



TO
People's Right to Know

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XII No. 128

DHAKA SATURDAY JULY 27, 2002

JAISTHA 16, 1409 BS

RABIUL AWAL 16, 1423 HIJRI

20 PAGES PLUS RISING STARS PRICE: TK 10.00

www.dailystarnews.com

PM to open Sayedabad Water Treatment Plant today

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will inaugurate Sayedabad Water Treatment Plant today.

Managing Director of Dhaka WASA Dr Khondoker Azharul Hoque told BSS that Sayedabad plant would use Shitalakya river as its source of water.

He said the plant is ready for service.

The WASA MD said the deficit of water in the city will be greatly reduced after inauguration of the new plant.

He said daily water demand in the capital is 160 crore litres but Dhaka WASA is supplying 128 to 130 crore litres of water everyday.

Dr Hoque said routine water deficit in the city was 30 to 32 crore litres per day but after inauguration of the new treatment plant it would be lowered to 10 to 12 crore litres.

People in north Shajahanpur, Moghbazar, Tejgaon, Farmgate, New Market, Gulistan, Dhanmondi, Sayedabad and Old Dhaka will be benefited after the plant goes into operation.

Streamlining power sector

PDB plants and distribution areas to become SBUs within a year

RAZIUR RAHMAN

The government has now decided to turn all the public-sector power plants and distribution areas into strategic business units (SBUs) within a year in its bid to restore financial discipline in the power sector.

Formation of such units is expected to make power revenue transactions in the public sector more accountable, ensure reduction of system loss and improve overall revenue earning.

An SBU will act under a plant management board (PMB), headed by the Power Development Board (PDB), and have its own balance sheet.

At present the PDB has 18 power plants with 56 units, one of which at Haripur with a capacity of 110MW has already been converted into a SBU in 2000. Last year, 23 distribution areas have also been converted into SBUs.

"The country's power sector cannot afford the system loss of around 30 per cent while the revenue collection is not more than 50 per cent. We have to commercialise the whole system," said Iqbal Hasan Mahmood, state minister for power told The Daily Star.

The PDB incurred an annual loss of around Tk 500 crore and the DESA Tk 280 crore during FY2000 and FY2001. The DESA, which consumes more than one third of total PDB production, owes around Tk 4,600 crore to the PDB.

About the timeframe set by the PDB, the state minister said, "The sooner is the better. We have already wasted enough time."

According to sources, sustained pressure from donors has also played a major role behind the PDB reform move. Donors have long been pressing the government for reforms in the country's power sector.

While the demand for power in the country is expected to be more than double by 2007, the government has not been able to implement planned power projects due to cash crunch.

At present, the PDB power generation units have a capacity of 3,200MW. The PDB predicts that power demand will shot up to 6,071MW by June 2007.

"This situation has left no other option for the government but to go for reforms. The donors have hinted at SEE PAGE 11 COL 8



PHOTO: STAR

The blown-up roof of a pharmaceutical factory at Mirpur in the city after a powerful explosion ripped through the building yesterday, also damaging adjacent houses and shops.

Coordination committee to revamp ADAB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A coordination committee was formed yesterday with BRAC chief Fazle Hassan Abed as its head to carry the activities of development partners forward.

The move is aimed at revitalising the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB), the apex body on non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The committee will work for six months on some specific assignments, following a government's move to further regulation on the NGOs through different sub-committees, in which the ADAB representatives were not included, SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



PHOTO: STAR

Guests of the Sonargaon Hotel, where Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf would be staying during his upcoming visit to Bangladesh, undergo extraordinary security checks yesterday at the hotel entrance where luggage scanner machine, metal gate and other security devices have been set up for the president's visit.

INSIDE TODAY

Article 4

Martyrs don't matter
Column: Between the Lines
Kuldip Nayar

Business 6-7

Traffic jam, extortion exact toll on Old Dhaka business

Enron, WorldCom scandals to cost US economy \$37b: Study

Supplement 17

One page supplement on 'Dhaka WASA'

Musharraf's S Asian tour no solace to India

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf is promised a red-carpet welcome in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, but his first South Asian tour could be a red-flag for nuclear rival

India, analysts say.

Musharraf begins his tour Monday by visiting Bangladesh, where the government is waiting to receive him with open arms despite rumblings by opposition groups.

He will stay overnight in Sri Lanka on his return from Bangladesh on Wednesday.

"Both countries are considered to be within the Indian sphere of influence and a high profile visit by a Pakistan president will not be liked by India," said Khalid Mahmood, a researcher at the Institute of Regional Studies here.

"The visit could enhance tensions between India and Pakistan."

The trip comes amid stepped up international diplomatic efforts to press both India and Pakistan to de-escalate tensions along their border where they have massed over a

million troops since December.

International diplomacy has pulled the two sides from the brink of war over disputed Kashmir, but they are yet to sit down for talks.

Musharraf will be the first South Asian leader to visit Bangladesh since Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's government came to office nine months ago.

He is the third Pakistani leader to travel to Bangladesh, which was a part of Pakistan until it gained independence in 1971 after a bloody nine-month war, which by Dhaka estimates left at least three million people dead.

Musharraf is scheduled to place wreaths at a memorial for the 1971 independence martyrs and the grave of slain president Ziaur Rahman, SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Factory blast damages houses, shops: 3 injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three employees of a pharmaceutical company were injured in an explosion at Barabagh in the city's Mirpur area in the early hours of yesterday.

The injured are Mohammad Amir Hossain, 20, Mohammad Kader, 21, and Monir Hossain, 22, employees of Jiska Pharmaceutical Company at 60, Barabagh in the city.

Police suspected that improper handling of chemicals inside the two-storey factory by the inexperienced factory workers might have caused the explosion. The strong explosion that occurred at 1:30am also damaged some nearby houses and shops.

Two fire-fighting units from the SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

JCD out to foil agitation to oust DU VC, proctor

Students threatened, forced out of halls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling BNP's student front Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) is out to foil the ongoing movement of general students of Dhaka University (DU) protesting police atrocity at the Shamsunnahar Hall and demanding resignation of the vice chancellor (VC) and the proctor, campus sources said.

Leaders and activists of different hall units of the JCD already forced a number of general students out of their halls yesterday and the day before for taking part in the movement. They are also threatening the agitating students of most of the halls not to participate the movement any more, the sources pointed out.

On the fourth day of their movement today, general students will bring out a big procession on the campus to press their demand.

Against this backdrop, the JCD leadership has advised hall unit leaders and activists to prevent the students from further participation in the agita SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Govt to take action after probe report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka University (DU) authorities could have averted such an unprecedented incident as the overnight police attack on the Shamsunnahar Hall, sources said.

The government assured that it would take punitive measures against those responsible for the incident upon receipt of the report by the judicial probe committee.

The one-member judicial committee formed with Justice Tafazzal Islam of the Supreme Court as investigator will submit its report in a week.

Sources said the raid on the DU hall ruffled the feathers of the government and inspired condemna SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Muggers dupe 'check posts', crimes on rise

SHAIKH NAZRUL ISLAM

The on-going anti-crime drive by Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has failed to reduce mugging incidents in the city even after setting up of 41 'rapid action check posts' to arrest criminals.

Four persons including an expatriate Bangladeshi were killed by muggers in the last 22 days. Two of the incidents took place at Natun Bazar on the Pragati Swarani (Biswa Road).

To contain rising crimes in the city, the government in mid-May deployed BDR and additional police forces to net criminals and improve the law and order situation. A 'national committee' was also formed to conduct joint drives to net notorious criminals.

Sources concerned claimed that muggers could not be arrested because of their links with a section of law enforcers. There were instances that muggers caught by

people and handed over to police got released, allegedly after under-hand deals, they claimed.

The sources said the law and order had improved 'slightly' immediately after launching of the drive but deteriorated within a few days. This was due to 'lack of creativity in planning', one source claimed.

A top official of DMP when con-

tacted admitted the rise in incidents of mugging in the city in the last couple of weeks.

This is because new gangs of muggers might have grown in the city, he said.

The present strength of law enforcers on streets is inadequate. Police patrol on streets should be increased substantially to maintain

law and order, he said.

On July one, a returnee from Malaysia -- Abdul Hye, 33 -- died after muggers personifying as taxicab drivers threw him from the vehicle on the Pragati Swarani at Natun Bazar after snatching valuables.

Day labourer Asad Miah, fatally injured by muggers, died at Dhaka Medical College on July 12.

Muggers stabbed to death Ali Arshad, 52, an employee of a private company, at Dhanmondi on July 19 and took away Tk three lakh.

On Monday, muggers shot dead garments factory manager Abdur Rahman and snatched about Tk six lakh at Kuril in Badda area. Rahman's colleague Sagar Ahmed was also shot in the incident.

Killings by muggers in the city are on the rise. Mahiuddin Khan, legal advisor of Uttara Bank, was stabbed to death on his way to his Dhanmondi residence on May 13, SEE PAGE 11 COL 2