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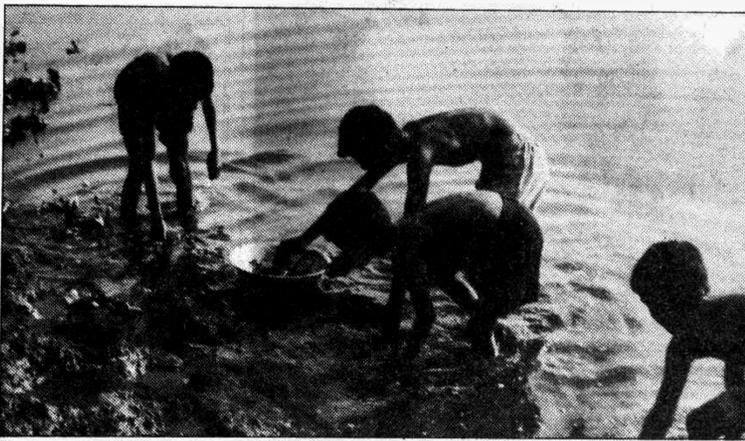
## Bangladeshi killed in BSF firing

**NETRAKONA, Jan 16:** A Bangladeshi national was killed by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) at a bordering village under Durgapur thana of Netrakona district yesterday, reports BSS.

Police and local people said, the BSF personnel of Rangchhara Border Observation Post (BOP) of India chased Abdul Mannan Talukder, 40, from Badambari village adjacent to no man's land at 11 am yesterday. The BSF personnel fired on him from behind and he died on the spot. They also took away the body.

Local people said Mannan Talukder, son of Haji Abdul Berek of village Naluapara went to the frontier village for collecting paddy seeds.

The BDR protested the killing and held a flag meeting with BSF today. The BSF agreed to hand over the body, sources said.



Children collecting dead fishes along the bank of the Buriganga yesterday. — Star photo

## Fishes in Buriganga dying

**By Morshed Ali Khan**

Thousands of dead fishes have been floating over a two-km long stretch of the river Buriganga between Basila and Kamrangir Char near the city.

Villagers and fishermen catching the dead fishes said that the 'epidemic' started four days ago and that the fishes are seen 'only' during the high tide. They suspected that the huge quantity of poisonous tannery waste dumped into the river was responsible for this.

Others said 'some deadly waste' might have been dumped into the river by illegally set up factories in the area.

Children were also seen catching the fishes along the river bank.

The tannery waste is channelled into the Buriganga from a point near Rayer Bazar. During low tide, the polluted water flows downstream towards Sadarghat but 'unusual' high tide over the last few days pushed the effluents upstream killing the fishes, local people said.

When asked what they were doing with the dead fishes, some villagers said they were eating those and some others said that those were being sold in the markets. Most of the dead fishes were eels, *chapiha*, *tangra* and *bailla*.

Some villagers said every year 'such epidemic' occurred but this time it is much more serious. An elderly man from Jhaochar under Keraniganj thana said there are many illegal factories in the area and 'it is not unlikely that some of those disposed of some poisonous waste in the river'.

When contacted last night, officials of the Department of Environment said they were not aware of the problem. "We will investigate the matter tomorrow," said one official.

## Beggars better off in Delhi

**NEW DELHI, Jan 16:** An average family of beggars with three children in New Delhi earns more than 100 dollars a month — half the wages of a middle-class employee, AFP quoting a report said today.

The Asian Age daily said a family of beggars with three children could earn more than 5,000 rupees (119 dollars) a month "displaying blood stained wounds... hunchback, handicapped youth with crutches and scores of others clutching at your feet."

"I earn about 100 rupees (2.3 dollars) a day and at times it reaches to 150 rupees," said Lakkhu Bai, a migrant from the northern state of Rajasthan, who has been begging for 12 years.

The newspaper said the beggars were 'concocted' by organised groups and operated with the 'blessings of local policemen.'

Most of the beggars interviewed by the daily said they did not want to take up any other business as begging was a 'profitable' venture.

## BDR, BSF trade fire: Three civilians hurt

**KURIGRAM, Jan 16:** A Bangladeshi fisherman and two Indian nationals were injured with bullets as BDR and Indian Border Security Force (BSF) exchanged fire here on Friday and Saturday, reports UNB.

BDR sources said fisherman Muhammad Solaiman, 18, was injured as BSF men opened fire on him Friday morning while he was fishing near border pillar No 1041 at Daikhawa in Sadar thana.

He was admitted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.

Hearing the gunshots, BDR rushed to the spot and retaliated with three rounds of shots, leaving an Indian citizen injured.

Another Indian national, Joyal Abedin, 43, was injured when BDR men opened fire on him at Anantapur in Fulbari thana when he was entering Bangladesh territory with smuggled goods this afternoon.

BSF officials visited the spot and strengthened security on the border. BDR also beefed up security in the area.

## Ghorasal sixth power unit opens next month

**By Sharier Khan**

While all the power projects undertaken by the government are more or less one to two years behind schedule, commissioning of a 210 MW power plant at Ghorasal next month is likely to save the country from inevitable load-shedding in the second quarter of the year.

But the load-shedding situation will worsen from the middle of the year as the demand continues to rise and there is "little realistic effort" by the government to handle the situation, sources said.

In addition to the Ghorasal plant, there's a chance of commissioning of a 110 MW barge-mount plant by a Malaysian company and a 60 MW gas-based plant by Rural Power Company in Mymensingh.

Private power projects like 450 MW Meghnaghat plant, 360 MW Haripur plant and 100 MW Baghabari plant are all more than a year behind schedule now. None of these would come into operation before 2001.

"Beginning from mid-99, the country's power situation will only worsen. The demand for power is increasing by 10 to 12 per cent every year. But we are not adequately prepared to meet that demand," said a source.

This year, the Power System Master Plan of the government projects a demand for 2800 MW. But, sources said, due to non-availability of power distribution system, the demand may vary from 2500 MW to 2550 MW.

The total power generation capacity in the country will rise to 2550 MW with commissioning of the two plants at Ghorasal and Mymensingh. "But as there will be no safety margin of power generation, there will be a risk of country-wide blackouts this year too," the source said.

The sixth 210 MW power unit at Ghorasal is expected to be commissioned early next month. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is likely to inaugurate this power unit.

It was built by a Russian company under a turn-key contract. Construction of the sixth unit was delayed by more than two years mostly due to inefficiency of the Power Development Board (PDB) and the contractor, the sources said.

The Ghorasal plant would have been ready before November-December last. But it was delayed as one of its major components, a rotor, imported around mid-98, was used to make the third unit operational. The Ghorasal third unit, built by the same company, had gone out of order in June as its rotor broke.

Meanwhile, the PDB, which had been hammering on setting up of barge-mount plants as a short-term solution to load-shedding, is now reluctant to proceed further with such plants.

PDB's initiatives resulted in signing of four agreements in mid-97 for setting up of four 110 MW power plants within 10 months. But till date, only one plant was commissioned by Wartsila in Khulna last October.

The load-shedding situation in last summer was worst in

## Election, rejection, hartal... but what about our right to breathe clean air

**By Mahfuz Anam**

The ruling party wants to hold municipal elections. The opposition parties have rejected it. Either way who cares? We simply want to breathe clean air. But then, that is not our politicians' concern.

Has any political party taken it up as its cause? Have we heard the opposition utter a single word about the drastically deteriorating environment in our urban areas? BNP loses no chance to accuse AL of selling out the country to India. Why doesn't it blame the government for causing brain damage to city children by doing nothing about lead poison in the city air? The newspapers have been carrying stories of its horrifying affect. Our experts have come out with how certain city children have already been damaged by it.

To the best of our knowledge the government has nothing so far. Neither has the opposition. None of them have considered it to be an issue of any significance. Their concern is election. One side wants it. The other side rejects it. And meanwhile we can continue to breathe poison for all they care.

In rejecting the elections the opposition has called for a hartal on the 26th. However remotely, we could have felt some sort of consolation if it was called to protest lead poisoning and to ensure clean air to the city dwellers. But such 'peoples' concern' does not matter to our political parties. Can any one recall a single hartal that was called on such issues as campus terrorism, oppression on women, raping of under-aged children, deteriorating educational standards, extortion, rising urban violence, insecurity of lives in our villages, rising instances of corruption and bribery? Not that hartals would have done us any good. We just want to prove the point that the REAL ISSUES are not very popular with our politicians and their parties.

When will our politics have something to with what the people want? Ask anybody on the streets, any businessmen, any worker, any office goer, any housewife, any employer or employee, whether there is the slightest bit of interest in the just declared municipal elections or in the hartal. Except for those who are candidates themselves, and those who are planning to earn some extra income by hanging around those who are the candidates, and the political parties that want to gain power, the rest of us — the general public — are far more interested in eking out a meager existence in a peaceful environment than in the elections or in the opposition's hartal. Is it because we do not want elections? No, but because those who get elected look after their parties, and NOT after the people who elect them. Do our political parties realise that more and more the issues that they raise look irrelevant to us, the voters?

Inexorably we are moving towards self-destruction by indulging in politics of confrontation.

## Alleged criminal shot dead in city

**By Staff Correspondent**

An alleged criminal was shot dead by an armed gang at Mirpur Section 11 bus stand in the city yesterday.

Police identified the victim as Mamun, 35, of Aminbazar under Saver thana. He was wanted in some 15 cases.

The gang shot him in the chest and fled the spot.

Fatally injured Mamun was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he died at about 5 pm.

Police suspected that the victim's second wife might be involved in the killing.

The body was sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy.

When contacted the duty officer at Pallabi thana said no case was filed till 11 pm but they were contacting Saver thana in this connection.

## Tablig Jamaat urges opposition to withdraw Jan 26 hartal

**TONGI, Jan 16:** The devotees of Tablig Jamaat today called upon the opposition to withdraw their proposed hartal on January 26 in view of the 'Biswa Ijtema', the second largest congregation of the Muslims after the holy Hajj, beginning January 30, reports BSS.

The organisers, workers and devotees, now busy erecting pandal on the bank of the river Turag for holding this grand congregation, said that thousands of people were arriving every day to attend the Ijtema. The hartal called by the opposition would hamper the smooth holding of this holy congregation, they said.

## Charges of high crimes, misdemeanours

**Inside the Senate chamber: a look at the impeachment trial**

► House presentation Thursday, Jan. 14 through Saturday, Jan. 16. Not to exceed 24 hours

► President's presentation Tuesday, Jan. 19 through Thursday, Jan. 21. Not to exceed 24 hours

► Senate questioning Friday, Jan. 22, and Saturday, Jan. 23. Not to exceed 16 hours

**PROCEDURE**

1 A Senator sends a written question to the 2 sergeant-at-arms. In turn, he takes it to the 3 presiding officer, who reads the question and rules on any objection. The judge's decision may be appealed by a vote.

► Senate considers motions to dismiss or motions for subpoenas of witnesses Monday, Jan. 25

**POSSIBLE MOTIONS**

- \* Defense
- To have the case dismissed before final arguments
- \* Prosecution
- Motion to call witnesses

► Jan. 26-31: Possible days for discovery or for closing arguments, depending on votes on motions

**55 REPUBLICANS**

White House defense counsel

Majority Whip Don Nickles

Majority Leader Trent Lott

Minority Leader Tom Daschle

Minority Whip Harry Reid

Judge - Chief Justice William Rehnquist

House Managers

**45 DEMOCRATS**

A Senate legal counsel  
B Assistant to chief justice  
C Clerk to chief justice  
D Sergeant-at-arms, staff  
E Secretary for the minority  
F Sergeant-at-arms  
G Secretary of the Senate

H Secretary for the majority  
I Journal clerk  
J Parliamentarian  
K Legislative clerk  
L Assistant secretary  
M Witness table

APICowan, Hoffmann, Tovar

## Impeachment trial

**WASHINGTON, Jan 16:** After alleging that William Jefferson Clinton violated the laws of this land, prosecutors at the president's impeachment argued today that his conduct amounted to 'high crimes and misdemeanors' warranting his removal, reports AP.

Continuing the proceedings into the weekend, senators were eager to stay on schedule for the crucial decision to invite the president to testify and summon several of his close aides and associates as witnesses. House prosecutors have relentlessly pressed for permission to call witnesses later in the trial.

"That's our purpose. We try," House Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry Hyde, the lead prosecutor, said today before the House managers were presenting their third and final day of opening arguments.

Those lawmakers-turned-prosecutors were prepared to contend that lying under oath and obstruction of justice meet the Constitution's standard for removal.

Hyde, a Republican from Illinois, was expected to deliver a summation.

As Chief Justice William Rehnquist, the presiding officer, peered down at the Senate from his elevated dais Friday, Republican Rep. Bill McCollum

## Murder, mugging on rise in Chittagong

**From Nurul Alam**

**CHITTAGONG, Jan 16:** Incidents of crime including murder, looting, mugging and toll collection have gone up in the city and its surrounding areas.

Panic gripped the city after the sensational double-murder at Mehdiabag last week, the motive of which is still untraced.

Police officials said serious investigation is going-on to find out the clues behind the incident that rocked the police administration here.

Two cousins were asleept in the same bed in a house on the first floor of a four-storied building in the morning of January 11 at Mehdiabag. The assailants escaped unchallenged.

Sources say, some other secret killings also took place in the city recently but the killers remained untraced as investigation moved at a snail's pace.

President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCC&I) Kamal Uddin Ahmed in a statement expressed deep concern over the unabated increase of terrorism, murder, mugging and toll collection in Chittagong.

He mentioned that during the period from January 1 to January 13, seven murders, seven incidents of mugging and ten other crimes took place.

The chamber president urged the Home Minister and others concerned to take steps on emergency basis to curb crime in Chittagong.

He said that all businessmen including industrialists were

## No alternative to ousting AL govt: Ershad

**BANGPUR, Jan 16:** Jatiya Party chairman H M Ershad has said the people have no alternative but to oust the present government "through an all-out movement to safeguard national interest," reports APB.

Speaking at an iftar party here today he said "any conscientious citizen cannot remain silent when the country is in the grip of manifold crisis including worsening economic situation and deteriorating law and order."

The former military ruler said that Jatiya Party would fight to raise people's demands "even at the cost of blood" and called upon his party leaders and workers to be ready for "greater sacrifice."

Branding the AL government as "inept and inefficient," the deposed president claimed that JP was becoming popular day by day because of the "pragmatic politics" being pursued by it.

JP central committee vice chairman Rezaul Haque Sarkar, Mozammel Hossain, Lulu, MP, Karimuddin Barasa, MP, and local JP leaders were present at the iftar, said a party press release.

## Inside Today Article

## Child Labour and Childish Arguments

Column: Beneath the Surface by Abdul Bayes Page 4

## Focus

Law and Our Rights The institution of ombudsman; and Need for a culture of responsiveness Page 5

## Prayer Timings

**January 17**

Fajr	5:20	Jamaat	5:26
Zohr	12:45		1:15
Asr	4:00		4:15
Maghrib	5:38		5:40
Esha	7:00		7:15

Source: Islamic Foundation

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**Sehri, Iftar timings**

Ramadan	Jan	Sehri	Iftar
28	17	—	5-38
29	18	5-20	5-38
30	19	5-20	5-39

## Eminent citizens decry traffic mess

**By SPCL Correspondent**

A group of eminent citizens yesterday discussed ways to free the city of traffic gridlock, calling it a national issue requiring political will along with other measures to deal with.

They spoke of national consensus, decentralisation of development process, respect to law, more police personnel and flyovers. Going underground was another recommendation.

Their recommendations came at an open discussion on the worst civic problem at CIR-DAP auditorium. Dhaka Metropolitan Citizens Rights Forum organised it.

They also demanded accountability and transparency of RAJUK, which drew heavy flak for arbitrarily rezoning different residential and industrial areas like Dhanmondi, Gulshan and Tejgaon without public hearing.

Among others, Dr Kamal Hossain, Fasihuddin Mahtab, Dr Shamsheer Ali, Dr Anun Nishat, Barrister Amirul Islam, Advocate Sigma Huda, journalists Enayetullah Khan, Shafiq Rehman, Professor Nazrul Islam, Gias Kamal Choudhury, Farzana Hasan, Muntasir Mannan and Shahriar Kabir participated in the discussions.

Earlier, Forum leaders Hashem Sufi and Tuhin Malik stressed that taxpayers have a right to demand of the government and civic authorities an answer for the mess.

"We are not opposed to the government but we would like to help it along with other agencies responsible for better civic rights and amenities including freedom from traffic mess," Sufi said.

Dr Kamal Hossain, a former foreign minister and eminent lawyer, noted that since independence there had been a tendency among people not to respect the law, to travel on the wrong side and ignore red light. "The situation has reached such a point that if we obey the law we cannot return home in time," he observed.

"As citizens we have a civic right to demand of our MPs proper solution and guidance to the problem. We also have a right to know from those who are constitutionally responsible for the traffic problem. They should have been brought to such discussions so that we could know their side of the story," Dr Hossain observed.

Dr Fashuddin Mahtab, a former presidential adviser, said there should be decentralisation of business and jobs to satellite townships to free the city of rickshaws and other vehicles responsible for the traffic mess.

It is essential for checking urban migration and there should be an efficient public transport system, he said.

"In Dhaka city, the roads are not for vehicular traffic, pavements are not for pedestrians and zebra crossings are not for crossing the streets. This is not a desirable situation," said Dr Shamsheer Ali, a former VC of Open University.

"If it is the question of votes, politicians should think about 12 crore people instead of one lakh hawkers," he said, suggesting shuttle trains connecting the city with Narayanganj and Tongi.

Barrister Amirul Islam said management is one of the key issues in the problem. "We are making the city one big market, with shops lining roads upto Uttara narrowing the streets. For this the RAJUK must be answerable. There is no other agency more 'corrupt' than RAJUK."

The lawyer fired more salvos at the city agency for what he said arbitrarily changing zoning plans for key residential areas like Dhanmondi and Gulshan and Tejgaon Industrial Area without consulting people, defying its charter and even 'stealing away Gulshan lake'.

He suggested citizens take RAJUK to court to correct the wrongs.

Enayetullah Khan, editor of Holiday, observed that rickshaws should be made to use the left side of the road. The people should respect law, walk across jama to avoid it and road medians

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MH 197	0120	DAC	0705	KUL	THU & SAT

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