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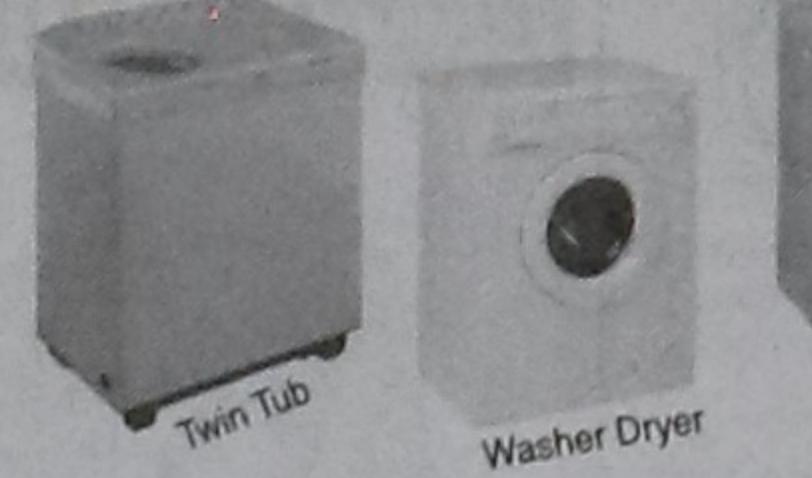
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Down to Earth

Unending Woes of City Pedestrians

By A S M Nurunnabi

The public transport users of the city have their own trials and tribulations. With the rising city population and no prospect of any appreciable improvement in the over-all transport situation, those citizens who try to avoid the use of public transports and seek to depend on their two legs to cover any distance are not in a happy position. They encounter a lot of adverse situations which make their passage to their destinations far from easy.

Ideally a pedestrian is supposed to have untrammeled freedom of movement. In the city, such freedom is hard to conceive except where there are open spaces which are also gradually shrinking.

The adverse circumstances that beset the path of a pedestrian are many. According to latest estimates, two-thirds of the city's busiest roads remain under unauthorised occupation. At the same time, such footpaths are so much filthy and cluttered with obstructions of various kinds that they are unfit for use by pedestrians. As a result, concomitantly with the heavy traffic jams on the city's main thoroughfares, the suffering of the pedestrians on footpaths is compounded. Although the police administration conducts from time to time raids to evict the trespassers on footpaths, they don't become fruitful, and with large, with the result that the footpaths built at great costs aren't conferring any benefit for the pedestrians.

Observers are of the opinion that a great part of the unauthorised occupation of the footpaths is due to large-scale irregular parking of cars and other vehicles. In the entire road network of the Motijheel Commercial Area, the irregular parking is so much rampant that hardly any space is left for the pedestrians. Specific examples in this respect can be cited galore. The Dhaka City Corporation and the Traffic authorities are aware of this overwhelming trend not only in this area but also in other areas of the city, such as Malibagh, Maghbazar, Sonargaon Road, Panthapath, Mirpur Road, Elephan Road etc.

In this all-pervading picture of irregular parking, the RAJUK takes no remedial steps. Rather it compounds the sorry state of affairs by giving permission to builders of private hospitals-clinics, and big shopping complexes to go with their construction projects without making any provision for parking.

On account of the present rising trend of construction of high-rise buildings, piles of building materials like rods, cement, bricks, sand, brick and stone chips etc, are kept on the footpaths for months together without any permission from the City Corporation. Among the busiest roads of the city, those which are seriously hampered by the piling on footpaths of the construction materials include Panthapath, Sonargaon Road, Eskaton Road,

KEC must be appointed thru' consensus, says Ershad

KURIGRAM, May 12: Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad asked the government today to refrain from appointing the new chief election commissioner before reaching an understanding with the opposition, reports UNB.

"The CEC must be appointed through consensus; otherwise the government will have to bear the consequences," warned Ershad, addressing the biennial conference of Kurigram district Jatiya Party at the local Town Hall premises in the afternoon.

"Although the four party alliance wants a neutral chief election commissioner, it's not our main goal. The main task ahead of us is to force Awami League to hand over power to the caretaker government to hold election," said the former president. Referring to sharing of parliamentary seats among the components of the alliance, Ershad said, "since greater Rangpur is the fort of Jatiya Party none excepting JP can claim any of the 22 seats here."

One of the city's busiest area, namely, Gulistan, witnesses the entire length of the footpaths lost to the unauthorised occupation by numerous hawkers and small traders setting up impromptu shops on the pavements selling an assortment of wares on the BB Avenue. The same picture can be seen in Baitul Mukarram and the adjacent areas, where garment sellers and hawkers of miscellaneous items leave little space for use by pedestrians.

The Dhaka City Corporation and the Traffic authorities seem impotent to deal with the problem of such large-scale unauthorised occupation of footpaths. In this situation, considerations of pedestrian convenience and safety don't weigh with the concerned authorities and these seem to be nobody's business at present.



Ready retreat

The day being hot as hell, these children could not think of a better way to weather the simmering heat than to take some cooling dips in the narrow channel of the Buriganga at Kamrangirchar yesterday.

—Star photo

Moniruzzaman made director at OIC Sectt

By Diplomatic Correspondent

A H M Moniruzzaman has been made a director at the Jeddah-based Secretariat of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), sources said.

Moniruzzaman is to join shortly as Director, Economic Affairs at the Secretariat of the 54-member organisation. His nomination by the government has already been accepted. He is currently the director general of the International Organisations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The government has appointed Jahangir Sadat as the new chief of protocol. Sadat returned recently after completing his stint as the country's ambassador to Myanmar. Mohammad Ziauddin, his predecessor, left recently to become the country's new envoy to Italy.

APAC to resist CCC mayor, commissioners

CHITTAGONG, May 12: All Party Action Council (APAC) at a meeting here today decided to resist the newly-elected mayor and commissioners of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC), reports UNB.

"As the election was held keeping the opposition parties outside the race, the mayor and commissioners can not be accepted," the meeting said terming the election as farcical.

Hold at Anasil Mansion at Chitteswar road with city convenor of BNP Meer Mohammad Nasiruddin in the chair, the meeting was attended by Jahangir Alami of Jatiya Party, Prof Ahsanullah and Ahsanur Chowdhury of Jamaat-e-Islami.

KMC faces severe fund crisis

From Staff Correspondent KHULNA, May 12: The Khulna Medical College (KMC) has been suffering severe fund crisis and administrative problem.

Sources said the college principal's inefficiency and negligence to take necessary steps have all the more compounded the problem.

Nine teachers of the college have not been got their salaries for last two months while interns of the second batch are performing their job without getting honorarium for last five months.

As a result, the academic and administrative affairs of Khulna Medical College Hospital are being hampered. Neither the principal nor the superintendent of the college could cite any specific measures aimed to resolve the problems.

However, the principal said today that he hoped the problems will be sorted out soon, but refused to be dragged on the issue of fund crisis.

Pak court

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ruling on Pakistan's democratic credentials.

The court was ruling on petitions by Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League against the coup on the same day the former premier appeared in a separate court at the start of a trial for tax evasion and corruption.

Pakistani courts have upheld previous military coups which have installed the army for about half of the country's 52-year existence and the validation of Musharraf's takeover had been expected.

But it came too late to help a stock market hit by jitters over the ruling, which came minutes after the close of the Karachi Stock Exchange.

Bangabazar

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ble gate at 10:30 pm, Amin said. After entering the market the gang locked the shops which were closed on the weekend.

It was not known why a police team at the street crossing nearby did not intervene.

When contacted, Ramna police said that they have received information about the incident.

The matter is being investigated, the duty officer at the police station told The Daily Star at 11:28 pm last night.

Violent anti-Suharto protest in Jakarta

JAKARTA, May 12: Police fired tear gas tonight at hundreds of student protesters who had gathered outside former President Suharto's home, demanding that he be put on trial for corruption, reports AP.

More than 100 police officers with shields had held the protesters about 300 meters away from the house for hours when they suddenly fired tear gas canisters and charged the demonstrators.

The former president, who is now 79, has been charged with corruption but not put on trial yet. Lately, he has refused to be questioned by prosecutors, saying he is too ill.

Earlier today, a separate anti-Suharto protest by about 1,000 other college students occurred outside Parliament. They demanded that he be prosecuted and that the current government better protect the human rights of Indonesians.

At least one journalist was injured when he was hit by a rock in the attack, which soon removed all protesters from the area.

The demonstration occurred on the second anniversary of a police attack that had killed four students at a college in Jakarta at the height of the student-led, pro-democracy movement that forced Suharto to resign as president in 1998.

"Hang Suharto! Hang Suharto!" the demonstrators shouted outside his house in central Jakarta before the police attack.

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Power generation at Baghabari plant resumes

SIRAJGANJ, May 12: Bijujoy Alo, a barge-mounted power plant in Baghabari, resumed power generation Wednesday with gas instead of oil, reports UNB.

"We have restarted power generation with gas due to short supply of oil by PDB that brought down our output to 0.05 mw a day against our capacity of 130 mw, causing routine load-shedding in the northern region," said Assistant Manager of the plant Borua.

Each one contains a large bullet hole toward the top. The memorial was installed in a parking lot in front of Trisakti University where the students

had gathered to pay their respects.

The resolution blamed the BNP-led opposition for its attempts to fish in troubled waters in the situation following resignation of CEC Mohammad Abu Hena completely on health ground.

It sought people's support to the PM's political move for a consensus candidate for the post of CEC and thus uphold the Constitution and democratic values.

The resolution also alerted the people against what it said the Opposition's ill attempts to destabilise the political situation with issues that does not concern people's interest.

The meeting also called the alliance of four opposition parties a "unity of vote thieves, autocrats and rajakars, which is a threat to democracy and the Constitution".

The ALCWC meeting also discussed the ruling party's council and other organisational matters.

Humayun Ahmed

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condition is now better. We hope it will not deteriorate. But he will have to remain under observation," Dr Rakib said.

Humayun's younger brother, Dr Zafar Iqbal, who is also a very popular writer, said Humayun Ahmed was admitted to the hospital at about five in the morning after he felt very exhausted at a friend's residence.

"Doctors said overwork is the reason for the exhaustion," Dr Iqbal of Shahjalal University told UNB, adding Humayun was very busy with shooting for the last few days.

"Doctors said his condition is now fine, and nothing to be worried," he said, also urging people not to crowd at the hospital as it will not help his treatment anyway.

"Doctors suggested a complete rest and full stoppage of smoking. Now this is the best time for him to give up smoking," he said about his elder brother who is a chain smoker.

The ALCWC meeting also discussed the ruling party's council and other organisational matters.

2 kidnapers held in Manikganj

MANIKGANJ, May 12: Two boys were caught during their alleged bid to abduct a man at gunpoint in Sadar thana here today, reports UNB.

The arrested are Swapnil, 13, son of Siddique and Nabin, 12, son of Arshad Ali of Joyra area.

Local people caught them red-handed while they were trying to kidnap Sudhir, son of Ranjit of Golra Charkhanda of the thana, and handed them over to the police.

They also recovered a revolver and a sharp knife from their possession.

ALCWC backs PM

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It said the Prime Minister's written invitation to the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament for discussion on the issue is a "rare gesture of political decency". But the Opposition leader failed to reciprocate, it regretted.

As per constitutional provisions and practice of parliamentary democracy, the President has no scope to initiate dialogue on the appointment of CEC, the meeting said.

The President is to accept the advice of the Prime Minister," the ALCWC resolution said, reminding the practice during the tenure of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

The resolution blamed the BNP-led opposition for its attempts to fish in troubled waters in the situation following resignation of CEC Mohammad Abu Hena completely on health ground.

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The ALCWC meeting also discussed the ruling party's council and other organisational matters.

Army continue to stay at Ctg port for security reasons

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, May 12: Army personnel redeployed at Chittagong port eight months ago continue to stay at port jetties gates for security reasons, port sources said.

About 200 army personnel were redeployed at the port on September 5 last year to maintain tight security at the port.

The redeployment was made 17 days after army pullout from the port, following appeals from Chittagong Port Authority and port users forum.

The forum had appealed to the Prime Minister for redeployment of army against the backdrop of incidents of pilferage, looting of imported goods and illegal toll collection inside port area.

Besides, Chittagong Port Authority also requested the government to keep army personnel at the port to ensure security at the jetty gates, port users said.

Earlier, army personnel were deployed at the port on September 17, 1998, after the flood that year to supervise the unloading of food from the ships. There was reinforcement in July last year for security reasons and army was pulled out of the port on August 19 last year.

At that time, withdrawal of army from the port was opposed by port users and Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Besides, Chittagong Port Authority also requested the government to keep army personnel at the port to ensure security at the jetty gates, port users said.

Nasim

nals, Nasim said despite law and order being under control across the country, some incidents in the capital panicked the people.

"Remove the scare from public mind becoming more active and doing duties with more competence and honesty," he said.

Meanwhile, officers-in-charge of Tejgaon and Ramma thanas have been posted out of Dhaka. More reshuffles are expected in Dhaka Metropolitan Police administration soon, one police official, preferring anonymity, said.

However, the principal said today that he hoped the problems will be sorted out soon, but refused to be dragged on the issue of fund crisis.

বাংলাদেশ বিজ্ঞান ও শিল্প গবেষণা পরিষদ (বিশিগপ)

Bangladesh Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (BCSIR)

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শতবর্ষীকৃত উৎসর্গীকৃত

উন্নত প্রদর্শনী

হাজার ৪
বিশিগপ, ঢাকা কাম্পাস,

ডঃ কুদরাত-এ-খুদা সংস্কৃত, ধানমন্ডি, ঢাকা-১২০৫