

AL plans 'big showdown' in city tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ruling Awami League goes for a 'big showdown' in the capital tomorrow when its student front Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) accords a grand reception to Prime Minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina to mark the anniversary of her homecoming in 1981.

Sources in the party told the Daily Star yesterday that AL wanted to put up an impressive show with less than two months to the expiry of the government's tenure.

Preparations have been taken at various levels of the party to make

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New e-mail, fax (news)

The Daily Star requests its readers and contributors to note the changed e-mail addresses:

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Indo-Bangla relations at crossroads

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Dilara Choudhury

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US envoy suggests gas export to India for 'maximum return'

OECD mulls five-point plan for global growth

DSE, CSE price quotations

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
May 16		6.34 pm
May 17	5-15 am	

Prayer Timings

May 16

	Azan	Jamaat
Fazr	4-30	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-20
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-40	6-45
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

DCC's 'obsession' with neon signs



Not necessarily a pointer to happy power scenario... electric hoardings such as these make a mockery of the power crisis the capital is perennially in.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While the capital reels under acute power shortage, the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) keeps allocating hundreds of electric hoardings without authorisation from the Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA).

According to sources, such an illegal practice translates into huge energy and revenue loss for the DESA. Even worse, the DCC does not bother to pay electricity bills and, as of June last year, its overdue bills stand at Tk three crore, an official said.

For all electric poles and new connections, the DESA has central meters. Over the years, the DCC has not only dismantled the meters but also ignored DESA's estimated bills. Now, it is installing new connections without even asking the DESA, let alone paying the bills, an official said.

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Stirring the hornet's nest

Gunfight at Karwan Bazar feared as DCC plans clean-up drive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka City Corporation's planned May 22 drive to evict illegal traders from Karwan Bazar in the city has stirred the underworld in the area as they fear loss of toll from several thousand illegal businesses.

Sources said that at least two notorious armed gangs of the city

are now moving in the area, trying to establish control on toll collection. Genuine traders and leaders of their association fear that a bloody gunfight may break out any moment.

Genuine traders say they have become 'targets' of the terrorists because they wrote letters to police, National Security Intelligence, Defense Forces Intelligence, City

Special Branch and the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) to help them run their businesses in the area peacefully.

Talking to this correspondent, DCC's Chief Estate Officer Fazle Elahi said they are planning to remove 'illegal structures' in Karwan Bazar on May 22, except those which have court injunctions.

Elahi said DCC's demolition and eviction drive will not touch the car parking area, Children's Park, the road known as Abdul Ali Foot beside the vegetable wholesale market and the fish wholesale market, on which there are court injunctions.

According to the traders and their leaders, some corrupt official of DCC's Estate Department helped the illegal occupiers to grab the public places.

In addition to four legal markets with hundreds of shops of different categories, there are several thousand illegal shops in Karwan Bazar area, from which lakhs of taka are realised by notorious gangs everyday. These shops use electricity, water, gas and all other facilities in exchange for toll paid to the gangs. Five major thoroughfares, in addition to other public places, have been totally taken over by the unauthorised traders.

Some genuine tax-paying traders said they have proof that the 'black money' generated in Karwan Bazar goes to high-ups in the government.

The gangs operating in the area comprise notorious criminals like Picchi Hannan, Delu Sardar, Gazi Abbas, Anwar, Kala Jahangir, Saidul, Litu, Sobhan, Nabi Solaiman and Samir.

"The problem started in 1985 when Rajuk handed over the open areas to DCC for maintenance. DCC

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Dengue at the door

Experts fear a severe outbreak, sound alarm

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The current spate of dengue viral infection in the city may assume epidemic proportions if immediate preventive measures are not taken, experts warned.

A WHO report last year had warned Bangladesh against a potentially severe dengue outbreak anytime.

Since the onset of dengue infection in the city in early May this year, four persons have been hospitalised, three in Dhaka Shishu Hospital and one in Dhaka Medical College Hospital, sources at the Directorate of Health said yesterday.

Unofficially, at least 15 people have been hospitalised so far in different private clinics. Three of them are now said to be in critical condition.

Doctors in most government hospitals and private clinics said most of the infected patients are wrongly diagnosed for common jaundice or typhoid. "This is even more dangerous since the strong antibiotics harmfully interact with the dengue virus," said one doctor.

Some experts, requesting anonymity, have warned that the early sporadic rains in the city this year created a perfect breeding environment for the

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Clarification

The Lab Aid Ltd in a clarification on the news item headlined 'A diagnosis of diagnostic centres in the city', published in The Daily Star on May 9, has said the name of the Managing Director of Lab Aid was printed as Dr Shamim Ahmed instead of Dr A M Shamim. The Daily Star regrets the mistake.

Lab Aid managing director in the same clarification denied making any statement admitting payment of commission to doctors.

Our reply:

We stand by our report.

VDP commander shot dead in Khagrachhari

BSS, Khagrachhari

A commander of Village Defence Party (VDP) was gunned down by terrorists at Kalachand Mohajan Para under Dighinala upazila on Monday.

The terrorists also took away Tk 43,000, salaries of VDP members, from the commander.

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Kibria tells UN confce in Brussels

LDCs need more investment, aid to fight poverty

UNB, Brussels

address it.

Dhaka, a spokesman for the LDCs, demanded debt write-off for the non-HIPC (heavily indebted poor countries), which are more conservative in external borrowings, to help them save money to invest in the social sector.

"The prosperity of the world is meaningless if the gap cannot be reduced and the misery of the large population be redressed," said Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria presenting the country statement at the third UN conference on LDCs in the Belgian capital.

About 75 per cent of LDCs' 600 million people have less than \$2 per capita income a day, he told the world meet, urging the developed countries to relax the stringent rules.

The minister reminded the developed countries of their unmet

pledge of contributing 0.2 per cent of their GNP as aid to poor countries.

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"On the contrary, the share declined. New and ever-increasing conditions constrain access to aid," he noted.

Kibria listed Bangladesh's successes in economy and social sectors, which he said have defied all negative predictions about its development potential.

"As a lead performed among the league of LDCs Bangladesh offers some successful examples of economic recovery, social uplift and disaster management," Kibria told the audience.

Bangladesh achieved a steady GDP growth of around 6 per cent

Hazari won't take on Khaleda in coming polls

NAZRUL ISLAM, back from Feni

Despite launching a premature election campaign, ruling party lawmaker Joynal Abedin Hazari has abandoned his plan to contest the upcoming general election from Feni-1 constituency now held by opposition leader Khaleda Zia.

"I've decided not to fight against the opposition leader as we have found a suitable candidate to field against her," Hazari, reached over cell phone at Feni, told The Daily Star last night. He, however, did not disclose the name of the "suitable candidate".

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A battle nevertheless... three members of armed forces try to regulate traffic movement in the city's Bijoynagar area yesterday. The Bijoynagar-Kakrail, like many other major thoroughfares, has been made off limits for rickshaws.