



COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XIV NO. 286

DHAKA SATURDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2004

KARTIK 22, 1411 BS

RAMADAN 22, 1425 HIJRI

20 PAGES PRICE: Tk 7.00

www.thedailystar.net

DU probe reports never come to light

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Dhaka University (DU) seems to have stuck in a rut of never making a probe report public. Not a single report on some 500 investigations formed by the university in the last three decades has been brought into light.

"No probe report was ever published and no actions taken on any. It's a farce in the name of investigation," said DU Treasurer Prof Syed Rashidul Hasan who headed at least eight of about 50 DU probe committees commissioned in the last couple of years. "Actually we don't dig out facts

but conceal them in the name of inquiry," was his candid admission. The professor said, "We, the teachers, are not investigation officers and have not the required logistics at our disposal to inquire into incidents. So, what a probe committee formed by the varsity does is look into the case only

perfunctorily."

In view of the relentless violence, corruption, forgery, sexual harassment etc on the campus of the country's so-called premier academic seat, he also suggested forming a permanent investigation cell.

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Strong watch keeps bigots at bay

Six EU envoys visit Ahmadiyya mosque, Amnesty concerned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Strong police surveillance and civil society resistance yesterday kept at bay religious bigots who had threatened to seize an Ahmadiyya mosque in the city's Nakhla para while Ahmadiyyas in Brahmanbaria held the Friday congregation sans Azan under police guard.

In Narayanganj, too, fear of arrest held the local fanatics off Missionpara Ahmadiyya Mosque they had declared last month to capture yesterday.

Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat, Bangladesh (AMJB) thanked the government and hailed the civil society steps noting the government's role proves it can resist the fundamentalist menace if it wants to.

Expressing solidarity with the Muslim minority sect and to lend a hand to the civil society move, a delegation of the envoys of European Union (EU) countries visited Ahmadiyyas at Nakhla para mosque. The delegation hoped the government of Bangladesh would ensure the fundamental rights of all

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Supporters of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat light candles yesterday in front of the French military Percy Hospital in Clamart, south of Paris, where Arafat is being treated.

PHOTO: AFP

24-hr transport strike today

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation will enforce a 24-hour transport strike across the country today protesting the killing of Rangpur transport leader Abul Kalam allegedly by Rab (Rapid Action Battalion).

To make the strike a success, transport workers held a rally at Muktaganj in the capital yesterday with Acting President of the federation, Shahajahan Khan MP in the chair.

Addressing the rally, Shahajahan Khan demanded that the government meet their six-point demand, including the trial of the killers of Abul Kalam. He said, "We urged the government several times to take measures to curb terrorism and extortion, but the government did not pay heed to our call."

He threatened to launch a massive movement to realise their demands after the Eid.

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Mugging on rise before Eid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As Eid-ul-Fitr nears, more and more people are getting mugged in particular by gangs of a type who drug their preys to make them unconscious and steal.

Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) alone treated more than

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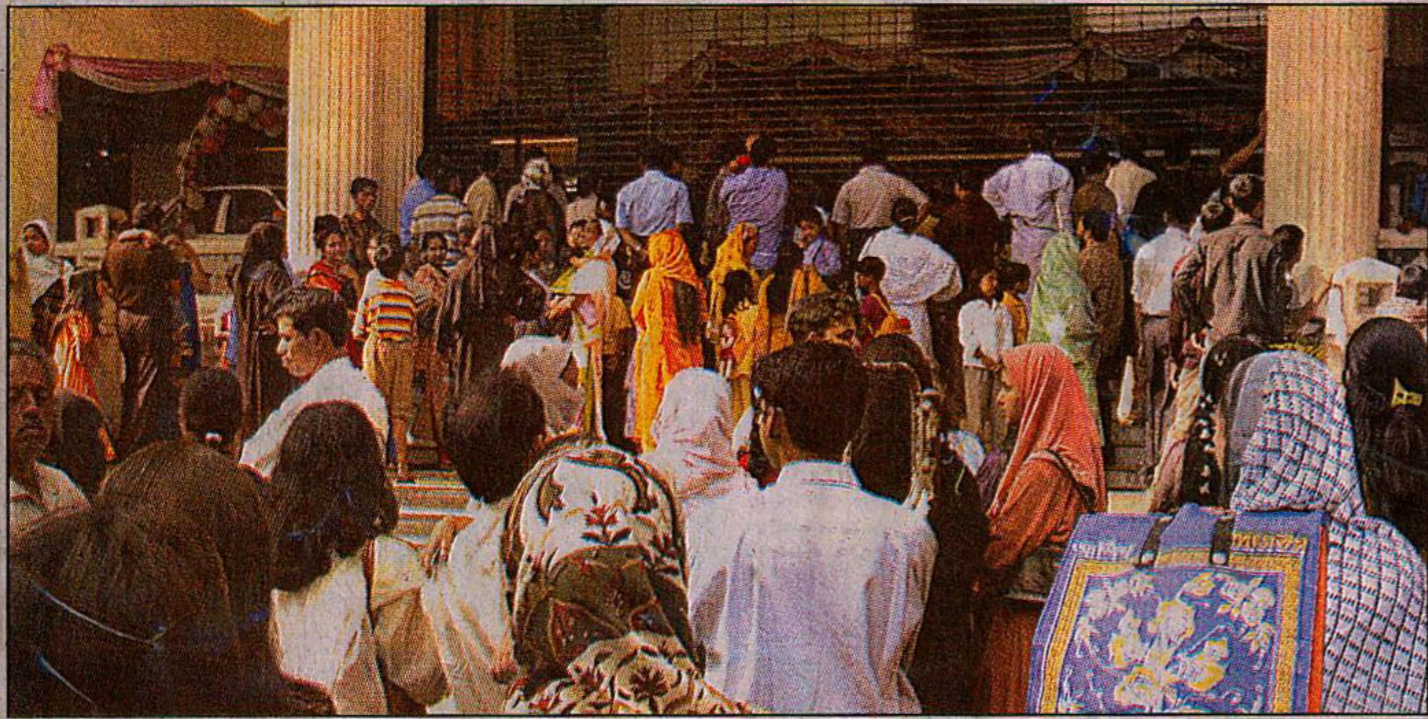


PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

SHOPPING SPREE: Eid shoppers crowd in front of Eastern Plaza at 10:00am yesterday, the weekend, even before the market opened. Frantic shopping has gripped the city markets with only about a week to go before the Eid.

PROBLEMS DOGGING POWER SECTOR

Donors may shy away

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON

Political interference in setting up new power plants, mismanagement and the government's foot-dragging on power sector reforms have made uncertain donors' investment in the sector.

The World Bank (WB) has already rolled back funds it committed for a power plant and channelled the funds to post-flood rehabilitation programmes.

The Economic Relations Division (ERD) last month wrote a letter to the Local Consultative Group (LCG), a platform of the development partners in Bangladesh, inviting it to hold negotiations to thrash out the problems dogging the power sector.

Sources at the LCG said the donors are discussing the proposition and hinted at the donor agencies taking a hardline stance on the power sector oddities.

Chair of the LCG and WB Country Director Christine I Wallich on September 26 wrote to the prime minister about the donors' dissatisfaction with the power sector.

The government earlier told the donors that \$3.6 billion in investment is needed in the sector for generation, transmission and distribution of power to meet the demand until 2007. The sector needs \$1.6 billion funding for new power generation plants alone.

It had also told the donors that each year the demand increases by 450 megawatt (mw) and an additional 3000 mw is required to meet the rising demand until 2007. Besides, power generated at present is about 1000 mw short of requirement.

A government estimate puts at 30 percent the proportion of the population having access to electricity, but independent estimates put lesser figure.

The government expects about 30 percent of the \$1.6 billion to be financed by independent power

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