

Power wrecks havoc on city life

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Power outage was there in most areas of the city yesterday afternoon although the Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) claimed that it shed only 32 megawatts (MW) power.

The Power Development Board (PDB) claimed that it supplied 1198 MW power as per the DESA demand yesterday.

According to sources, the areas that suffered worst included Dhaka University area, Sutrapur, Dhanmandi, Banani, Gulshan, Kalabagan, Tallabagh, Rajabazar, Indira Road, Rampura, Mirpur, Shewrapara, Zigatola, Karwan Bazar and Lalbagh.

Power supply at Lalbagh remained off for no less than two hours at a stretch from 1:00pm, residents said.

"We have no power for two and a half hours and it is ridiculous. It is happening almost everyday," said Abdul Khaleq, a resident of Shewrapara.

At Rampura, power supply remained disrupted for more than three hours. Residents complained that the situation turned worse in last couple of days.

At Dhanmandi and Mirpur, power supply remained off for about two hours at a stretch, while at

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Double-murder accused Pasha 'nabbed'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Kamal Pasha alias Pasha, one of the 23 most wanted criminals in the city and known as a professional killer, was arrested from his father's residence at Katsur in Mohammadpur area in the city yesterday afternoon.

He was arrested on a tip-off by his father Liakat Ali Miah, police said. But the father said he had taken his son to the police station and turned



Kamal Pasha

him over to the police.

He had gone to his father's rented flat at Kaderiabad Housing Society there in the morning. His father informed police when he was taking rest after lunch.

A team from Mohammadpur police led by Officer-in-Charge Noor Ahmed rushed there at about 3:45pm and arrested Pasha.

He is detained at Mohammadpur thana and will be produced before court today, police said.

Pasha is accused in at least half-a-dozen murder cases and an arms case, lodged with different police stations in the city.

The arrest was made five months after the home ministry announced the list of 23 most wanted criminals in the city and ordered their arrest.

The ministry had also announced awards ranging from Tk 50,000 to Tk one lakh each for information leading to their arrest and circulated posters bearing their photos.

Pasha, 30, hails from Jarajan village under Kalihati thana in Tangail district. His present address is C/O Imtiaz Khan Babul, D-3 Housing Quarter, Kazi Nazrul Islam Road, Mohammadpur in the city.

Pasha is the principal accused in the sensational murder of two

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



PHOTO: STAR

Drenched in sweat, a rickshaw-puller paddles down the downtown street, defying the 35.3 degree Celsius temperature yesterday that made life miserable in the capital.

Cabinet bodies hold back pledge implementation

NAZMUL ASHRAF

Low performance of the cabinet sub-committees on a number of crucial issues is hindering implementation of the BNP-led coalition's major election pledges.

These bodies are crucial as they recommend actions on specific issues to assist the cabinet in its functions.

Of the eight of the vital sub-committees, five had met more than once. Apart from the sub-committee on the law and order, none has come up with any suggestions. Three important bodies are yet to make it to their maiden meetings.

The one on the law and order has made 148 recommendations after 23 meetings. But none of the recommendations has yet been executed. And a progress report on the committee decisions said, "The process of implementation of 103 decisions is satisfactory."

The committee in its last meeting on May 8 blasted the law enforcing agencies for non-implementation of the decisions aimed at improving the law and order. The next scheduled meeting was abruptly postponed last week after the government launched a crackdown on crimes.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia

chaired some of the meetings of the crucial cabinet body on law and order while LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan presided over others.

Reluctance of the field-level officials is mainly responsible for the poor implementation of the steps regarding law and order, an official observed. The execution process is also halted at different tiers of the administration, he noted.

At least three cabinet sub-committees on ombudsman, public administration reforms and on resolving the issue of display of portraits of Bangabandhu and Zia have so far failed to meet even once. Functions of the committees on the separation of the judiciary, Upazila Parishad and the NGOs have also hit snags, officials said.

According to sources, the cabinet committee on the separation of the judiciary from the executive is now in the wilderness because of conflicts between the administration and judiciary cadres.

This committee was close to finalising its recommendations, but as the conflict between the two cadres intensified its progress came to a halt.

Officials pointed out that the committee started off without any specific plan of action, ignoring

the two relevant cadres. "It simply examined the law ministry's proposal and drafted its recommendations accordingly," said one source.

Activities of the cabinet body on the Upazila system have stalled after four meetings. A number of influential ministers took diametrically opposing positions on the question of who to decide the timing of Upazila polls the government or the Election Commission. It has also failed to act on updating the Upazila Parishad Act.

Similarly, the cabinet committee on the NGOs have so far met four times, but it failed to come up with any suggestions about updating rules and regulations to guide the NGOs.

The cabinet body on human rights protection has met only twice, but it also could not make any progress.

There is no progress at all on the appointment of an ombudsman, reforms in the public administration and on reaching a consensus on display of portraits of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and of late president Ziaur Rahman. The cabinet committees concerned have so far not met even once.

Shanu surrenders before court, sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Golam Mawla Shanu, 38, a listed criminal and newly elected Khulna City Corporation (KCC) ward commissioner, surrendered before the Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court, Khulna yesterday.

Judge Didar Ali Fakir sent him to jail custody after his bail prayer was rejected by the court.

A charge-sheeted accused in the SMA Rob murder case, Shanu was given a one-month detention, being shown arrested under the Special Powers Act.

Shanu has been on bail in nine criminal cases and was wanted in four cases of murder including that of SMA Rob, former president of the Khulna Chamber of Commerce and

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Bhomra land port looks deserted as MP's musclemen move freely

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

The deadlock in export-import through Bhomra land that began on May 12 continues as C&F agents are still afraid of attack by local mastaans, allegedly sheltered by a BNP lawmaker from the area.

The deadlock began following a clash between the mastaans and customs police when they challenged illegal entry of six truckloads of rice from India allegedly brought by the lawmaker. The mastaans took away the rice forcibly.

On May 13, some people were

arrested but the FIR-named culprits escaped arrest. The real culprits are moving freely despite a home ministry order for their arrest, sources said.

The sources said some vested groups are reportedly planning to call an indefinite strike at the land port demanding release of those arrested.

More than 200 trucks loaded with imported goods are stranded on the Indian side of the border.

The land port looked deserted yesterday. Only a handful of passport holders were found moving about. The immigration check post was also not operating

properly. Police were seen guarding the staff quarters of the customs superintendent and customs inspectors.

The sources said that despite assurances by the district administration, police and customs officials, C&F agents were reluctant to resume activities. Their offices were found under lock and key.

The FIR-named accused tried on Saturday to get ad-interim bail from High court, the sources claimed.

Meanwhile, the BNP MP, Ali Kader, at a press conference at Jessore Press Club on Friday refuted his alleged involvement in

the May 12 incidents. He blamed a section of C&F agents for those.

The lawmaker alleged that the complainant of the case misinformed newsmen about the incident to defame him and his party. "Neither anyone of my party nor I was present on the day the rice was looted", he said.

Some C&F agents preferring anonymity alleged that armed cadres of Ali Kader are not only involved in smuggling, but also in extortion, smuggling and pilferage of goods at Bhomra land port. Four C&F agents have already left the land port fearing reprisal for refusing payment of toll, they claimed.

Badal's death in DB custody raises a volley of questions

ABUL KALAM AZAD

The recent killing of Mohammad Badal allegedly by the Detective Branch (DB) has once again brought to the fore the issue of extra-judicial death.

It is alleged that the law-enforcement agencies, especially the Detective Branch (DB) of Police, are arresting innocent people without showing any reason and detaining them. Many are systematically tortured in custody, implicated in false cases and released on hefty bribes.

Oddly enough, officials of the police and the detective branch justify the torture on inmates in custody. Torture is needed to extract

confession, they say. In many cases, law enforcers do not even record the statements of the arrested persons and produce them before the court by 24 hours of arrest.

Although physical torture in custody is constitutionally prohibited, the law enforcers usually ignore the articles of the constitution and abuse the Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPc).

Eminent lawyers on many occasions had underscored the government's initiative to immediately stop violation of human rights of the arrested persons in custody and demanded an end to the abuse of the Section 54 of the CrPc.

Nineteen-year-old Mohammad

Badal, a butcher by profession of Baraipara in Narayanganj, is the latest victim of atrocities by the DB personnel.

A team of DB police arrested Badal at his Baraipara residence at around 2:00am on May 8 without showing any warrant or any other document. The DB team asked his family to report to the DB office the following morning.

At the DB office in the morning, DB Sub-Inspector Azharul Islam asked the family to pay Tk 50,000 for his release. After a bargain, the amount was fixed at Tk 20,000, claimed the victim's elder brother.

On May 9, Badal's family went to the DB office to inform the officials

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



Indo-Pak tension..... a Hindu family leaves Ghadhkal with their belongings yesterday, after the border village in Kashmir came under mortar fire from Pakistani troops across the border (left), while a man looks at the roof of a shop damaged by Indian shelling in Chakoti sector, some 56 kilometers southeast of Muzaffarabad, capital city of Pakistan-administered Kashmir.



PHOTO: AFP

Cassette scam Court makes some observations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court Division of the Supreme Court in its verdict on the cassette tape scam yesterday made some observations about newspapers and judges.

A Division Bench of the High Court which gave the verdict observed that newspapers have full freedom to publish opinions. (But) A responsible editor or journalist cannot make sensational comments to increase its (newspaper's) circulation. They (the press) have been given full freedom to print full truth and correct information-- not to print partial information.

Regarding judges, the Bench said judges must have firm character and they should follow a code of conduct. Further observations about judges would be given later, it added.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Second suicide bombing in Israel in two days

AP, Jerusalem

A Palestinian militant detonated explosives at a busy intersection yesterday as he was approached by police -- killing himself, but causing no other injuries in the second suicide bombing in northern Israel in two days.

On Sunday, three Israelis and a bomber were killed in a blast in an outdoor market in the coastal city of Netanya. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, or PFLP, a radical PLO faction, claimed responsibility for Sunday's attack.

The PFLP is headed by Ahmed Saadat, who is detained in a Palestinian jail in the West Bank town of Jericho under British and US supervision, along with a Palestinian Authority official sus-

pected of weapons smuggling and four PFLP members convicted of killing an Israeli Cabinet minister.

An Israeli government spokesman, Danny Shek, said Israel has information that Saadat "might have been instrumental in commanding and masterminding the bombing." Shek said the circumstances of Saadat's detention should be looked at. However, Deputy Defense Minister Dalia Rabin Pelosoff said Monday there was no conclusive proof that Saadat ordered the Netanyahu attack.

Saadat has given a phone interview from detention, and Israeli media reports said he had access to phones and has received visits from PFLP activists.

Mena Rawlings, a spokesman for the British Embassy in Tel Aviv,

said British officials have asked Israel to substantiate the allegations that Saadat had a role in the bombing. "We recognize that it's a pressing matter for the detaining body which is the Palestinian Authority," Rawlings said, adding that US and British officials would raise the matter with the Palestinians.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for Monday's attack at the Taanakhim Junction, a few kilometers west of the West Bank.

Police said a local driver notified authorities when a man waiting at the junction's bus stop aroused his suspicion. When the patrol asked the man for identification, he exploded himself, said police spokesman Gil Kleiman.

Life term for 11 woman traffickers

OUR CORRESPONDENT

The special court for prevention of Women and Children Repression, Sathkhira yesterday sentenced eleven traffickers in women to life in prison.

The court also fined them Tk 5000 each, in default to suffer one more year of rigorous imprisonment. Abdul Mannan, Saiful Islam, Kalam, Nazir and Javed under the Mottlab upzila of Chandpur district, Yusuf Ali, Syed Alam and Ahmad Hossain of Naikangkhal of Cox's Bazaar district and Mohar Ali, Nazrul Islam and Ismail Hossain of Sathkhira district were handed down the verdict by Judge Afzal Hossain.

According to the court, the accused, under the pretext of providing good jobs, had lured Jesmin, 20, of Noakhali, Salma, 26, of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Clinker-laden ship sinks

UNB, Chittagong

A clinker-laden coaster-ship sank in the estuary of the Bay of Bengal yesterday with huge cargo on board.

Port sources said MV Fair Take-1 capsized near the Alag encroachment point of the Bay at about 1 pm due to a sudden squall of storms on its way to the port jetty from the outer anchorage.

The Fair Take-1 loaded 1002 metric tons of cement clinker from a foreign flag carrier, MV Amalif.

Chittagong Port Authority issued notice to the ship owner asking them to take step to salvage the sunken ship at the earliest.