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### Neglected Martyrs' Monument

Granite tower badly stained with seeping chemicals

By Staff Correspondent

The 33-foot high granite tower at the Martyred Intellectuals Monument at Rayer Bazar in the city has been badly stained with 'chemicals' sipping out of the structure.

Engineers at the Public Works Department (PWD) suspect that massive air and land pollution caused by the tanneries at Hazaribagh have inflicted the damage on the Tk 10.56 lakh imported stone structure which was inaugurated only seven months ago. The project entailed a cost of Tk 17.61

It was on this site that many of the country's brilliant intellectuals were brutally murdered at the fag end of the Liberation War in 1971 when the enemy

sensed obvious defeat. The black granite tower with a 40-feet diameter and rectangular in shape is a unique structure in the country. Engineers who were monitoring the project admitted that they "lacked

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The black granite tower at the Martyred Intellectuals Monument at Rayer Bazar in the - Star photo city has been badly stained within six months of its installation.

# Dengue takes serious turn

RABIUS SAANI 18, 1421 HIJRI

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Experts see ominous sign while govt continues to downplay

By Staff Correspondent

Prevalence of dengue fever in the city has assumed alarming proportions, a fact the government is yet to acknowledge.

According to Prof. Md. Nazrul Islam, Head of Virology Department of Banghabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMUH), dengue is not only spreading at an alarming rate, rather it is now an epidemic.

"Tests conducted here at the hospital indicate that 80 per cent of the cases have dengue infection. We carried out 40 tests since July 13 and found that 32 of them have dengue infection,' Prof. Islam said.

Sources in Lab Aid, a private diagnostic centre, sounded similar warnings. They said about 60 per cent of the samples were

Dr. Abu Mohammed Shamim, Managing Director of Lab Aid said. "We tested blood samples of 193 suspected dengue patients in last ten days. Of them, 21 were found to have Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever or DHF (that causes bleeding and in most cases is fatal) while 79 had dengue virus, although at primary stage of infection." The rest tested negative. Dr Samir K Saha, head of the

microbiology department at Popular Diagnostic Centre, told the Daily Star last night that they tested 259 people in ten days and found 75 cases posi-

INSIDE TODAY

Who's Afraid of Mamata Banerjee?

Election and parliament are two sides

of the democratic spirit and one side is incomplete without the other, writes

Mohammad Badrul Ahsan

**SOUTH ASIA** 

Sakyasen Mittra's

Bold and Beleaguered

Mansoor Mamoon's

Wooing Mynamar?

COMMENT

Ekram Kabir's

Said Dr. Saha: "The alarming thing about the tests was that about one-third of the Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever in cases had platelet count less than 45.000, which means a large number of them had

Hospital, Mitford Hospital and BIRDEM as well as leading city clinics have it that dengue infection is spreading across the city at an alarming rate. Ten people have already died from the capital

College Hospital, Dhaka Shishu

Reports from Dhaka Medical

**FOCUS** 

SPECIAL

A democratic society has to reconcile its

goal of removing poverty through

democratising access to resources and

restoring efficiency to the financial

Human Genome Project's success in

making a draft genetic blueprint of

human being has launched an era of

fantastic medical rewards and sombre

moral concern, writes Md. Asadullah

system, writes Rehman Sobhan

Prof. Islam of BSMMUH ex- DHF and may die." plained. "We know that the

### mosquito that carries and Reagents crisis

By Staff Correspondent

Hospitals and private diagnostic centres in the city have run out of reagents for testing dengue virus.

"We have run out of reagents for testing dengue virus," Prof M Nazrul Islam, head of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMUH) said yesterday. "We have ordered for fresh kits but it will be two weeks to re-start tests." Officials at BIRDEM also

said their stock of kits exhausted on Wednesday. "We are not sure when we can

re-start tests. It will take at least another ten days," said a BIRDEM official.

Popular Diagnostic Centre, a private diagnostic centre, also reported that it ran out of reagents. It will take at least one week to start tests again. Dr Shamir Shaha, head of its microbiology department, told The Daily Star last night.

Now, there are only two government institutes in the city to test Dengue virus. These are the Institute of Epidemiology, Dis-See page 11 col 6

transmits dengue virus exits in plenty in the city. In fact, the city dwellers have had the experience of dengue infection in the early sixties.

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"But what worries us most is that if you are infected with type one dengue virus and infected second time with type two then you are likely to suffer

"I've observed that there is a lot of DHF cases. Haemorrhagic fever was very rare even last year when we had dengue scare around this time but the rate is quite high this time around and

I suspect the figure would rise even higher. A WHO report said South-East Asia and western Pacific regions are the areas where dengue has taken the most serious turn. Before 1970, only nine countries had experienced DHF

epidemics, a number that had increased fourfold by 1995. Some 2500 million people worldwide are at risk of catching Dengue fever. Dengue viruses are transmitted to humans through the bites of infective female mosquito

species of Aedes Eegypti. Mosquitoes generally acquire the virus while feeding on the See page 11 col 6

### Four more generals in army ranks

By Special Correspondent

Four more Brigadiers were promoted to the rank of Major General yesterday.

They are: Brigadier Abu Tayeb M Zahirul Alam, psc, officiating as GOC, Mymensingh; Brigadier Alauddin M Abdul Wadud, Bir Protik, ndc, psc officiating as GOC of Comilla and Brigadier Abul Hossain, officiating as Director General of Medical Services and Brigadier Abdul Matin, ndu, psc.

Promotion of Brigadier Abdul Matin was approved earlier but formally announced yesterday. He was serving as Defence Adviser in Bangladesh mission in Delhi. He would take charge

as the GOC, Rangpur. With them, the number of Major Generals in Bangladesh Army rose to 26, sources said. As reported in the Daily Star

on Wednesday, yesterday's promotions filled up vacancies in the present set up of the

This is the second time in six months that Brigadiers were promoted to the rank of Major General. Earlier, five Brigadiers were promoted to the to the rank of Major General on February 20. In the biggest ever reshuffle on the same day, five area commanders were named. A press release issued by the

Defence Services yesterday said See page 11 col 6

#### Petrobangla initials PSC with Maersk

By Staff Correspondent Petrobangla yesterday initialled a Production Sharing Contract (PSC) with European oil company Maersk Olie for oil and gas exploration in deep sea blocks 19 and 20. Sources said that the PSC fo-

cuses on conducting seismic survey in these blocks, which spread more than 200 kilometres into the deep sea, in the first three years of Initial Operation Period (IOP).

Bangladeshi exploration and production company BAPEX will get a 10 per cent carried over interest in these two blocks.

Specialised in deep sea extake its oil and gas drilling pro- | April 21 last year. gramme on the basis of its own it would undertake a gas field | the operation jointly conducted development programme only if the gas reserve prospect in of at least 3 trillion cubic feet.

"Since deep sea exploration and development involve huge ports, over 60 people were killed investment, Maersk's proposal in different districts of the reis reasonable," observed an official. Investment in these two 110 in 1998. Ten people have so blocks could go as high as one far been killed in the current billion dollars if Maersk decided to develop gas fields.

Maersk has also proposed. as per the guideline of the Model the option of exporting gas in the form of Liquefied Natural | front organisations. Gas (LNG). The other option for selling gas to Petrobangla Bengal

# PM may find US trip too warm for comfort

Gas export likely to top agenda in Hasina-Clinton talks

By M Anwarul Haq

Prime Minister is expected to be ests in Bangladesh, particularly received warmly by the US in the oil and gas sector with President during her first offi- special emphasis on pipeline cial visit to US in October, she might come under serious pressure to accept several proposals regarding US investments in Bangladesh, diplomatic sources

A flurry of diplomatic communications is going on between Dhaka and Washington to confirm the date, detailed itinerary and to fix the salient 'talking points' during the summit between Sheikh Hasina and Bill Clinton.

It may seem to many that her visit only two and half months before the end of Clinton's presidency may not be very significant. But the fact is otherwise. Considering the bipartisan foreign policy of the US government and the Congress, Shiekh Hasina's visit will have 'all the elements of seriousness and continuity of growing US interest in Bangladesh,' the sources said.

They said the summit between Hasina and Clinton will focus on further expanding US

Although the Bangladesh business and commercial interexport of gas to India involving US companies.

US investors in the energy sector have been fine-combing Bangladesh for the last few years. Their interest to explore energy in the country and export gas to India through

pipeline is now an open secret. Prior to his departure from Dhaka, US Ambassador John Holzman called for sale of gas without waiting much. He expressed the apprehension that gas might lose its value if kept reserved for as long as 50 years as agreed publicly both by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.

In fact, Holzman's views were articulation of US government's latest policy stand and an indirect pressure on the government, which is likely to be more direct when the Bangladesh Prime Minister meets the US President.. By all indications, it seems the US government will not be happy

to hear a negative answer, the sources said. But it would be a difficult decision for Sheikh Hasina in an election year.

The US government's position on pipeline gas sale has become more obvious now because of the pressure from American oil giants.

Former US ambassador to Sri Lanka Teresita C Schaffer now working with the Washington based Centre for Strategic and International Studies came to Dhaka last month with representatives from a number of Latin American countries which export gas through pipeline. She pleaded for pipeline export gas to India.

Bruce McMullen , Senior Energy Advisor of USAID in Dhaka, when asked at Schaffer's news conference said, "Bangladesh's gas reserves would vary between 13 TCF (trillion cubic feet) and 100 TCF although the figures swing". The figures are generally not accepted by Dhaka, which says the proven reserve is in the neighborhood of 10 TCF. However, a section of

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#### Bomb scare for Biman

By Staff Correspondent A bomb alert delayed departure of a Biman flight to Jessore at Zia International Airport (ZIA) yesterday afternoon, aviation sources said.

Biman and airport security along with police swung into action immediately after an unidentified caller claimed there was a bomb inside an F-28 aircraft that was about to fly for Jessore at 4:45 pm.

The passengers were evacuated and the aircraft was thoroughly searched but no bomb was found, the sources said.

#### **CEC** braces for worst 60 out of 122 centres for Jhalakathi by-polls 'risky'

Sixty out of 122 centres in Jhalakathi-2 Constituency have been identified as "vulnerable" in the by-election scheduled for July 31, reports

This was disclosed in a meeting between the Election Commission and chiefs of different law enforcing agencies in Dhaka yesterday with Chief Election Commissioner MA Sayed in the chair.

The Election Commission has decided to deploy adequate number of police, Ansar, BDR and Army personnel in the polling centres to maintain law and order, said an EC press re-

It said a 28-member law enforcing team will be deployed in each risky centre while other centres will have a 26-member team each

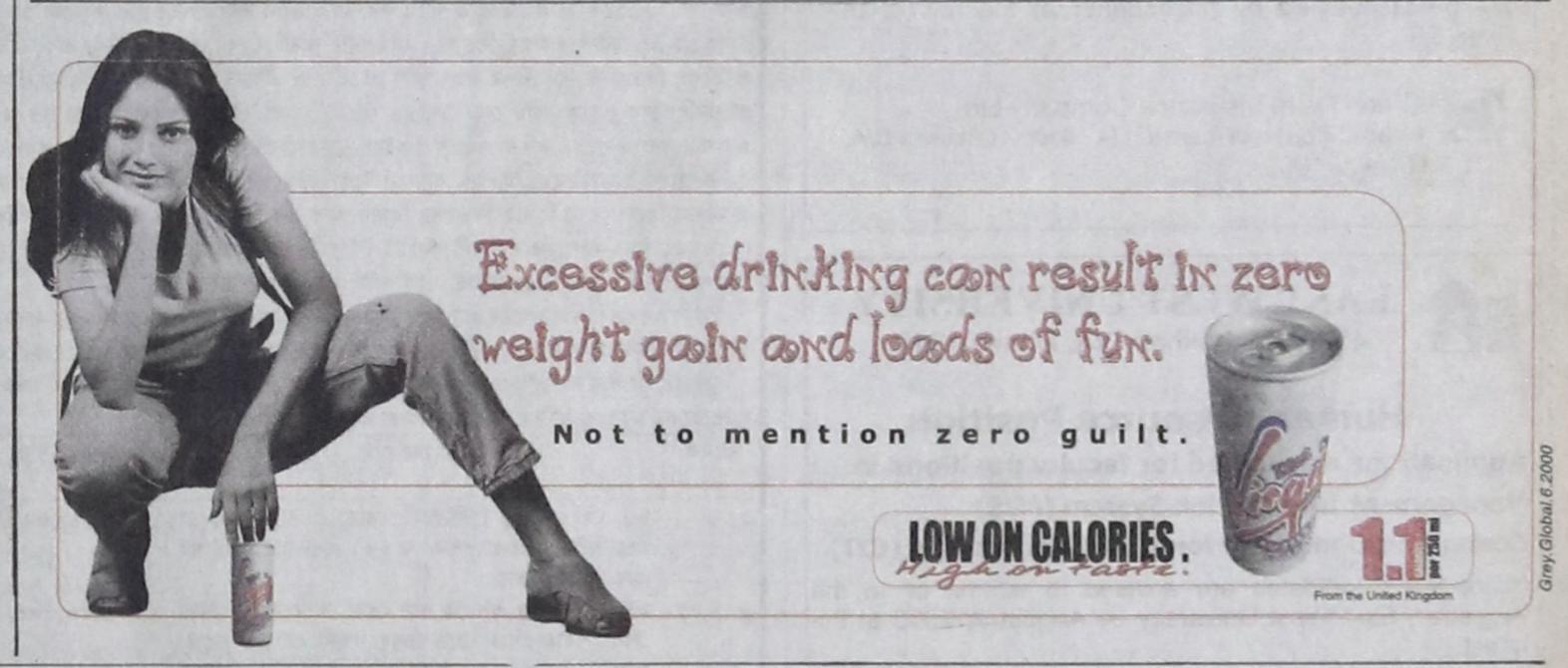
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# Clarification

The Ministry of Labour and Employment yesterday gave a rejoinder to a news item published in The Daily Star on July 7 under the headline Doubly Victimised."

The rejoinder contradicted the report that a section of officials and employees at the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training were realising money from the Gulf War Our Reply: The Daily Star

report was based on complains by scores of victims who said that they were forced to give toll to a section of officials and employees to get their compensanon money.



# Rule of outlaws in south-west

Combing operations fail to arrest killing spree

By Abul Kalam Azad

operation in the country's south-western region, neither killings by outlaws have ties of outlawed parties were stopped nor law and order has appreciated by all quarters. improved in the areas in the last one and a half years.

Armed terrorists of different

outlawed parties continued to kill their rivals and innocent people in the region even after ploration. Maersk would under- the combing operation began on A total of 1,600 people were gas market study. Maersk says arrested soon after launching of

by the BDR, Armed Police and Ansar. About 500 outlaws have these two blocks showed a total | so far surrendered to police along with their arms. According to available region in 1999. The number was

year. Most of the killings took place in Jessore and Kushtia. The victims include journalists, leaders and activists of PSC, that it was interested in Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) and the ruling party and its

The latest victim was Shamsur Rahman, special correwould mean installing up to 200 | spondent of the Daily Janakankm of gas pipeline in the Bay of tha, based in Jessore. Gunmen shot him dead at his Jail Road

Despite the ongoing combing office on Sunday night. He was once involved in left politics and his recent reports on activi-

Rahman was the second journalist killed by armed terrorists after R M Saiful Islam Mukul, Editor of the daily Runner, was gunned in Jessore town on August 30, 1998. Mukul died on the spot when armed assailants sprayed bullets on him on his way back to Deshpara residence.

In 1999, the biggest terrorist incident in the region was the bomb attack at a cultural function of Udichi Shilpi Gosthi. Ten people were killed and more than 200 injured when two powerful bombs exploded at the function on Jessore Town Hall premises in the early hours of March 7. The killings created a sensation throughout the country.

Another sensational incident was the killing of five persons including JSD central leader and valiant freedom fighter Kazi Aref Ahmed. They were shot dead on February 16 at a public meeting at Khalidaspur Primary School ground in Kushtia. Fifteen others were injured in the incident.

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