

# Mobile JCD teams

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the administrative work at DU from July 1, if the vice chancellor (VC), pro-VC and the proctor do not resign by June.

The overall situation on the campus however was less tense yesterday, as the BCL leaders and activists did not show up.

## JCD GUARD

Mainly the JCD workers from outside were tasked with guarding the campus yesterday. The entryway to DU near High Court Intersection was guarded by Ramna thana JCD men while workers of Lalbagh thana and Shibbari JCD patrolled Palashi, Shaheed Minar, Bakshi Bazar, and Chankhar Pool areas.

Activists of different hall units JCD were relieved of their duty to guard the campus and dormitories yesterday while a large number of JCD activists were at the Madhu's Canteen to keep watch inside the campus.

Some of the top JCD leaders told The Daily Star yesterday that JCD activists of different hall units would resume the surveillance today to make sure the BCL men cannot enter the campus.

**ROOM OCCUPIED**  
A group of Shahidullah Hall unit JCD activists yesterday occupied room No. 2028 of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-backed BCL DU unit President Mohammad Selim Hossain, and looted valuables, said a hall source.

**BCL PRESS CONFERENCE**  
BCL President Liaqat Sikder at a press conference yesterday demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the JCD leaders and activists for repeatedly attacking the general students as well as BCL men.

He demanded immediate withdrawal of the case filed against BCL leaders.

BCL leaders speaking at the press conference held at Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal office also demanded action against Officer in Charge of Ramna Police Station Mahbubur Rahman and compensation for the students injured in 'JCD and police atrocities'.

The BCL will stage countrywide demonstrations today. Besides, it will hold rallies at the Central Shaheed Minar on June 6 and at city's Muktangan on June 8 to press home its demands.

**CASES**  
The JCD is preparing to file as many as four more cases against the BCL activists. In one of those cases, four teachers of the Institute of Fine Arts will be implicated along with the BCL men, said DU unit JCD President Hasan Mamun.

BCL had filed three criminal cases against four teachers of the Institute of Fine Arts and 47 JCD leaders including DU unit president and general secretary for unleashing violence on the campus.

**DUTA**  
Dhaka University Teachers Association President Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique yesterday demanded judicial probe into the recent spate of violence on DU campus. He said Duta will take initiative to bring back normalcy on the campus if the authorities fail in this regard.

**PROBE BODY**  
The nine-member probe committee, three members of which have already quit, will sit at the DU Treasurer's Office at 10:30am today. DU Treasurer Prof Syed Rashidul Hasan, also the head of the probe body, will discuss with the other members the probe procedure.

# Hot spell to continue

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report says.

Scarcity in water supply and frequent power failure have worsened the situation. Until yesterday the load shedding was around 800MW in the country with 200MW in Chittagong alone on Thursday as the power generation at the Kaptai Hydroelectric Power Station and Raazan Power Station went down.

Acute water crisis in many areas especially of Dhaka and the Port City has compounded sufferings of the dwellers of the two cities.

The meteorological department told The Daily Star that temperatures yesterday remained steady all over the country, including capital Dhaka.

Temperature was relatively higher in the west, north and central regions of the country than in the south and east regions.

The highest temperature yesterday was recorded in Jessore at a scorching 41.8 degrees Celsius. In the capital the temperature was recorded as 35.7 degrees Celsius.

Met officials said it is a relatively light heat wave when the temperature hovers around 36-38 degrees Celsius, and the heat wave is at a medium level when the temperature rises to around 40 degrees Celsius.

The heat wave is considered intense with temperature around 40-44 degrees Celsius.

The suffering of people is also to continue in the face of the continuing heat wave. In the capital, fares for manually drawn rickshaws, vans and pushcarts are on the rise due to the unbearable working conditions.

"I have been drinking saline water every half an hour to counter the severe sweating. The heat is like hell and it would not be possible pulling rickshaw if I do not drink a lot of water," a rickshaw-puller said yesterday.

Sales of seasonal fruits, iced juices, and ice cream have also gone up from the high demand to cool the body, and the sales persons are also taking advantage of the situation hiking prices of these products.

Reuters adds: A heat wave sweeping India, Bangladesh and Nepal has killed nearly 100 people over the past two weeks.

Severe heat conditions in Andhra Pradesh and in neighbouring Orissa

# Nearly one in 5 Japanese aged 65, more than a million over 90

AFP, Tokyo

The elderly made up a record 19.5 percent of Japan's population in 2004 and the ratio will grow rapidly, the government said yesterday, calling for efforts to keep seniors active and salvage the pension system.

With fewer Japanese having children, the ratio of elderly people in the population climbed 0.5 percent last year with 24.88 million people out of 127.69 million people aged 65 or older, a government study said.

Japanese who are aged 90 or older totalled 1.016 million, climbing above the one million mark for the first time, said the Cabinet Office white paper on an aging society.

It said the number of elderly people will continue to "rapidly increase" through 2020 before stabilising.

"But an expected fall in the population as a whole will result in a rising ratio of elderly who will account for 26.0 percent of the population in 2015 and 35.7 percent of the population in 2050," the white papers said.

The general Japanese population is expected to peak out next year, with the birth rate hitting a new record low in 2004.

With an anticipated decline in the number of young workers, the study called for better employment opportunities for the elderly. Workers usually begin to retire at age 60 in Japan.

"As we brace for a full-fledged declining population, Japan must build a society in which the elderly can become active participants and fully use their abilities and experiences to maintain the vitality of the country," it said.

"Regardless of age, elders and other workers must be able to exercise their abilities through employment and receive fair treatment," it said.

Japan last year began to reform its creaking pension system to cope with the baby bust.

The white paper found that the graying population was taking a major toll on public finances.

In 2002, the social welfare system paid out 83.57 trillion yen (775.2 billion dollars), accounting for 23.0 percent of the national income.

The cost accounted for only 5.8 percent of national income in 1970, the white paper said.

# UNO threatens

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asked some reporters to publish that the words of the MP (member of the parliament) of the area are law to him.

"The former UNO was transferred as he did not abide by the MP," he told journalists, adding, "He [the MP] will also kick me out if I don't follow him."

But when his words were published, the UNO burst into anger.

The three journalists are now considering to lodge a case against the UNO.

# FTA with Malaysia

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The last JC meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur in 1994 after it was set up in 1992 to foster co-operation between the two countries in various sectors.

Malaysian Foreign Minister Syed Hamid bin Syed Zafar Al Bar arrives in Dhaka on June 6. He will lead his country at the 3rd JC meet while Bangladesh Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan will lead the home side.

Meetings at senior official- and secretary-levels on June 5 and 6 will precede the ministerial-level JC meeting on June 7.

Deputy Secretary General at the Malaysian Foreign Ministry Haji Selim bin Hashim will hold talks with Economic Relations Division (ERD) Secretary Ismail Jablullah on June 6.

The foreign ministry official said the upcoming JC meeting bears a great significance for strengthening both political and economic ties between the two Muslim countries.

Dhaka-Kuala Lumpur bilateral ties apparently plumbed new depths after Bangladesh had announced its candidature for the OIC secretary general post, for which Malaysia too was a contender.

Both the foreign ministers will have a breakfast meeting on June 7 before leading their sides at the JC meeting. Political issues are likely to be discussed at the breakfast meeting.

The Malaysian foreign minister is scheduled to call on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia on June 7.

Kuala Lumpur's present investment in Bangladesh stands around US\$ 100 million in various sectors, including telecommunications, palm oil refinery, and construction. It also has investment in capacity building in the fisheries sector under an OIC project.

The emerging economic powerhouse for Asia, Malaysia is also keen to invest in low-cost housing projects and power sector in Bangladesh.

Currently, the two-way trade is heavily tilted towards Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur's export bill stood at US\$ 254.66 million against Dhaka's US\$ 8.66 million in 2003-04.

To reduce the gap, the official said Bangladesh would seek duty-free access of its products including jute and jute goods, leather and leather products, pharmaceuticals, frozen food, electric cable and tea.

# Goalpara power cut causes severe load shedding

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira and Jessore districts under Khulna Zone are suffering severe load shedding as the 110MW unit of Goalpara power station went out of order on Thursday due to leakage in the acid tank.

Besides domestic users, mills, factories and shrimp processing plants in Khulna area are victims of severe load shedding.

It will need at least four or five days to repair the unit and make it ready for operation, Goalpara power station sources said yesterday.

There are shrimps worth over Taka 100 crore in the processing plants in Khulna zone, sources said, adding that shrimp worth around Tk 100 crore is likely to be brought to the plants from different depots for processing within one week.

Only 20 out of 43 shrimp processing plants in Khulna are now in operation. Even these 20 plants are not in a position to run full capacity due to irregular power supply.

Shrimp exporters are now incurring huge financial losses due to serious disturbance in exporting frozen processed shrimp, said Humayun Kabir, joint secretary of Khulna chapter of Bangladesh Frozen Food Exporters Association.

The president of Khulna Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) also stressed the need for uninterrupted power supply to save national economy from disaster.

The KCCI president strongly demanded installation of a 250MW power plant in Khulna.

# Road accidents

**FROM PAGE 1**  
of the ARC Prof Mazharul Hoque told The Daily Star.

In the four metropolitan cities—Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi—buses, minibuses and trucks, while constituting only four percent of motorised vehicles, are nonetheless responsible for about 90 percent of accidents, the study said.

In the Dhaka metropolitan area, the number of motorised vehicles registered with the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) is about 7,87,000. Of this, buses and minibuses number about 65,000.

Another study, conducted by the Road Safety Cell (RSC) of the BRTA, said about 24,000 fatal and grievous road accidents took place across the country in the last eight years, causing injuries to over 1.5 lakh people. It gave no estimate of deaths.

The number of road accidents in Bangladesh has doubled over the last eight years, and is higher than in other Saarc countries.

In Bangladesh, the number of "fatalities per 10,000 vehicles" is 44. The number is 20 in India, 17 in Pakistan, 25 in Sri Lanka and 4 in Bhutan, the study mentioned.

Prof Mazharul said strict enforcement of traffic rules, increasing awareness among people and vehicle drivers and expansion of the road network could reduce road accidents.

Referring to a report of the Orthopaedic Hospital (Pangu Hospital), he mentioned that 56 percent of patients at the hospital's emergency wing are road accident victims.

Many accidents are neither reported in newspapers nor recorded by the police, the ARC director pointed out.

On the RSC's road accident statistics, a BRTA director said the fact is that the number of accidents is much higher. "Plying of unfit vehicles and reckless driving are two major causes of road accidents," he said, seeking anonymity.

He admitted that irregularities of a section of the BRTA officials in issuing driving licences and fitness certificates also lead to many road accidents.

BRTA Chairman Faruk Ahmed could not be contacted.

# Arsenic Contamination

**FROM PAGE 1**  
temperature rises to 70 to 80 degree Celsius, killing the pathogens that cause diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases.

The hot water is then collected in a traditional earthen pitcher called Kolshi and used for drinking when it cools down.

"The system is simple and inexpensive, and laboratory tests have proved its efficacy. It also helps the poor villagers avoid the extra cost needed to boil water, like the urban people do," the professor notes.

A number of scientists agree that, if the new technology is promoted and put to extensive use, it may gradually substitute the 'tube-well technology', which in the past two decades has proved unsafe.

The Integrated Approach for Community Development (IACD), a local non-government organisation that focuses on developing affordable water and sanitation technologies, introduced the Chulli technology last year, informs David B Nunley, representative of Wagtech International, a UK-based organisation that supports such locally developed techniques.

Considering its affordability and prospects of community acceptance, the Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) in association with the Unicef engaged the IACD to field-test the Chulli technology in areas, where 90 to 100 percent tube-well water is contaminated with arsenic above the acceptable level.

The rural poor cannot afford to buy fuel solely to boil drinking water, says Nunley, so the Chulli technique offers a perfect solution by using the heat of cooking ovens.

According to a study of the Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR), more than 80 percent of the heat produced by rural ovens is wasted to the atmosphere. Only a small percentage of that heat is needed to kill the bacteria in surface water.

The Chulli system uses simple gravity flow to pass water through the coil. Water is poured into a 25-litre plastic bucket placed on a three-foot high stand made of bamboo.

# Hazarika killed

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Hazarika tried to flee and, falling in the line of fire, received bullets. He was rushed to Rangunia upazila health complex where the duty doctor declared him dead, the Rab claimed.

The Rab sources said they recovered one home-made DBBL gun, one SBBL gun, one cut-rifle, one LG and three bullets of M-16 rifle, eight bullets of 7.62mm pistol and seven cartridges.

The Rab press release said that during the interrogation Hazarika confessed he was a close associate of top Shibir cadres Sajjad Khan, Habib Khan, "Shibri" Nasir, "BDR" Selim and "Taleban" Soheli. He also confessed to supplying illegal firearms to the notorious criminals of Chittagong city, Rangunia, Hathazari as well as Cox's Bazar.

Hazarika himself was an instructor of arms and a master in marshal arts.

Sources said Hazarika was charge-sheeted in the double murder of AL leaders Faruk Mahmud Siddique and businessman Solomon Khan that took place at Hathazari on the Eid-ul-Azha night in 2003.

He was also charge-sheeted in the sensational Bohaddarhat carnage that left six Bangladesh Chhatra League men and two others gunned down in broad daylight on July 12, 2000. But he later managed to drop his name from the charge-sheet.

**HOW HAZARIKA BECAME AN ARMS DEALER**  
Sources said Hazarika spent a brief expatriate's life in the Middle East and returned to country in late 1990. In 1994, he came in touch with notorious Shibir cadres Sajjad Khan and Habib Khan, who are also accused in the Bohaddarhat eight-murder case.

A wealthy person and an amateur singer, Hazarika gradually got involved with the crime world through smuggling and dealing arms.

He started arms-dealing from 1997 under the patronage of another notorious Shibir cadre Khuku Moni, who was killed in an internal feud, sources said.

Two Union Parishad chairmen of Cox's Bazar and Maheshkhali allegedly helped Hazarika in continuing his activities without any trouble for four years but his name came to light after the Bohaddarhat carnage.

The Detective Branch (DB) of the Chittagong Metropolitan Police arrested Hazarika on August 8, 2000 on charge of supplying arms to Shibir cadres involved in the Bohaddarhat incident. Police later recovered two sophisticated AK-47 rifles and one US-made pistol from his village home.

Srivastava's statement came ahead of foreign secretary level talks between the two countries in New Delhi on June 20. He said he had no details of the planned crackdown.

No immediate comment was available from Bangladesh.

India says there could be up to 150 bases belonging to Indian separatist groups in Bangladesh.

"We've definite reports of these militant groups running well-entrenched camps, including arms training bases, in Bangladesh," an Indian intelligence official said.

India and Bangladesh share a porous 4,000-kilometre border, only 20 percent of which is fenced.

Indian intelligence officials say top leaders of northeastern rebel groups such as the United Liberation Front of Asom, the National Liberation Front of Tripura and the All Tripura Tiger Force are holed up in Bangladesh.

"We're happy to find Bangladesh reacting to our pleas and the military offensive currently on vindicates our stand," another senior BSF commander said, asking to remain unnamed.

gravity flow to pass water through the coil. Water is poured into a 25-litre plastic bucket placed on a three-foot high stand made of bamboo.

The bucket contains 12kg sand and is connected to the input end of the aluminium coil by a locally made connector or valve fitted at its bottom. The sand filter frees the surface water of all organics, algae and foreign matters before letting it pass through the coil.

Once the heat from the Chulli reaches the cooking temperature, the plastic valve at the bottom of the bucket is opened, releasing the water into the coil. The water is allowed to run through the coil at the specific flow rate of 500ml per minute. As it flows through the coil, it gathers heat until it reaches the exit temperature of approximately 70-degree Celsius and comes out at the other end of the coil through a plastic faucet.

"In view of the very high production rate of bacteria-free water from ordinary surface water sources, the Chulli technology has potentials of mass application in areas where ground water is arsenic-contaminated but an abundant supply of surface water exists," observes DPHE Superintending Engineer Itishamul Haq.

"A major challenge for arsenic mitigation has been to find an alternative water source, which is free of germs and chemicals, can supply safe water all round the year, is inexpensive and easy to operate, and is well accepted by consumers. The Chulli purifier seems to meet all of these conditions," remarks Unicef Project Officer for Water and Environmental Sanitation Rick Johnston.

"It is inexpensive, easy to operate, and has little or no recurring costs. It quickly purifies surface water, generating more than enough microbiologically safe water that a family needs a day," he says.

# Iraq violence

**FROM PAGE 16**  
of harassment since Saddam's fall. In Baghdad, Iraqi authorities hailed Operation Lightning, a drag-net designed to snare insurgents in the capital, saying Thursday that 700 had been arrested and 28 killed in five days of operations.

But three explosions from a mortar attack shook the capital around midday Friday, with a security source saying the shells had come from a predominantly Sunni area and that one had landed near the Lebanese embassy.

No casualties were reported. Residents reported some additional mobile checkpoints by interior ministry commandos, but there was little evidence of a massive operation going on, and in many areas of the city, life carried on as usual.

Up to 40,000 army troops and police personnel were to take part in the sweep, but Baghdad streets were filled more often with a motley collection of dusty foreign-built cars than with armoured Humvees or heavily-armed personnel carriers.

Outside Kirkuk, two roadside bombs struck a US patrol early Friday, lightly wounding an unspecified number of soldiers and damaging two Humvee vehicles.

The government is struggling to regain control of the country, where almost 700 Iraqis died last month in widespread violence following the swearing in of Iraq's first post-war democratically elected government.

Despite the slaughter, Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari has voiced hope that disenfranchised groups believed to be fuelling the insurgency could be brought into the political process.

Iraq's Sunni minority, which held power under Saddam, has been sidelined since they largely boycotted January elections for fear of reprisals or in protest at the presence of US-led forces.

Meanwhile, an official from the Northern Oil Company said that a halt in Iraqi exports to Turkey's Mediterranean port of Ceyhan was "for technical reasons" and not the result of sabotage.

Iraq's vital oil infrastructure is regularly the target of insurgent attacks.

In neighbouring Iran, the foreign ministry scoffed at US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice for her comments on Teheran's participation in an Iraq reconstruction conference, the student news agency ISNA reported.

"Ms Rice is infuriated by our foreign minister's successful trip to Iraq and feels belittled when comparing that to her own trip," said spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi in reference to a landmark visit last month by Foreign Minister Kamal

# Cops on payroll

**FROM PAGE 1**  
girls new to the trade. He had some 20 to 22 such chicks, shot back the broker, smiling proudly, "Take your pick." Spending the whole night at the hotel would cost Tk 2,500, he informed.

Hoping to gather information surreptitiously, The Daily Star reporters insisted on speaking with the girls first about their health and activities, pretending to be concerned about diseases. Monzur, the pimp, eventually gave in, saying, "You can leave undisturbed if you do not like what you hear."

Discretion and cleanliness would not be a problem, he said, adding foreigners frequently visited the hotel. The foreigners working at the Meghna power plant, he said as example, visited once or twice a month. "Fear not, there is no problem," he claimed, explaining that the police, criminals and intelligence officers in the area are regularly paid off to ensure an uninterrupted flow of business. "No one bothers us," he said, flashing a reassuring grin.

Sources say many such hotels, numbering up to 2,000 in the city, pay between Tk 1 and 1.5 lakh each a month in kickbacks, doling out cash to local musclemen, corrupt police and journalists, who might otherwise expose or hinder their business.

The police often raid the hotels that do not pay up tolls, arresting dozens of pimps and 'massage girls, but they often obtain bail, since only light charges are brought against them, sources claim.

Mahbubur Rahman, officer-in-charge (OC) of Ramna Police Station, however, denied the accusation. "The complaint that our men are involved is common. But there is no truth in it," he professed, adding such accusations are made because the police are cracking down on the trade.

"Why should these people speak in favour of us?" he argued, "We are regularly arresting them. Sometimes they are beaten mercilessly by us. We are their main enemy. If it [bribery] is being practised, why would they speak out against us? There is no validity in what they say."

Broker Monzur asserted otherwise, though. "The Capetown was raided, because it failed to come up with the toll," he said, leading the correspondents to his hotel.

A small boy sat perched on a stool at the entrance. Monzur signalled to him, with a finger to the lips, to keep quiet. Then the correspondents climbed the dimly lit stairs up to Hotel Rupashi Bangla, with a soft darkness barely concealing the grimy walls. On the second floor, a group of men surrounded a concierge desk, where a heavysset man stood counting a wad of cash. Pointing to him, Monzur reassured the correspondents, "The hotel owner is here. Nobody will bother us."

The hotel was little more than a long, dark hallway studded with several doors. A sour staleness was hanging about the place.

Kharazi.  
Rice said Thursday in Washington: "We have our differences with Iran. We believe very strongly that Iran is a state that is out of step with what is going on in the region."  
Asefi retorted that "Iran is not moving in line with America's imposed changes in the region" and that "people in the region have enough political awareness to determine their fate".

# Dhaka denies

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"We don't have any such information," IG Abdul Quayum of Bangladesh Police told The Daily Star last night, noting, "It seems incorrect to me."

However, Quayum said they will check out the information, as they customarily do whenever any allegation comes from India.

The three Dhaka hotels named by IG Srivastava as controlled by Uffa insurgents were Surma International on Taj Mahal Road, Hotel Mohammadia in Mirpur and Padma International in Banani. According to the BSF IG, these hotels are managed by Subal Barua alias Ahmed Satish Sharma alias Kamal and Ashish Deka alias Hossain.

He said the rebel outfit has two hotels in Sylhet, namely Keya International in Zinda Bazar area managed by Dulal Roy alias Saidul and Yamuna on University Road by Anil Dey alias Sohal.

The remaining two hotels Srivastava named were Hotel Basundhara managed by Subhash Deka alias Humayun at Halishahar and Raj King by Kanailal Barman alias Rubel at Pahartali in Chittagong.

According to the BSF regional chief, the managers of the hotels are "cadres of the proscribed outfit".

# AL symbol

**FROM PAGE 16**  
District AL President Asaduzzaman is contesting the by-polls under the banner of Nagorik Committee, a platform of opposition parties.

He along with other senior district leaders including SA Hadi, Abdul Matin Bhuiyan and Mahbubur Rahman Bhuiyan met Hasina to discuss the by-polls.

Meantime, AL high command summoned today another party leader, Shawkat Ali, who has submitted nomination paper for the by-polls.  
AL top brass may direct him to withdraw from the election race, said a party source.

Monzur, his thin frame clad in a lungi, beckoned the reporters to one of the small rooms, barren except for two beds covered with white sheets. Bidding the correspondents to sit, he disappeared down the hallway, returning minutes later with a pretty young woman.

She walked through the door. Dressed in a pink salwar-kameez, she looked well bred. Responding to thinly veiled questions, she briefly told her tale. "I'm 22," she said, sitting nervously on the bed. Originally from Jessore, she came to Dhaka three months ago to work as a call girl, hoping to make fast cash. "I only do this once a week," she claimed, adding that she lives in Ramna with her family.

Condoms are not generally used, said the young woman. "We offer condoms, but customers do not like using them. Some people use them though, but most do not."

The correspondents inquired if she ever underwent a test for sexually transmitted diseases, but she said such tests were not available.

Sources say, in addition to these residential hotels, hundreds of residential houses throughout the city are also secretly serving as brothels. Most of the girls in these houses -- located in places like Mohammapur, Dhanmondi and even some of the city's posh areas -- are held against their will.

OC Rahman later said his department and others are vigilantly prosecuting the criminals involved in the sex trade. "We are very much aware of the situation. We are chasing, we are checking, we are getting hold of these types of criminals. We are regularly arresting them and processing them to the court," he said, adding, "We are trying our best and, of course, we will stop it."

As a testament to these efforts, detectives of Dhaka Metropolitan Police on May 26 arrested 107 female sex workers and 56 male customers in a number of residential hotels in the city, according to a police press release.

At Hotel Rupashi Bangla, the mood in the small room grew tense, as Monzur insisted the correspondents to stay. But the young woman's services were eventually declined. Monzur, offering a card bearing the name of Hotel Rupashi Bangla and a telephone number, said he would produce three or four more girls the following day, if wished. As the reporters left, the hotel owner berated the pimp for failing to strike the deal.

Monzur could not be reached later for comment, despite repeated attempts. An unknown person at the hotel said over telephone he had gone on leave.

Outside the hotel, the sidewalk was calm, and pedestrians flowed as usual in the late night, offering no hint to the clandestine business going on right along and above the street.