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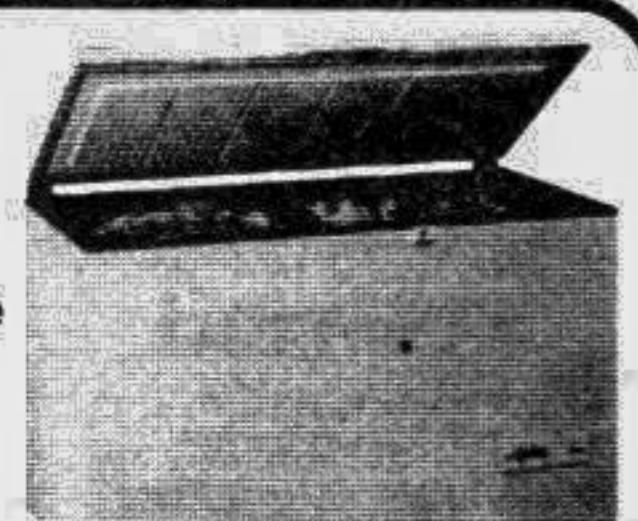


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Down to Earth

Burgeoning Meat Sale Outlets

By A S M Nurunnabi

Nowadays in line with the easy availability at their doors in some local areas of the city of such daily necessities as vegetables, fish and fruits, etc through vendors, the city dwellers have also been enjoying the facility of buying meat at wayside meat sellers or impromptu meat shops. The current position is that the proliferation of such meat sale outlets has reached such a stage that most department shops in the city, which have also grown in number, have a meat sale counter outside their shop fronts. The comparative scarcity of fish in the city markets may be one of the reasons for creating greater demand for meat which has been causing the proliferation.

The moot point is that there are allegations that in most cases the meat sold at such places is not upto the mark. In fact, sales of such meat of allegedly questionable quality are said to be rampant in the city not only at the wayside selling points but also in regular markets. Observers complain that most of the meat meant for sale bypass the needed quality check by Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) officials.

According to the Meat Quality Control Law and the 1983 City Corporation Ordinance, a butcher should slaughter animals in an authorised slaughter

house and take the meat to markets after getting the quality seal from the Corporation's veterinary officials. It is alleged that a large number of meat sellers, particularly those at roadside shops and on footpaths, do not follow the rules. No adequate mechanism appears to operate to enforce the observance of the rules by meat sellers.

It is also alleged that in a large number of cases, slaughter of animals is done at unauthorised places in dirty environments.

One can recall in this regard the mad cow scare which nearly put Britain's booming beef industry out of commission as the European consumers refused to ingest anything suspect. But in our case, not many people bother about whether or not the meat offered for sale in the city markets and elsewhere is really fit for consumption.

People consuming the meat of sick animals are exposed to various afflictions. So something needs to be done to prevent the butchers from selling poor quality meat. The mobile courts set up from time to time to punish the offenders may not perhaps deal with the problem effectively. Observers feel for much stricter law enforcement to keep the situation under control.

The DCC has only six modern slaughter houses in the city.

Doctors

From Page 1

A surgeon of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital said at his chamber at the Green Super Market that on an average he sees 25 patients a day between 5 pm and 8 pm and charges Tk 300 from a patient for the first visit and Tk 150 for subsequent visits.

Another doctor of medicine at the BIRDDEM hospital said he sees 22 patients between 6 pm and 8:30 pm.

A doctor who worked in the Middle East for over 20 years and is now practising at a small chamber at Green Road however expressed his utter disappointment that doctors in Bangladesh are "using patients as commodity".

"I noticed most of my colleagues seeing maximum number of patients in a short time and frequently asking them to have medical examinations. This is unfair. As I see it, it is purely business deal."

During the investigation, some doctors were also found maintaining more than one chamber between 4 pm and 9 pm daily. Three such doctors have chambers at Dhammandi and Mogbazar. Another three have chambers at Dhammandi and Elephant Road. All the chambers were found crowded with waiting patients, mostly from outside Dhaka.

When contacted, Bangladeshi Private Medical Practitioners Association (BPMPA) Secretary General Dr Moniruzzaman Bhuiyan acknowledged that there are some doctors who are engaged in "business deals".

The meeting urged the people to join the opposition movement against giving transit to India that includes countrywide demonstration on August 1, nationwide 30-hour hartal from 6 am on August 2.

Govt giving corridor to India in the name of transit:

Mannan Bhuiyan

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday alleged that the Awami League government is providing corridor to India in the name of transit to fulfill one of its commitments it made to Delhi before coming to power, reports UNB.

Presiding over a meeting of BNP central executive committee members in the city, he also denied that the two agreements signed during BNP rule were the basis of the transit but later sent to jail.

Atik died inside the jail on July 28, but the jail authorities disclosed it this morning. They did not mention any reason behind Atik's death.

His body was sent to Gopalganj Sadar hospital for autopsy.

The government continued propaganda by distorting the 1980 agreement with India and also the SAPTA signed in 1993. SAPTA is a multilateral matter and 1980 agreement was a follow-up of another one signed by Awami League government in 1973, Bhuiyan said.

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Venezuelan plane disappears

CARACAS, July 30: A small plane with 15 people aboard disappeared today while on a short domestic flight in southwest Venezuela near the border with Colombia, officials said, reports Reuters.

The twin-engined Beechcraft of local airline Avior, with 13 passengers and two crew, was flying from the provincial capital of Barinas to Guasdualito on the Colombia-Venezuela border.

Beximco at it again!

From Page 1

The JB board has found out two points. First, instead of paying the full amount, Beximco Pharma deposited only Tk nine crore and look disbursement of the extended loan from its local office on June 16. Secondly, the major condition of the loan extension, payment of the debenture loans, remained unmet.

But the more startling fact is that JB deposited the three post-dated cheques issued by Beximco Pharma with IFIC Bank thrice in June and July. And every time these bounced, proving that Pharma's cash documents are in fact valueless papers.

Beximco had Tk 13.87 crore irregular loans from JB as of April 6 this year.

According to sources, even after all such activities, JB local office not only kept mum but also willingly helped Beximco Pharma get the loans. A general manager of the local office who is also the brother of a former ruling party MP had allegedly helped the company get the loans.

According to sources, the manager had talked with the JB MD over telephone before giving the loan. The MD had reportedly given him orders to disburse the loans under the condition of adjusting the Tk 12 crore overdue loans.

Now the question arises why JB is sitting on the bounced cheques instead of taking action as per the provisions of the amended Negotiable Instrument Act.

This Act paves the way for filing criminal cases against any issuer of dishonoured cheques.

When a cheque bounces, the holder of the cheque has to make a demand for payment in

A DCC source admitted that the existing number of slaughter houses in the city is inadequate to meet the total demand of the steadily growing city population.

In spite of punitive measures intermittently taken by the DCC with mobile courts and police, observers do not find any effective control of illegal sales of sub-standard meat by sellers taking recourse to various malpractices.

With the fast growth of the city population, it is natural that expansion of meat trade will inevitably follow. What the DCC should do according to observers, is check proliferation of unauthorised meat sellers.

In view of higher price of goat meat, there are limited number of sale outlets for such meat. Here also some malpractices are observed, namely selling of meat of old and immature goats and also of sheep.

People consuming the meat of sick animals are exposed to various afflictions. So something needs to be done to prevent the butchers from selling poor quality meat. The mobile courts set up from time to time to punish the offenders may not perhaps deal with the problem effectively. Observers feel for much stricter law enforcement to keep the situation under control.

The health department of the DCC should take greater responsibility to ensure the good health of the city dwellers by checking all forms of malpractices adopted in the meat trade.

Former Commerce, Industries and Information Minister M Shamsul Islam denounced transit to India as a one-sided

transaction that will destroy Bangladesh's prospect of export to India's northern part, reports UNB.

It will also ruin the possibility of Indian investment here that the neighbouring investors are considering keeping the seven sisters in their mind, he told the agency. He strongly criticised the cabinet decision of examining proposal for allowing India what he called "corridor" through Bangladesh.

The foundation is committed to promoting three fundamental freedoms freedom from poverty, freedom from ignorance and freedom from oppression in Bangladesh.

M Shamsul Islam, a vice president of BNP also said giving India transit would also discourage expected foreign investment from other parts of the world.

All the foreign investors consider Bangladesh to invest for a huge market in the seven Indian states. Why will they invest here if they are allowed to carry their goods over Bangladesh from one Indian point to another?"

Priority areas in the foundation's funding activities will include good governance, accountability and transparency; women, children and minority groups in poverty and disadvantage; and habitable and sustainable ecology and environment.

In electing activities to support the BFF will give preference to gender equality and non-discriminatory participation of all social, religious, cultural and ethnic groups. It will also prefer smaller, newer and sustainable initiatives with innovative approach.

The BFF will explore and welcome collaborative funding and programme jointly with similar institutions for initiatives that have shared objectives.

Work of the foundation will be supported by voluntary contributions and grants from interested funding organisations.

About the opposition allegation that India might move its troops and military hardware to suppress the rebellion in India's landlocked north, Chakravarty said: "It's a bogey being raised by some people having no other arguments against it."

The Indian diplomat referred to clause VIII of the joint-agreement signed by former Commerce Minister Pranab Mukherjee and ex-State Minister for Commerce Chowdhury Tanveer Ahmed Siddiqui in 1980 and said it clearly stated about the use of waterways, railways and roads for commerce between the two countries.

"So agreement is already there, we're just trying to implement it in the mutual economic interest of the two countries," he said.

Asked about the use of Chittagong port, he said: "I don't think it is at the moment on the table. The point was raised by the Mizoram Chief Minister during his recent visit to Dhaka. But again it would depend on the decision of the Bangladesh government."

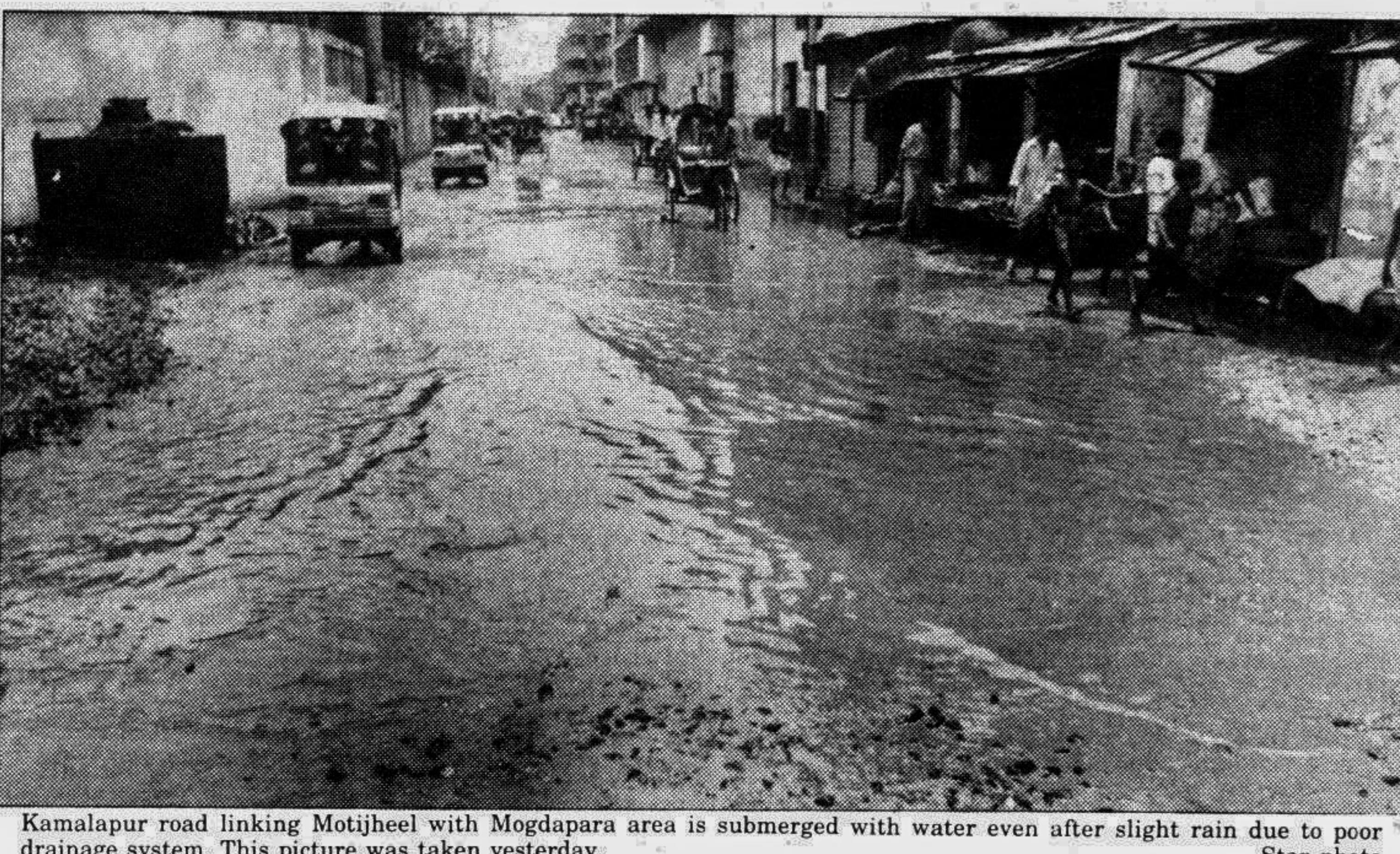
India's reluctance to give similar transit facilities for trade between Bangladesh and Nepal was pointed out to him. There is no problem from Indian side, he said. "I understand that Nepal has requested Bangladesh to build infrastructure for it."

About Indian proposal to buy natural gas from Bangladesh, he said: "Since Indian economy is expanding, we need energy and are willing to buy gas. The Indian government is planning to import gas from Oman and Myanmar."

Asked if reported ULFA threat against Bangladesh if transit is given to India, Chakravarty said, "They don't have the capacity. They are trying to create problem. But did anything happen when ULFA leader Anup Chetia was arrested by Bangladesh government?"

"I came to know this (cheque bouncing) much later. As soon as I came to know this, I sent them (Beximco) notice for taking legal action," the MD said, adding that the group has promised to repay all the money soon.

Besides, the road march, se-



Kamalapur road linking Motijheel with Mogdappa area is submerged with water even after slight rain due to poor drainage system. This picture was taken yesterday.

— Star photo

BFF set up

From Page 1

Sapriya Bhattacharya and Dr Naila Khan are the members of the board of trustees of the foundation.

Mahfuz Anam and Dr Iftekharuzzaman will act as the chairman and executive director of the foundation respectively, the release said.

The foundation will also be concerned with multi-faceted challenges of social stability, democratic institutionalisation and economic transformation in Bangladesh.

The foundation is committed to promoting three fundamental freedoms freedom from poverty, freedom from ignorance and freedom from oppression in Bangladesh.

Other areas of interest will include freedom of expression, freedom of the press and media, human rights and equality before law, the release added.

It will aim at promoting professional excellence in various fields with particular focus on the enormous reservoir of Bangladeshi talents, especially the new generation, for catalysing positive and forward-looking response to challenges facing Bangladesh in the new millennium.

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'Transit to ruin prospect of export, increase smuggling'

Former Commerce, Industries and Information Minister M Shamsul Islam denounced transit to India as a one-sided

transaction that will destroy Bangladesh's prospect of export to India's northern part, reports UNB.

When it was pointed out that the BNP government in an agreement in 1980 had agreed to give transit facility to India, Shamsul Islam said: "If it's true, why it was not implemented in last 19 years? Why India didn't claim the transit or corridor facility in the last one-and-a-half decade?"

About the SAPTA, which

former Bangladesh annually, he added.

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