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# Down to Earth Hazards on City Roads

By A S M Nurunnabi

A large number of hazards on city roads pose threats to the safety of city dwellers. Some of these hazards are life threatening. In this category we may cite open manholes whose covers have been filched. The number of such missing manhole covers on city roads is so large that one wonders how such large-scale pilfering operations are conducted with impunity and without proper vigilance from the concerned quarters.

Such hazards are compounded by several factors. At night time, such open manholes become potential death traps for unwary pedestrians. Even vehicles may fall into them. The hazard in this respect gets all the more uncertain when there are heavy showers, causing water-logging in many city roads. In such situations, the open manholes go under water, exposing all forms of traffic including vehicles to grave risks of injury. Such ominous existence calls for adoption of suitable fool-proof techniques to foil attempts to steal manhole covers. Evil practices as this have taken such a grave turn that the concerned authorities need to be very alert, vigilant and prompt in taking remedial measures.

The haphazard positioning of the city corporation's large-sized garbage containers, taking up much of the limited space on city roads represents another hazard. The city road space is already under heavy pressure on account of the burgeoning growth of traffic of all descriptions. The large-sized garbage containers provided by the municipality disturbs the traffic flow on the roads. The most galling aspect of these garbage containers is that they are not regularly cleared by the City Corporation's garbage trucks. This means that such garbage containers are often

found to be overflowing with garbage which spill on to the roads creating a nauseating stench all around and thereby polluting the surrounding environment. Observers say that this is the prevailing picture in respect of most of the city's garbage containers on many roads, particularly near bazaars, where the situation is just horrible. It behoves the City Corporation authority to take effective steps to check this chaotic state of affairs in the interest of the public health.

The third ominous thing is the non-use of any kind of lamp by the hundreds of thousands of city rickshaws plying at night. It is strange why the traffic police find it difficult to enforce this simple requirement of using lamps or lights by rickshaws at night. It needs no mention that the lapse in this respect, especially by rickshaw pullers enhances the risk of accidents. If there is loadshedding in any area, the hazard in this respect is increased all the more.

Zebra-crossings marked at road junctions and other convenient points on the roads are put up with an aim to facilitate pedestrians wishing to cross roads. But pedestrians her just love to ignore their presence. People, many unaware of the significance of such markings, make a dash for crossing roads whenever there is a small break in the heavy traffic flow. In this way they invite accidents. The real problem is that many city dwellers are migrants from villages or are too illiterate or even lack civic sense. They do not even know the rudiments of city traffic discipline.

The city traffic police follows the practice of observing regular traffic weeks or fortnights. During such observance, the traffic authority seek to inculcate among city dwellers

through various publicity media the basic traffic disciplines that need to be followed for road safety. The present requirement seems to place greater stress, on the part of the traffic police in course of their day-to-day duties, to concentrate on traffic education of the city dwellers at large. The operators of the city's mechanical transports also need to be taught to respect the rights to pedestrians when they use Zebra-crossings, as they constitute an important safety factor in road discipline.

Connected with the problem of jay-walking is the reluctance of many pedestrians to use foot-bridges constructed at different congested points in the city. Instead of taking the trouble to use them when there is heavy traffic movement on the roads, some pedestrians are seen to dash across the traffic caring the least about the risks of accident in such rash actions. As such foot-bridges are little utilised for the purpose they are actually built for instead they become easy haunts for street hawkers to set up centres for their business in various low-priced wares. Beggars and vagabonds also take shelter there, creating such an unwholesome environment resulting in a situation that even those pedestrians who wish to use them hesitate to do so. The traffic police sometimes conduct raids to clear such foot-bridges, but such clearances turn out to be very temporary when the agents of law and order withdraw.

All in all, our city life is fraught with many preventable hazards and pitfalls on the roads. In the midst of such under-ranging dangers, it behoves us to be more cautious and vigilant as far as possible, and to avoid any situations where our own safety may be at stake.



THIS IS KARWAN BAZAR: The veritable mound of garbage that continue to pollute the busy business centre in the heart of the city. Several stories and such photos published in The Daily Star however failed awake the city fathers.

— Star photo

## Assistant Public Prosecutor stabbed at Satkhira

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Oct 29: An Assistant Public Prosecutor (APP) of Satkhira district Judge's Court was stabbed by some unidentified miscreants at Kamal Nagar in the town last night.

The victim was identified as Advocate Khoda Bux of Kamal Nagar in Satkhira sadar thana.

Police said Khoda Bux came under attack while he was returning home. He was admitted to Satkhira District Hospital in a critical condition.

A case was filed with Satkhira police, but none was arrested till filing of this report at 7 pm today. Awami League leader A K Fazlul Haq, PM, condemned the attack.

## Garment workers postpone strike programme

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Garments Workers and Employees Federation (BGWEF) has postponed their planned strike on November 1, a BGWEF press release said yesterday.

Leaders of BGWEF took the decision following a 'fruitful' discussion with the BGMEA leaders during a meeting of the two organisations at the conference room of BGMEA on Thursday.

During the meeting the BGMEA leaders assured the garments workers and employees of implementing their four-point demand including issuance of appointment letter and identity card, granting weekly holiday and maternity leave, from November 1, a BGWEF press release said.

## 4 held with fake currency notes

KHULNA, Oct 29: Police arrested four people along with eight fake currency notes of Tk 500 and Tk 100 from Shahapur bazaar in Dumuria thana today, reports UNB.

The arrested are Sunil, 30, Subhash Bala, 35, Subhas Mallik, 40, and Chitta Ranjan, 32.

Police said they recovered seven forged notes of Tk 500 and one fake note of Tk 100 from the four who are members of an organised gang engaged in illegal trade for long in the bordering areas.

## Cyclone: Hundreds feared killed in Orissa

BHUBANESHWAR (India), Oct 29: A "super-cyclone" slammed into northeast India today packing winds of 240 kph and flattening houses across a wide area along the Bay of Bengal, reports Reuters.

The chief minister of Orissa state, Giridhar Gamang, said he feared a death toll "not in tens but in hundreds" in the coastline's second big storm in a month. "You cannot imagine the devastation," he told United News of India.

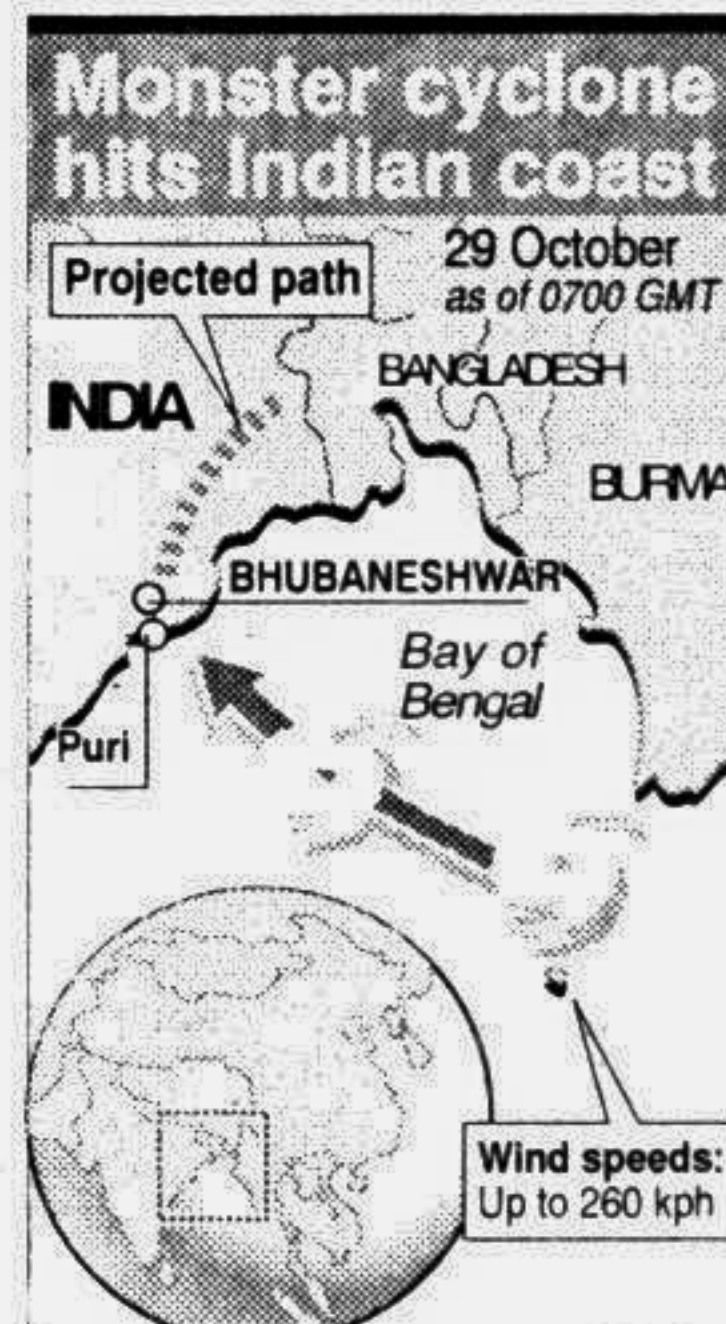
No official tally of casualties and damage available because communications links were down over a wide area. Press reports said anything up to 10 million people were likely to be driven from their homes.

A weather official in Bhubaneswar, capital of Orissa, told Reuters wind speeds were estimated between 240 and 260 km an hour. State officials said the storm was expected to rage until midnight.

Satellite images showed that the cyclone had crossed the coast.

An official at the control room of the India Meteorological Department in New Delhi, said: "We have classified it as a super-cyclone, which means one of the highest intensities." The Press Trust of India news agency said two people had been crushed to death under a falling wall in the Orissa port town of Paradip, where about 2,000 houses had been destroyed. UNI however said, at least 14 people were killed in Paradip.

It said nine fishermen were missing off the coast of Andhra Pradesh state and 11 were missing in the eastern province of West Bengal. The agency added 30 people had been injured in



West Bengal because of the cyclone.

Media reports said trees and power poles uprooted by the storm blocked a national highway in Orissa at several points and several trains had been cancelled.

The cyclone hit a 500-kilometer-long coastline of the states of Orissa and West Bengal.

Telephone lines were knocked out, making it difficult to get an accurate account of the severity of the storm.

Just 12 days ago, more than 100 people were killed and more than 1,000 injured by another cyclone that roared in from the Bay of Bengal and devastated the Orissa coastline.

## Navy aircraft crash kills 21 in Pakistan

KARACHI, Oct 29: A Pakistan Navy aircraft crashed into the Arabian sea today, killing all 21 military personnel on board, said a navy official, reports AP.

The Pakistan Navy P-3C Orion American-made aircraft was on a regular reconnaissance flight over the coastal regions of southwestern Baluchistan province when it crashed, said officials.

The cause of the crash was not immediately known, but officials said it was being investigated.

## Cyclone

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weakened form. It is likely to keep much of Bangladesh wet from today before fair weather returns on Monday", a senior meteorologist said.

As the cyclone packing winds up to 250 kph roared north-westward, weathermen kept a close watch in case it changed course as on some previous occasions.

Reports received in Dhaka said that besides drizzles and strong winds, nothing more happened in the Sundarbans coast.

Dublarchar, a traditional camping ground for fisherman experienced drizzles and high winds yesterday.

## We are pledge bound to protect child rights: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said a new law incorporating tough provisions against oppression on women and children and trafficking is now awaiting passage by the Jatiya Sangsad, reports BSS.

"We are pledge bound to protect the rights of children and stop cruelty to them at any cost," she said while addressing a discussion, prize distribution and cultural function marking the 35th birth anniversary of Sheikh Russel, a victim of the August 15, 1975 massacre.

Held at the Osmani Memorial auditorium, the function was organised by Russel Jatiya Shishu Kishore Parishad.

Noted journalist, litterateur and children's organiser Rohanuzzaman Khan Dada Bhai attended the function as special guest while the Parishad's Chairman Raqibur Rahman presided.

## Ctg Jubo League activist shot dead

From Our Correspondent  
CHITTAGONG, Oct 29: A Jubo League activist was shot dead in Patharghata area under Kotwali thana tonight.

The victim was identified as Jahangir Alam, 22.

The victim's family sources and eyewitnesses said that Jahangir was picked up by some BCL activists from his house near Patharghata brickfield at around 7 pm. His body was found at Jaliganj area at 8 pm.

## Hosts disappoint

From page 1

award for holding Victor Solanki at mid-on with a full length drive to his left.

Coming in to bat at number six, with England limping at 98 for four, Alleyne put on 86 runs for the fifth wicket with Trescott, who chipped in with an invaluable 44 off 69 balls.

Bikash Ranjan Das, the young left-arm seamer in his first match for Bangladesh, struck a flicker of hope for the home side when he caught and bowled Trescott for his maiden international wicket in the 44th over, leaving England still 31 runs short of the target.

But England flourished where Bangladesh faltered, scoring those 30 odd runs with a professional approach.

Bangladesh play the tourists in a four-day match beginning November 1 at the Bangabandhu Stadium, the last in the tour itinerary.

## SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the England A innings in the one-day match against Bangladesh at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday:

Ward c A Islam b K Mahmud 31  
Sales lbw A Islam (Jr) 8  
Solanki c Al-Shariar b K Mahmud 29

Habib cbb Sabbir 16  
Trescott cbb Bikash 44  
Alleyne not out 66  
Turner not out 14

Extras (b-1; lb-9; nb-4; w-7) 21  
Total (For 5 wickets in 49.1 overs) 229  
Fall of wickets: 1-14; 2-65; 3-96; 4-98; 5-184.

**Bowler** O M R W  
A Islam (Jr) 5.1 0 37 1  
Bikash 10 0 52 1  
K Mahmud 10 0 33 2  
E Haq 10 0 37 0  
Sabbir 10 0 39 1  
H Bashir 3 0 14 0  
A Islam 1 0 7 0

**Result:** England A won by 5 wickets.

**Man-of-the-match:** Mark Alleyne.

## Reunion '99 St Placid pulsates with life

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Oct 29: The 147-year-old St Placid School in the port city, an institution with rich tradition and high standard, started pulsating with life as a large number of its old students gathered on the campus for their Reunion-99 today.

The day-long colourful programme was attended by Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam as chief guest and Bishop Patrick Rozario as special guest.

Organised by Old Placidians Association (OPA), the function was chaired by its president M A Salam and addressed by, among others, Commodore (ret'd) A Z M Nizam, convener of OPA; Moinuddin Chisti, DIG of police; Brother Jarlath D'Souza CSC, ex-principal of the school; Brother Lawrence S Rozario, incumbent principal; Errol Gomes of OPA and Fazle Alam, past president of OPA. It was conducted by Ali Ahmed and Mohammad Ali of OPA.

Mahfuz Anam in his speech stressed upholding democratic ideals and values to lead the country towards prosperity. Deploring the "distorted concept" of democracy, he said, "democracy is not a licence for irresponsibility."

Democracy should start from grassroots level and schools, he observed. Bishop Rozario said there is a lack of 'common vision' in our social life.

He said "we are entering a new millennium, so we have to step into the next century with faith, hope and love to build a better future."

Highlighting the historical importance of St Placid School, Rozario urged the teachers and students to make concerted efforts to keep up its tradition. Commodore (ret'd) Nizam recalled his old days at the school and said the friendship among us still remains as it was.

## Clinton to visit India in February

WASHINGTON, Oct 29: President Bill Clinton plans to visit India in February next year to forge stronger economic ties between the countries, US Deputy Trade Representative Susan Esserman has said, reports PTI.

The president is going to India in February and looking on this visit very, very carefully, Esserman, who begins a three-day visit to New Delhi from Monday to bridge differences on the WTO's Seattle agenda, told Indian correspondents here.

The president's visit, she said, is an important part of our bilateral relationship and will be very important to promote a stronger and more effective economic partnership between the two nations.

## JCD will stage demonstrations at edn instts today

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the student wing of BNP, will stage demonstrations at all educational institutions throughout the country today to protest police attack on its procession in the city on Thursday.

A JCD press release issued last night said that as part of the countrywide programme, a procession would be brought out in the city at 4 pm today.

JCD leaders also demanded immediate release of the party activists arrested during its 'Black-Flag' programme on Thursday.

## Sharif asked to leave country, claims wife

LAHORE, Pakistan, Oct 29: Pakistan's new military rulers have asked ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif to leave Pakistan and quit politics but he has refused, his wife said in remarks published today, reports Reuters.

"We have been asked that we should leave the country and politics," Kulsom Nawaz, in her first public appearance since the bloodless military coup of October 12, told women activists of Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League party.

"But we want to make it clear that we are sons of this soil," she said in an apparent rejection of the orders.

There was no immediate comment from the new government on Kulsom's remarks, which were published in local newspapers as a visiting team of Commonwealth ministers prepared to meet military ruler General Pervez Musharraf to discuss prospects for a return to democratic rule.

Kulsom told women party

## 3 alleged terrorists held in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Oct 29: An alleged terrorist and his two accomplices were arrested from Debarpur Ispahani Rest House area in Doublemooring thana today, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip off, police raided the area and arrested Chandan Biswas of North Gujra village in Rouzan thana. He is an accused in seven cases, including killing, toll collection and abduction.

The two others were identified as Nazrul Islam, 24, and Sagor, 24. They are from Feni and Comilla districts respectively.

Police said the arrested were involved in various crimes in different parts of the port city, including Zakir Hossain Khan Road, Khulshi Colony and Lalkhan Bazaar.

## Arms making factory found in Barisal: 2 held

BARISAL, Oct 29: Police unearthed an arms making factory at Gaila in Agailjhara thana and arrested two people in connection with making firearms on Thursday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the lathe machine factory of one Harun Molla and arrested Russel Chokder, 18, and Badsha, 20, while they were making pipeguns.

Based on their statements, police recovered six pipeguns and arms making equipment from the factory on Thursday and seven pipeguns from village Shawra in Gouranadi thana today.

Separate cases were filed with Agailjhara and Gouranadi thanas.

## BD-Eng A ICC grants first-class status

International Cricket Council (ICC) has recognised the status of three-day and four-day matches between Bangladesh and England A as first-class.

President of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Saber Hossain Chowdhury told BSS that first-class status for these two matches was granted after Bangladesh contracted the ICC to clarify the issue.

He said the three-day match held in Chittagong was treated as first class and the four-day game from November 1 to 4 would also be treated as a first-class one.

Musharraf has so far given no indication of the fate of Sharif, who is reported to be under investigation for corruption and tax evasion.

Sharif's brother, Shahbaz, ex-chief minister of Punjab province, was also detained, together with other key members of Sharif's party. Most other former government ministers have been freed from virtual house arrest.

The Commonwealth ministerial team, led by Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, has sought access to Sharif. It was not immediately known whether the team, which arrived on Thursday morning, would meet him.

## Musharraf

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suspended Pakistan from participation on its advisory councils, wants an immediate return to democracy, but its rules allow up to two years for the army administration to achieve that goal.

The rules also allow the Commonwealth to give technical assistance to the military regime toward that end.

The final decision on whether to expel Pakistan from the Commonwealth rests with the heads of states who will meet Nov 12-15 in Durban, South Africa. The delegation, which is winding up its two-day trip to Pakistan, will offer a recommendation.

"I am sure their recommendation will be favourable," said Musharraf.

Musharraf said he assured the Commonwealth delegation that Sharif is being well-treated.

"I gave them my personal assurance that I am not a vindictive man... he (Sharif) is in good health... he is staying very comfortably that is my personal guarantee," said the army chief.

## JU reopening

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It will continue strike on the campus after reopening till the enhanced admission fees is withdrawn.

Asked about the authorities' strategy to tackle further student agitation on the issue, some senior teachers said there is a strong possibility of a ban on student politics at the JU for a specific time.

## Fire at Mouchak Market

A fire is raging the Mouchak Market in the city, police and fire brigade sources said late last night, reports BSS.

They said the fire originated on the third floor of the market at 10.45 pm.

Fire brigade and police personnel were trying to douse the blaze, but so far have failed to reach the fire due to heavy smoke. Sub-Inspector Aminur Rahman of Ramna thana told BSS by telephone.

## Petrol pump owners on strike in Mymensingh

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, Oct 29: Petrol Pumps Owners' Association began an indefinite strike in the district since this evening protesting assault on the employees of a petrol pump in the town by a gang of terrorists today.

The gang came to Bhuiyan and Company petrol pump at 10 am by a microbus and bought 12 litres of petrol. When the employees asked them to pay, the extremists became furious and started beating up the employees. Later, they left the scene without paying for the fuel.

The petrol pump owners said they would continue strike until the terrorists responsible for the attack are arrested.

The physicians went on strike protesting attack on the night of October 26, disrupting medicare of the patients at the hospital.

Everything is functioning and all the doctors joined their duties, said acting director of DMCH Syed Babar Hossain.

## Permanent police camp set up at DMCH

A permanent police camp was set up yesterday at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital as per demand of the doctors, reports UNB.

The physicians went on strike protesting attack on the night of October 26, disrupting medicare of the patients at the hospital.

Everything is functioning and all the doctors joined their duties, said acting director of DMCH Syed Babar Hossain.



Normalcy returned to DMCH yesterday as doctors resumed their duties.

—Star photo

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