

GROWING DEMAND FOR ELECTRICITY

Country needs 13m tons of coal a yr to generate additional power

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh would require 13 million tons of coal every year for the next 10 years to generate additional power to meet the growing demand for electricity, as the natural gas supplies would not be able to cater for this need.

The power plants need a supply of 9 trillion cubic feet (tcf) gas to meet the demand for power up to 2025. Along with gas supplies for other consumers, Petrobangla should have 20 tcf gas up to that period, but it has only 13 tcf gas, said Moniruddin, a representative of the Power Development Board (PDB), at a discussion on coal policy.

The 10-member national coal committee headed by former Buet Vice Chancellor Prof Abdul Matin Patwari organised the discussion at the Petrobangla conference room in the city yesterday.

According to the sixth draft coal policy, if Bangladesh's GDP remains as low as 5.5 percent up to 2025, the country needs to generate

19000 megawatt additional power and if the GDP is as high as 8 percent, it needs 41000 mw additional power.

But Petrobangla has said that the production of gas -- which has been the key source for power generation -- will start to decline from 2011. This is where the country's coal resources should play a key role. "In the low GDP scenario, we will need 136 million tons (mt) of coal and in the high GDP scenario we will need 450 mt of coal," Moniruddin said.

Chairman of University Grants Commission Prof Nazrul Islam, defence representative Maj Gen Ismail Faruk Chowdhury, journalist Ataus Samad, geologist Prof Badrul Imam, Research Director of Centre for Policy Dialogue Prof Mustafizur Rahman, Petrobangla Director Moqbul-e-Elahi, Infrastructure Investment Facilitation Center (IIFC) chief Nazrul Islam, Prof Nurul Islam of Buet and M Zaman of the World Bank also took part in the discussion.

The gas scenario is so unpromising that the Power Cell is currently unable to sign Gas Sales Agreements for three small power projects totalling 100 mw, as the Petrobangla said it would not be able to supply the required gas, said Moniruddin.

"We cannot get adequate coal supplies from Barapukuria mine. We might have to import coal to generate power," he added.

At the discussion, majority of the speakers opposed coal exports and emphasised its utilisation for domestic power generation.

They also voiced the need to form a national body styled as 'Coal Bangla' under the government to handle coal mining in the country.

The speakers also noted that the sixth version of the draft coal policy is full of contradictions which need to be addressed and that this policy should be a part of the national energy policy.

Some speakers opposed open pit mining on the ground of environmental damage, and also on the

ground that open pit mining will produce so much coal that it will compel the country to export it.

They also said that Barapukuria underground mine is a bad deal and that should not be used as an example of mining method.

Former PDB chairman Nuruddin M Kamal pointed out that as per the constitution, the people of the country are the owner of natural resources. The constitution also says that if any law contradicts with this statement, then that part of the law should be deleted. Yet, existing laws related to coal mining simply want to give away the resources to foreign companies in exchange of royalty. This should be clarified, he added.

Engr Sheikh Md Shahidullah of National Committee to Protect Oil and Gas Resources, Zakir Hossain of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon and Anu Mohammad of Jahangirnagar University also spoke.



Volunteers prepare oral saline for the flood victims at the Teacher Student Centre on the Dhaka University campus yesterday.

PEOPLE'S JUTE MILLS Attack on CBA leader, 548 more workers get arrear wages

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

The general secretary of People's Jute Mills workers' union was injured in an attack by angry workers in front of the main gate of the mill at midday yesterday.

The incident occurred when Azizur Rahman Akram was about to enter the mill compound to receive his arrear wages.

According to Abdur Rahman, a leader of Patkal Sangram Parishad (PSP), workers became furious when they saw their CBA leader after three months during which he kept himself aloof from their movement for realising their arrear wages.

He also collaborated with the mill authorities to deprive the workers of their dues, alleged Rahman.

Akram was, however, rescued by security forces who helped him in getting a cheque for Tk 18,469 against his dues and leaving the mill premises in safe and sound.

Meanwhile, another group of 548 retrenched workers of the mill yesterday received their arrear wages for 15 weeks.

Earlier on Tuesday and Wednesday 650 and 584 retrenched workers received their arrears respectively.

Md Fazul Huq, joint secretary to jute ministry and convener of the monitoring committee, told the local journalists that a sum of Tk 5, 39, 21,000 would be paid against the arrear wages of retrenched workers in 10 days.

He however could not confirm when the arrear salaries of officials and employees of the closed jute mill would be paid.

20 fall sick from food poisoning in Rajshahi

RU CORRESPONDENT

At least 20 apprentices of Rajshahi Female Cottage Industry and Agriculture Centre fell sick from food poisoning after they had their dinner at its dining hall on Wednesday night.

They were rushed to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH). Ansan, a trainer of the institute, told newsmen that 50 apprentices at the centre were given fresh rice and broiler meat that night.

However, the apprentices alleged the authorities are cooking in an unhygienic atmosphere. They also demanded immediate investigation into the incident and supply of quality food.

20 to receive Japanese scholarship

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Like previous years, 20 more Bangladesh citizens will go to Japan for study this year under the Japanese Grant Aid for Human Resource Development Scholarship project.

They will be selected from Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) Cadre officials and Bangladesh Bank officials to study in the fields of public administration, economics, international relations and environmental policy for two years.

This was told at a seminar titled 'Japan Development Scholarship (JDS) 2008-2009' organised by Economic Relations Division (ERD) in cooperation with Japan International Cooperation Centre at the National Economic Council (NEC-2) building at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city on Wednesday.



Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed distributes relief among the flood-affected people at Singerghat in Munshiganj yesterday.

Gender sensitive budget a must for women's empowerment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gender sensitive budget is a must for women's empowerment, said the speakers at the concluding session of a workshop yesterday.

The workshop titled 'Gender budgeting: A framework for women's empowerment and social accountability' was organised by Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS) at the Chhayanaut Bhaban in the city.

A total of 30 representatives from different government and non-government organisations including Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Steps Towards Development, Women for Women, Oxfam, Karmojibi Nari, Care Bangladesh, Prip Trust, Karitas, Bangladesh Nari Sangbadik Kendra, Directorate of Women Affairs and BNPS took part in the four-day workshop.

The workshop was organised to create awareness and sensitise women's rights activists on gender budgeting concept and its importance for women's empowerment. Addressing the session as chief guest former adviser to caretaker government Dr Akbar Ali Khan said all citizens are entitled to enjoy justice but women in Bangladesh cannot enjoy justice due to some patriarchal mechanisms. Criticising the establishment of a separate ministry for women he said, "All the problems of women are kept inside a Hijab (ghomta)."

He suggested that their problems should be solved mainstreaming them through different ministries. Dr Akbar mentioned that budget allocation for women is very important as the solution of their problems depends on the quantity of fund allocated for them.

"The success of enacting a budget lies in its ability to resolve women's problem," he observed. Presiding over the function BNPS

Executive Director Rokeya Kabir said the 'invisible' and 'unpaid' labour of women should be evaluated and reflected in the budget.

She said a gender-sensitive budget would also pave the way for strengthening democracy.

BNPS Executive Committee Treasurer Shivani Das also spoke on the occasion.

Later, Dr Akbar gave away certificates among the participants of the workshop.

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Victims' Support Centres to be set up at police stations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The police department will set up Victims' Support Centres (VSC) to enhance the capacity of the law enforcement agency men to better respond to the needs of the victims of crimes and provide security to them.

This was disclosed at a workshop at city hotel yesterday.

"The police is going to set up a Victim Support Centre soon to deal with repression and violence against women and children," LGRD and Cooperatives Adviser Anwarul Iqbal said at the inaugural ceremony.

The centres would help create a safe and secure environment for the victims at the police stations, he added.

The first centre will be set up at Tejgaon Police Station in the city with the support from Police Reform Programme (PRP). Trained policemen will be assigned to this centre.

More centers will be set up throughout the country, said the adviser.

He also said that the government is committed to curbing violence against children and women through implementing various initiatives.

Home Secretary Abdul Karim, Inspector General of Police Nur Mohammad, Additional IGP and National Project Director of PRP NBK Tripura and Project Director of PRP Hubert Staberhofer also spoke at the workshop.

Schoolboy murdered over cricket match

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A schoolboy was stabbed to death and three others were injured in a dispute over a cricket match at Shewrapara in the city yesterday.

The deceased Ahmed Rubel, 15, was a student of class eight of Mirpur Model High School and resident of West Shewrapara at Mirpur.

Nurul Islam, 18, Alamgir Hossain, 13, Muhammad Parvez, 16, were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with serious injuries.

Police said a group of young men numbering seven to eight swooped on them with sharp weapons at about 12:30pm while they were gossiping in front of a bridge at Oli Miar Tek at Pirebagh. Rubel succumbed to his injuries at the DMCH.

Police picked up one Hafizur Rhaman and Alauddin Sikdar in this connection. Locals said yesterday's incident was sequel to a previous dispute over a cricket match at Anandabazar between Shewrapara

Cricket Team and Anandabazar Cricket Team.

Baby food for jute workers' families

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Jano Uddog, a civil rights organisation, yesterday distributed baby food among the 300 families of retrenched workers of closed People's Jute Mills.

Coordinator of Jano Uddog Khulna city unit Mahendra Nath Sen, CPB leader Advocate Firoze Ahmed, Animesh Chatterjee and Ridoy Sarker were present when the baby food was distributed.

They called upon the affluent people to stand by the side of the hungry children of retrenched workers.

More donations for flood victims

STAR REPORT

Different government, non-government and international organisations continue to donate to the Chief Adviser's Relief and Welfare Fund and distribute relief among the flood victims.

Australia Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Alexander Downer yesterday said Australia would provide A\$ 1.6 million for the flood victims, says a press release.

Meanwhile, Australian High Commissioner Douglas Foskett said Australia has provided humanitarian assistance to Bangladesh in response to natural emergencies in the past, and remained strongly committed to support the people of Bangladesh, particularly during such difficult times, the release added.

Noting that the World Food Programme has already been distributing 142 tonnes of High Energy Biscuits valued at A\$106,000 funded by Australia, Downer added that a further A\$1.5 million will be made available to WFP to support their relief and recovery activities.

Denmark In response to the request of the Save the Children Sweden Denmark, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has allocated DKK 1 million through Save the Children in Denmark for providing humanitarian assistance to the flood victims, a press release from the Embassy of Denmark in Dhaka said.

The assistance includes food, non-food items and cash, water purifying tablets, house building materials, educational materials, etc. The Save the Children Sweden Denmark will implement the programme in Dhaka, Comilla, Chandpur, Netrokona and Kurigram in collaboration with local partner NGOs.

World Vision World Vision has allocated Tk 1.66 crore for 23,950 families. Every family is provided with a relief package of 10-15 kg rice, 1-2 kg lentil, 1 kg salt, 1-2 kg flattened rice, 1-2 kg molasses, 1-2 kg sugar, 1-2 liter soybean oil, 2-3 kg potato, biscuit, milk powder, candle, match box, oral saline, water purifying tablets and other medicines.

Brac Brac yesterday distributed 750 packets of relief materials among the flood victims at Kushuripara, Kayakirtan and Selamoti villages at Srinagar upazila of Munshiganj, says a press release.

Each packet contains rice, molasses, oral saline, water purifying tablets, and medicines for cold and diarrhoea.

Brac is set to cover 19,502 affected families in Munshiganj. Brac will also participate in the rehabilitation programme.

BGMEA Representatives of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BGMEA) handed over 1000 packets of relief materials to Mohammed Akhtar Ali Sarkar, deputy commissioner of Tangail, yesterday. BGMEA had so far distributed 7000 packets of relief materials in Sirajganj, Kurigram and Tangail since August 6.

BKMEA Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BKMEA) will distribute relief materials in Narayanganj district from tomorrow, says a press release. It also already started providing meals twice a day among the flood victims at a gruel kitchen it set up yesterday.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) launched its relief cell and relief funds yesterday at Col Taher auditorium in the city, says a press release.

Leaders of JSD and its sister associations donated relief items such as medicines, food and cash to JSD President Hasanul Haq Inu and General Secretary Sayed Jafar Sajjad following the opening of the relief cell.

JSD leaders will also distribute relief materials among the flood victims in Sirajganj Sadar and Belkuchi upazila today.

CPB Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) will open a 'Relief Operations Coordination Cell' today. CPB is opening the relief cell with a view to further extending and coordinating the relief operations of the CPB volunteers who had been conducting relief works such as distributing relief materials, undertaking projects includ-

ing supplying pure for the last 10 days across the nation.

Ganatantri Party Ganatantri Party will start distributing relief materials across the country from the next week. A 19-member sub-committee was set up yesterday in this connection. District leaders were asked to maintain regular communications with the sub-committees and to generously participate in the relief works.

Other NGOs RDRS has started its second phase relief operations with a budget of Tk 1.80 crore after completing the initial emergency relief operation of Tk 60 lakhs in the northern districts.

Besides, several member NGOs of Bangladesh NGO Federation, including Samata, BURO, RIC, CMES have been conducting relief works in different areas, say press releases.

Muslim Hands Bangladesh will distribute relief materials at Khoshbari in Sirajganj today. The relief materials will include rice, potato and oral saline.

IMPACT Foundation Bangladesh (IFB) distributed relief materials, including 18 different food items and life-saving drugs, among 500 flood-affected families in Sirajganj district on August 8. IMPACT will also distribute relief materials among 1000 families of Gala Union today, says a press release.

Oitijhya Meanwhile, Oitijhya, a publishing house, have decided to donate two percent of its proceedings from the Oitijhya Book Festival for the flood victims.

Khulna City Corporation (KCC) Mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman, ward commissioners, officials and employees of KCC donated Tk 11.31 lakh and Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries donated Tk 25 lakh yesterday while Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) donated one day's salary of the officials and staff worth over Tk 1.10 lakh on August 7 to the relief fund of the chief adviser.

Announce 6th wage board immediately Demands SSKOP

The Sangbadik Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SSKOP) yesterday called on the government to announce the Sixth Wage Board Award immediately taking its recommendations into account, a SSKOP press release said.

The Parishad has also threatened to launch a movement if the award is not announced within the next two weeks.

SSKOP leaders said the sixth wage board is the outcome of a prolonged movement during the regime of the four-party alliance.

The press release added that although a board comprising the representatives from the government, owners and journalists finalised the wage structure and submitted to the then government, neither that government nor the caretaker government has announced the Sixth Wage Board Award.

The chief adviser had also assured the SSKOP leaders at a meeting on July 11 that the Wage Board Award would be announced soon, but no steps have been taken as yet, the leaders said.

They also alleged that a few changes are being brought to the wage board award, which would deprive the journalists and workers of the facilities they are enjoying now.

Oikya Parishad co-convenor Mozammel Haque and Fazle Imam, Member Secretary Ruhul Alam Gazi, Joint Member Secretary Md Motiur Rahman Talukdar and Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan were present at the meeting which was presided over by Oikya Parishad Co-convenor Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul.

Death anniversary



The death anniversaries of SM Moazzem Hossain and his wife Farida Banu will be observed today, says a press release.

A milad and doa mahfil will be held at their residence at 277 Elephant Road after Asr prayers.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme.

SM Moazzem Hossain passed away on August 12 in 2004 and Farida Banu on July 16 in 2001.

Matiur Rahman BSS, Dhaka

The 30th death anniversary of Matiur Rahman, former chief reporter of The Bangladesh Times and The Weekly Holiday, will be observed today.

He died of cancer at the age of 37. Matiur Rahman also worked as public relations chief of the then Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) before independence.

He was also a stringer for The New York Times.

A milad mahfil will be held after Asr prayers at the residence of his sister at House No. 16, Block-F, Section-2, Mirpur.

Friends, relatives and well-wishers have been requested to attend the milad.

Latifunnesa Khanam

Today is the 35th death anniversary of Latifunnesa Khanam, mother of poet and banker Waheed Murad.

A milad and doa mahfil will be held at Bhashantek Minar Mosque after Asr prayers and at Panchabaki Juma Masjid in Swarupkati, Pirojpur after Juma prayers.

IBA English debate contest begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-day national English debate competition organised by the Institute of Business Administration Communication Club (IBACC) of Dhaka University (DU) will begin at the IBA auditorium today.

Twenty-four teams from 16 universities are participating in the 'IBA National Debate Championship-2007', which will end on August 12.

The day one will begin at 8:30am with mandatory registration for all.

The Daily Star, Channel 1 and Radio Fori are the media partners of the event sponsored by ACI Limited.

Enhance cooperation for mutual benefit

President tells Chinese military team

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed stressed the need for enhancing the visit, training and technical cooperation programmes concerning the armed forces of Bangladesh and China to the mutual benefit.

He made the suggestion when a 12-member visiting delegation led by General Chen Bingde, member of the Central Military Commission of China, called on him at Bangabhaban yesterday. The Bangladesh leader hoped that this kind of interaction would help increase professional skill of the forces.

Welcoming the delegation, the president exchanged pleasantries with them and expressed satisfaction at their visit to Bangladesh. "As a friendly country, Bangladesh attaches great importance to its bilateral relations with China," he told them.

He said the existing bilateral relations between Bangladesh and China are excellent and it would be further strengthened and deepened in the days to come. The President wished the delegation a pleasant stay in Bangladesh.

He also informed the delegation about a huge trade gap prevailing between the two countries, which

is against Bangladesh. He said the gap should be narrowed down for the interest of Bangladesh.

The delegation apprised the president of the vision of their visit to Bangladesh as well as the activities of the Central Military Commission of China.

The delegation told the president that their government would provide all kinds of cooperation for the mutual benefit of the two friendly countries.

The Chinese Military Commission team hoped the existing relations between the two countries would be further strengthened and consolidated in the days to come.

Iajuddin invited, through the delegation, both the president and the prime minister of China to visit Bangladesh at their convenience.

Chinese Ambassador in Bangladesh Zheng Qingdian, Military Secretary to the President Major General Mohammad Aminul Karim, Secretary to the President's Office Mohammad Sirajul Islam and concerned officials of both the countries were present on the occasion.



Light to moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over all the six divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may rise 1-2 degree Celsius over the country during the period, Met office said.

Highest temperature 36.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Syedpur and lowest 26.1 degree Celsius at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:36pm today and rises at 5:32am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	35.8	26.3	64	67
Chittagong	32.9	27.1	80	77
Rajshahi	34.2	27.3	--	71
Khulna	34.5	27.5	78	65
Bansal	35.0	27.0	80	70
Sylhet	34.7	27.2	78	61
Cox's Bazar	33.5	26.2	76	66

New DFID Country Representative due Aug 12

Chris Austin, UK's new Country Representative of the Department for International Development (DFID), will arrive in Dhaka on August 12, says a press release.

Before leaving London, Chris Austin said: "Bangladesh is DFID's second largest country programme and I am delighted to be joining the DFID team there. Bangladesh is an extraordinary country with masses of potential as well as some challenges. I am really looking forward to working with other development partners and supporting efforts to ensure an ever more prosperous and stable future for Bangladesh."

Chris Austin has worked for the British Government in a number of roles over the last 23 years, both in the Treasury, the UK's Finance Ministry, and DFID. Prior to his arrival he worked at DFID's London headquarters as Deputy Director for the Africa Division.

The Department for International Development (DFID) is the British ministry responsible for the UK's contribution towards international efforts to eliminate poverty. The UK is the largest grant donor to Bangladesh, contributing around £120 million per year to country's development.

DHAKA TODAY

Debate
The IBA National English Debate Championship 2007 will begin. Venue: IBA, Dhaka University campus. Time: 8:30am.

Discussion
Amader Narail, an organisation of people hailing from Narail, will hold a discussion on the 83rd birth anniversary of artist SM Sultan. Venue: Biam auditorium. Time: 8:30pm.

Roundtable
Nagarik Sanghati organises a roundtable on jute policy. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.

Reception
Youth Ending Hunger Bangladesh will accord a reception to the Bangladesh team that brought laurels from International Math Olympiad in Hanoi. Venue: The Hunger Project, 37/ Asad Avenue. Time: 3:30pm.

Inauguration
The HDU, NICU and Haemodialysis Unit at Aysha Memorial Specialised Hospital will be inaugurated. Venue: 74 G/05, Peacock Square, Mohakhali. Time: 5:00pm.

Cultural evening