gested urban environment relate to sheer population exwithout any light at the end of the tunnel in the near future. plosion of the city with corresponding harrowing deficiencies primarily in such sectors as transport and communica-

about creating satellite towns in close proximity to the Dhaka city. In this context, the Purbachal Housing Project received a lot of publicity and raised hopes in many that the project could play a helpful role in relieving the pressure of population within the city. But it seems that the project has been making such slow progress that there is hardly room for optimism about the project's expeditious completion.

Similarly, there is little optimism about expansion of the city across Buriganga. There is, of course, an on-going project for construction of a second bridge across Buriganga which is due for completion sometime next year. There is, however, no ground for hoping that the completion of the additional bridge will give a spurt to the expansion of the city southwards even in the private sector.

The private estate developers at present appear to be so busy pulling down low-rise buildings in some select areas of the city and constructing multi-storey structures in their places that they are not likely to find any incentive in taking up development work regarding satellite township schemes.

housing schemes outside the city centre on the one hand, and the continuing spree of building multi-storey apartment build-

been creating cumulative impact in heightening density of city population within existing limits with near-paralysing effect on utility service sectors,

like gas, water and electricity. There is already a trend for movement of some sections of people who are more or less reasonably well-placed financially to outer fringe of the city like Uttara which are less congested with less air pollution yet en-joying normal facilities of urban life. The advantage of adequate transport system for that area, in some cases with pre-mium AC bus service has added to the attraction for that area. This has also acted as a helpful factor for many business

Some recent travellers who went abroad cite the cases of Bangkok and Calcutta which previously suffered from serious traffic problems, but are now said to be enjoying a more disciplined traffic environment, thanks to innovative efforts of the civic bodies. Particularly in the case of Bangkok. due to construction of fly-overs in certain strategic areas. Judging from the results observed in such cities for relieving traffic congestion, our hope lies in the adoption of similar strategies as already envisaged in the foreign-aided projects for our city.

But the overriding need in the context of our horrendous problems, is speed in implementation of such projects. In the light of our signal success in implementing such a grandiose project as Bangabandhu bridge, there is room for optimism that given a determined will, the multi-faceted problems which are at present threatening the livability of the city may not be difficult for resolution.

The bottom line is that the city's mammoth problem o population congestion desperately cries for effective solu-

said today he did not see any of

the hearing but did get a 'curso-

ry' briefing. He did take issue

with the committee's vote to

never been a case where a per-

and testify," Clinton told re-

porters at Tokyo's Haneda air-

port before boarding Air Force

One for a flight to Seoul, South

Armed Forces

From Page 1

task in natural calamity apart

from putting their efforts to

achieve the highest profes-

Forces comprising army, navy

and airforces, are the pride of

the country as well as the na-

tion," the President said. He ex-

tended his sincere greetings to

all members of the Armed

Hasina has expressed hope that

the members of the armed

forces' would join in various

social movements for the wel-

fare of the country's poorer sec-

praised the services rendered by

the members of armed forces to

the people during recent floods

her greetings to the members of

the armed forces on the

begin with offering of munajat

after the Fazr prayers in all

mosques at army garrisons,

naval ships and establishments

as well as airforce bases

In Dhaka, the President and

the Supreme Commander of the

Armed Forces Shahabuddin

Ahmed and Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina, who is also the

Defence Minister, will place

wreaths at the Shikha Anirban

(the eternal flame) to pay their

Armed Forces who had em-

braced martyrdom in the Lib-

Chief of Army Staff Lieu-

tenant General M Mustafizur

Rahman, Chief of the Air Staff

Air Vice-Marshal Jamaluddin

Ahmed will also place wreaths

at the 'Shikha Anirban' sepa-

rately on behalf of their respec-

However, sensing a massive

security hunt the kidnappers

released Dananjoy Chakma, 50,

an active supporter of peace ac-

cord at a village in Babuchhara

police-army launched a comb-

ing operation after the abduc-

who were abducted from

Laxmichhara thana on Satur-

day last, are yet to be traced.

One person was arrested and

Meanwhile, the four men,

Abducted

From Page 1

eration War in 1971.

tive services.

people here.

this morning.

tion of Dananjoy.

homage to the members of the

throughout the country.

In her message, she highly

The Prime Minister extended

The day's programme will

Prime Minister Sheikh

"The Bangladesh Armed

son's lawyer was asked to come

"As far as I know, there has

subpoena Bennett.

sional excellence.

Forces.

in the country.

occasion.

### Power Purchase Indian team to visit Pakistan to work out technical details

BALLABGHARH, India, Nov 20: A seven-member Indian team will visit Islamabad next week to discuss technical details of the purchase of power from Pakistan, Power Minister PR Kumaramangalam said today, reports Reuters.

"The delegation's primary job is to work out the technical details," Kumaramangalam told reporters. "We are at the very preliminary stage of discussion".

Kumaramangalam was speaking after laying the foundation of the 400 kv sub-station at Samaipur village in Harayana state's Ballabhgarh district, about 40 kms from New

The team to Pakistan will be led by Pradeep Baijal, a senior power ministry official. An external affairs ministry

statement in New Delhi said the discussions on the sale of power would be held from November 24 to 27.

It said officials from the two countries will meet from December 1 to 4 to discuss details about opening a bus service between Lahore and Delhi.



### Prof Yunus gets Indira Gandhi Prize

NEW DELHI, Nov 20: Dr Monammed Yunus. Chairman of Grameen Bank, has been selected for the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 1998, re-

The prize carrying 25 lakh rupees has been instituted in memory of late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to foster creative cooperation among nations. ushering in of a new international economic order and en richment of human spirit, Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust

announced today. The jury members who attended the meeting were former US Secretary of Defence Robert S McNamara, Vice Chancellor Emeritus of Cambridge University David Williams and Russian academician GI Marchuk.

Among the prominent award winners are Mikhail Gorbachev, Sam Nujoma, Rajiv Gandhi, Vaclav Havel and Jimmy Carter.

### Case against Benazir PPP challenges legality of Swiss authorities

ISLAMABAD, Nov 20: The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has filed a case in a Swiss court challenging the legality of Swiss authorities in assisting the Nawaz Sharif government in the alleged corruption cases against its chief Benazir Bhutto and her husband Asif Ali Zardari, reports PTI.

The petition, filed on Monday, alleged that the Swiss authorities, by getting involved in Pakistani politics, have done incalculable damage to the reputation of PPP and its leader, a release by the party said here

### 2 murdered

From Page 1

out, he heard explosions and saw some people locked in a clash and others running in Some local people said they

saw three persons lying with critical stab wounds near the stadium and another in front of the thana premises soon after the clash. Local people took three of them to a local clinic and later to DMCH where doctors declared one of them dead at about 8:30 pm, police and hospital sources said.

According to associates of the Rimon, Aktar and Russel. the three, along with some of their friends, were enjoying the concert from around 3 pm.

At one stage Rimon, Russel and Aktar went out through gate No 5 at around 7:30 pm to collect food and drinks for their friends.

When the three were crossing the gate, they had an altercation with some other youths inside the stadium. There was no other untoward incident there. The three went outside but did not come back, their associates

added. The bodies were sent to DMCH morgue, hospital sources said.

None was arrested or any case was filed with Mirpur thana in this connection till late last night.



Club in the city yesterday.

### President tells SAFOG conference

# Reducing maternal mortality challenge for all of us

"It is a human right issue

and we must stop this gender

bias. In spite our small re-

sources in the health sector, we

should allocate high share in

women's reproductive health

mothers for no fault of their

own in the process of child-

stakeholders at every level have

the responsibility to come for-

ward to help the government in

its efforts to reduce maternal

deaths and long term complica-

women. President Shahabuddin

said it is "another shameful

menace" prevailing in this re-

gion, which very much affects

dowry is very common in this

country, and the government

has introduced stringent laws

He said violence related to

Turning to violence against

tions following childbirth.

maternal health.

"We should not penalise our

He said community and

infrastructure," he said.

he said.

ginning.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday called for highest efforts to bring down maternal mortality, saying that it is a challenge for all of us, reports UNB.

"Why should a woman die in childbirth, a duty she performs for propagation of the human race? This question remains unanswered and unaddressed," he said inaugurating the 2nd conference of South Asian Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (SAFOG) in the after-

"Motherhood-Safe for All by the 21st Century" is the theme of the three-day conference at Sonargaon Hotel. President Shahabuddin said

the condition of women's health is not good in Bangladesh, where some 22,000 women die every year because of complications in childbirth which "is by no means acceptable to us."

"I feel, it is our moral obligation to answer and address this issue of human misery," he said adding that the situation is no better in the other countries of this region.

The President said the governments in this region are no doubt doing their best to help the mothers and their infants. but the government alone cannot tackle these problems.

"The governments have a very high expectation from professionals, particularly those who are highly qualified and technically competent in this field," he said.

Quoting a statistics of the World Health Organisation, he said 500,000 maternal deaths occur every year globally, of which 99 per cent are in the de-

veloping countries. He said South Asia's share is

almost 50 per cent of the total

### Mid-term polls

From Page 1 tion in which her Awami League defeated the BNP. The next election is not due until 2001.

Asked whether the BNP would fare in a snap poll, Khaleda said: Certainly we will do better. Our credibility with the people as an alternative to run the country is now far higher.

"During the last two and a half years, the people have only witnessed undemocratic actions by the government, saw the economy sliding gradually and little progress in development activities. "The government also re-

sorted to unconstitutional means by signing a peace treaty with tribal rebels in Chittagong Hill Tracts and a water sharing treaty with India bypassing parliament.'

Khaleda hit back at Hasina's 'no-strike' offer, saying that Awami League had called 173 days of strike during BNP's rule between 1991 and 1996.

"We have called only nine days of strike so far. These had been forced upon us by the government's repressive policies. But personally I do not believe in politics of hartal (strike)", Khaleda said.

"But this government cannot be trusted. There is no similarity between its words and deeds," she said.

Asked if the country should see a lull in political unrest in near future, Khaleda said, "It depends on the government's behaviour. If it allows us to hold peaceful rallies and practice our democratic rights we

will not go for strikes." "If it does not ... the onus will be on the rulers," she said.

prohibiting dowry and protect ing women from cruelty and "It is a challenge for all of us to bring down maternal mortality, particularly of this region." "But we need social support

people to implement the laws The President said women in this region are victims of diseffectively. The President said medical crimination in many areas care is always costly, but prethey suffer from nutritional, ventive measures are more afsocial and even psychological deprivation from the very befordable and beneficial.

"I would advise all of you to give more preventive medical care to our pregnant mothers and the new-borns to avoid risk of life," he told the conference.

and change in attitude of our

About 600 delegates, including 150 from 13 foreign countries, are attending the conference. The countries represented are: India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, UK, Canada, the Netherlands, Singapore, Indonesia, Sweden, Egypt and Germany

Health and Family Welfare Minister Salah Uddin Yusui addressed the conference as special guest while State Minister for Health Prof M Amanullah as the guest of honour.

Newly elected SAFOG president Prof T A Chowdhury, outgoing president Prof Rashid Latif Khan, Prof Shirish S Sheth, Prof Ratna S Samil, Prof Syeda Firoza Begum, Prof Shahla Khatun and Prof A B Bhuiyan also spoke at the inaugural session.

### PM attends milad at mazar premises of Bangabandhu

TUNGIPARA, Nov 20: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today attended a milad mahfil at the premises of the mazar of father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and expressed her gratitude to Almighty Allah for verdict in the Bangabandhu Murder Case, reports BSS.

Hundreds of people attended the milad mahfil and offered prayers seeking eternal peace of the departed soul of Banga-

Prayers were also offered for the peace, stability, progress and prosperity of the country and the people. Leaders and workers of

Awami League, Jubo League, Krishak League, Sramik League. Shechchhasevak League, Mahila Awami League, Chhatra League also attended the milad. The Prime Minister also offered fateha at the mazar after

Juma prayers. The prime minister left here for the capital in the afternoon.

### BNP blasts govt for gas price-hike BNP Secretary General Ab-

dul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday blasted the government for increasing gas price by 15 per cent and demanded withdrawal of the decision, reports UNB. Bhuiyan in a statement said

the 15 per cent rise in gas price is part of the government's evil design of shifting the responsibility of its failure, incompetence, corruption, plundering wastage of wealth to the people, he said. Bhuiyan said gas price was

increased in addition to tax burden at a time when public life became miserable due to a famine-like situation in the backdrop of flood, economic recession, unemployment and price spiral.

He said effort is also being made to increase the power tariff. He also criticised the government for increasing the price of fertiliser. "Their cruel fun has created a devastating situation," he added.

### Sylhet Airport

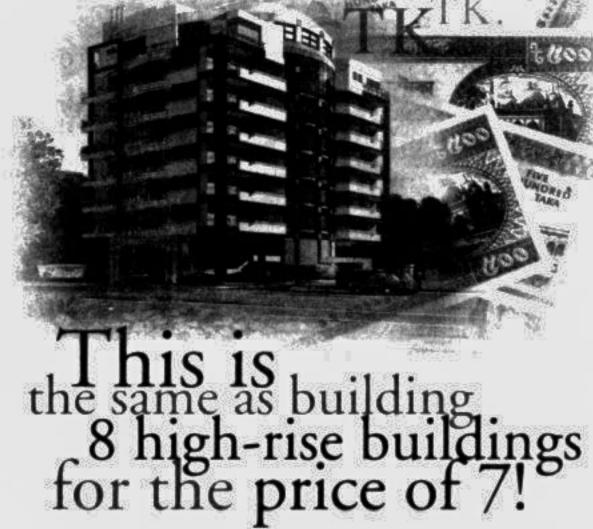
From Page 1

manding punishment to those responsible for the incident. The work stoppage which began at 12.00 pm was withdrawn after an hour with assurance from the police super.

The Station Manager of Civil Aviation was missing. The customs and airport officials said that Collector of Customs and other high officials had been informed of the matter. They vowed to resume work stoppage soon if legal measures against the culprits

were not taken immediately. However, president of Sylhet district BCL Shafiul Alam Nadel said none of the responsible office-bearers of the organisation was present at the VIP lounge. They alleged misbehaviour of the Airport Man-

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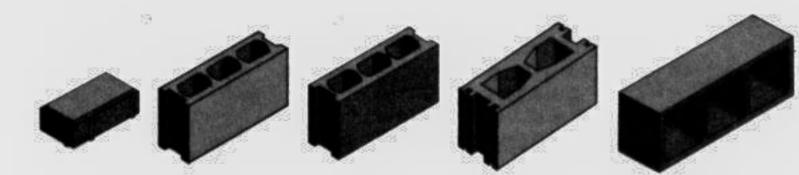
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# There was also some talk houses in shifting to that area.

The transport and communication sectors with their attendant snarls-up in the city seem to be going from bad to worse in spite of some palliative measures lately taken by the authorities concerned. True, some measure of discipline and control was lately discerned on some major roads and highways of the city through com-

missioning of army, navy and BDR personnel in traffic man-But this cannot be a regular, normal feature for the relief of the ever-burgeoning traffic management problems. The main inhibiting factors appear to be the limited availability of the city's total road space, contrasting with the steady growth of the motorised transports. The spiralling ingress of slowmoving cycle rickshaws in

The absence of suitable

riod in a day for almost all the We have been hearing for a ings, on the other hand, have long time about some foreign-

New subpoenas approved in impeachment inquiry

WASHINGTON, Nov 20: Former Senate Watergate Counsel Sam Dash abruptly resigned today as Kenneth Starr's ethics adviser to protest the independent counsel's decision to testify hearing against President Clinobligations under the indepenpower of impeachment," Dash said in a letter to Starr that was

proved subpoenas for Clinton's lawyer in the Paula Jones case, Robert Bennett, and two people connected with Mrs Willey.

nounced that Clinton's closest be subpoenaed. No vote was required, because Democrats did not object. All four will appear session, but it is not clear that

moving beyond President Bill Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinsky, after an opening hearing produced a heated clash between accuser Kenneth Starr and the president's personal

lawyer, reports AP. Independent Council Starr made a 12-hour nationally with her in the White House but televised appearance before the her allegations were not a part committee Thursday, as it opened only the third presidential impeachment inquiry in

US history. No president has been removed from office by the Fencing with hostile Democrats and basking in Republican praise before engaging in a much-anticipated showdown with presidential attorney David Kendall. Starr was so much in the spotlight that the facts of his impeachment referral on the Lewinsky matter obtained by The Associated barely got a mention. The House Judiciary Com-

mittee is expected to conduct several days of hearings before deciding whether to send articles of impeachment to the House floor. Republicans have only a narrow majority in the House. If they do recommend impeachment, the Senate would hold a trial on removal of the

president from office. Congress has impeached a president only once. Andrew Johnson in 1868. He was acquitted by one vote in the Senate and served out his term. Presider. Richard Nixon resigned in 1974 rather than face

# Khaleda tells diplomats

BNP to carry out it's peaceful and legitimate movements. meetings and processions, end killings and repression on opposition political activists. withdraw false cases and make parliament effective, there would not be any hurtle, she

tela diplomats. The party was compelled to call hartals and would do so in future unless the government permits the party to hold rallies and demonstrations and other peaceful activities, put an end to killings and repression on its workers, Karim said.

The present Prime Minister had said many things in the past and made pledges on many issues. Even in her election manifesto and speech she promised to repeal Special Powers Act and give autonomy to Radio and TV, separate the judiciary and the executive.

During the one and half-an hours' meeting the BNP chief also told the diplomats that on November 16 the party's march towards parliament ended peacefully "since government goons or police did not attack

leader were the High Commissioners of India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Ambassadors of Norway, Switzerland, Iran, Thailand, Turkey, Russia, The Philippines, Charge d'affaires of Indonesia, UAE, Kuwait and representative of IMF.

Norwegian ambassador described the meeting as "useful and informative". But he declined to say anything further to newsmen after the meeting.

Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Dr Moyeen Khan and Rezaul Karim assisted the BNP chief.

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almost certain impeachment over the Watergate scandal. Before exhausted lawmakers

went home after midnight this morning, they met in closed session to extend to move the inquiry into the Kathleen Willey case and other matters. Mrs Willey has publicly accused Clinton of sexual misconduct

in the House impeachment ton. "You have violated your dent counsel statute and have unlawfully intruded on the

of Starr's impeachment report. Majority Republicans ap-

Committee officials anaide, Bruce Lindsey, also would for sworn interviews in closed

### they would testify at hearings. Clinton, travelling in Asia,

From Page 1 he added. If the government allows

But none of these pledges

have been fulfilled. Even it did not implement the four-point agreement signed with the Opposition in Parliament, Karim quoted her as telling the diplo-

Those who met the BNP