

# Country heading for severe power crisis

UNB, Dhaka

The power sector is heading for a severe crisis for failure to implement power projects in public and private sector.

The power shortage is now about 2,000MW. With fast increasing demand the situation is likely to be intolerable, affecting production in factories and field.

Officials said generation of about 6336MW electricity was planned to add to the national grid by 2010, of which half was to come by December 2009.

But the achievement so far is less than 10 percent. Experts in the sector blamed the Power Division's too much interest in setting up rental power plants which are highly inefficient, costly in operation and high gas consuming.

The power tariff of the rental plant is the highest, to the extent of Tk 15 per unit, as against normal power tariff of about Tk 2 per unit.

For rental power plant, PDB is to incur huge loss, estimated at Tk 42 crore per month.

The PDB's overall loss is about Tk 1200 crore in purchasing electricity from costly and inefficient plant. This year, the loss may cross Tk 1500 crore.

Despite this huge loss, the Power Division has engaged its full efforts to implement the rental power plant projects.

A few projects came into operation as per agreement while most others failed to come up.

A total of 600MW rental power plant projects were undertaken in two phases in last two years, of which 300MW signed agreements for a 15-year term and another 300MW for a three-year term. Of them, barely 160MW (20 MW Bogra+160 MW three-year plant) has come into generation.

Failing to install timely, sponsors of the rental power plants now moved to the court to avoid penalty, allegedly in connivance with certain officials of the Power Division.

Power Secretary at a seminar recently said the rental power plants are undertaken to meet emergency power demand. But he did not explain why the projects failed to come into operation.

Experts believe that inefficient and costly rental power projects are likely to render state-owned PDB bankrupt because of purchase of electricity at an exorbitant high rate.

Sources said among the projected power plants in the public sector, only 90MW Fenchuganj, 240MW Siddhirganj and 150MW Sikalaha are under implementation.

No IPP project could make headway during the last two years. Power Division scrapped a number of deals in IPP and public sector projects allegedly on grounds of lame excuse.

# Banker gets 10yrs' RI for embezzling money

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special court yesterday sentenced Aminul Islam Majumder, cash-in-charge of Southeast Bank, Motijhel branch in the city, to 10 years rigorous imprisonment for embezzling money.

Judge Jesmin Nahar of the Special Court-4 on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban Premises also fined Aminul Tk 17.79 lakh, in default, to serve one year more in jail.

The sentences will be effective from the day of his surrender or arrest.

The manager of the Bank filed the case against him with Motijhel Police Station.

# UK introduces points based system from today

METRO DESK

The United Kingdom (UK) introduces a new points based system (PBS) from today for skilled nationals from outside of the European Economic Area wishing to travel to that country for work, says a press release.

The global system is fairer for applicants because it uses transparent and objective criteria.

Under this system, applicants will be able to calculate how many qualifying points they will be awarded and, therefore, they will be able to know whether or not they will be issued a visa before making their applications.

Applicants will be able to obtain information from VFS offices and the British High Commission, which means that they do not have to rely on visas agents.

It is also a simpler system for skilled workers because it replaces a two-stage application process with a single application.

"The UK is a fantastic place to work and we want the UK to stay open and attractive to skilled workers. At the same time we are determined to deliver a system of border security which is among the most secure in the world."

# 'Sustainable land management a must for food security'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sustainable management of land, the scarcest resource in the country, is a must to ensure security of food, water and energy but the development policies of the country was never focused on this sector, the speakers said.

They said this at a workshop on 'Capacity building for sustainable land management and use of resources' yesterday at the auditorium of the environment and forest ministry with its Secretary AM Rezaul Kabir in the chair.

The speakers pointed out that excessive use of chemical fertiliser and pesticides reduction of biodiversity, desertification of forest and water bodies, urbanisation, rampant land use for infrastructure development are the main barriers to a sustainable land management.

Special Assistant to Chief Adviser for Environment and Forests Raja Devasish Roy said the government has been working for a time-befitting and effective land-using policy under the sustainable land management project.

A long-term economic benefit and expected development is possible if we could ensure the use of land suited for environment, he added.

UNDP Country Director Stephen Priesner was present at the function as the special guest. Dr AM Mustain Billah, director of the project, also addressed the function.



Former chief election commissioner Abu Hena speaks at the inaugural ceremony of a training on 'Election violence monitoring' at Caritas auditorium in the city yesterday. Odhikar, a human rights organisation, arranged the workshop. (Story on Page 1)

# Next govt to assist ACC in curbing graft

Hopes ACC chief

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Lt Gen (retd) Hasan Mashud Chowdhury yesterday hoped that the next elected government would also assist the commission in building a nation free from corruption.

He called on the local Anti-Corruption Committee members to be more active and make the candidates in the upcoming elections pledge to work towards curbing corruption.

He also urged them to always remain vigilant so that the campaign against corruption does not get eclipsed by electioneering.

The ACC chief said this at a view exchange meeting with the members of local Anti-Corruption Committee at the conference room of Magura Circuit House.

Later, he also addressed a meeting on 'The role of government and non-government officials in curbing corruption'. Deputy Commissioner

(DC) Begum Vikarunnesa and ACC Deputy Director Afzalur Rahman Bhuiyan also spoke at the meeting attended by local government and non-government officials.

# Rainwater harvesting project launched

METRO DESK

To ensure availability and provide safe drinking water in schools, Coca-Cola Far East Ltd in partnership with Plan Bangladesh launched a 'Rain water harvesting and drinking water project' at a school at Mirpur in the city on Tuesday, says a press release.

As part of the project equipments were installed at Surovi School under Block-E in Mirpur.

At the launching ceremony of the project, teachers and students of the school and officials of 'Coca-Cola Far East Ltd and Plan Bangladesh were present.

# Physiotherapy students continue hunger strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of the physiotherapy department of National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR) continued fast unto death at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday.

Reiterating their demand for a separate college for physiotherapy students, resuming the classes and holding examinations and admission tests they staged a hunger strike for the second consecutive day.

They also demanded immediate withdrawal of cases filed against them following a violent incident between the students and the NITOR hospital employees. They also demanded proper investigation into the incident.

Some of the students on hunger strike became sick yesterday.



Participants of an international symposium of photojournalism pose for photograph with Sindh Chief Minister Shah Quayum Ali and Information Minister Shahji Mari at Japan Consular auditorium at Karachi in Pakistan recently. South Asian Photojournalist Association was launched at the symposium organised by Pakistan and Japan Cultural Association.

# AIDS COMMISSION REPORT LAUNCHED

## 5m HIV-positives in Asia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An estimated nine million Asians have been infected with HIV since its first appearance in the region more than 20 years ago, while approximately 2.6 million men, 950,000 women and 330,000 children have so far died of AIDS-related disease, says a report of the Commission on AIDS in Asia.

The number of people living with HIV in Asia was 4.9 million in 2007 including 440,000 people who are newly infected while the number of people died from AIDS-related illness was 300,000 last year.

The report said despite the progress made in many Asian countries and declining trend of new HIV infection, AIDS accounts for more deaths annually among the 15 to 44-year-old adults currently than do tuberculosis and other diseases.

The main causes for spreading HIV/AIDS in the Asian countries include unprotected paid sex, sharing of contaminated needles and syringes and unprotected sex between men, according to the report.

The commission recommended an increase of condom use among sex workers, their clients and the male having sex with male (MSM)

# AAA executives

METRO DESK

Prof SAM Khairul Bashar and Nusrat F Aman have been elected president and secretary of American Alumni Association (AAA) respectively for the years 2008-2010 at its annual general meeting recently.

Other office bearers are A Gafur, treasurer, and members Ayesha Dastgir, Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmed, Syed Saadat Almas Kabir and Amy Hart Vrapmas.

AAA promotes fellowship among graduates of American universities in Bangladesh and assists members to develop careers that use their abilities and education, says a press release.

AAA recognises members for significant achievements and provides scholarships to the deserving rural students under a partnership programme with the Prothom Alo; assists visiting representatives of American colleges and universities; and Bangladesh students exploring the possibility of study in the United States.

AAA is an affiliated body of the Embassy of the United States of America in Bangladesh and the Head of the Mission is the Co-Chair of AAA Governing Council.

AAA is also associated with the American Information Centre, Dhaka as well as American Chamber of Commerce.

over 80 percent, and halve sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and needle sharing among the injective drug users (IDUs) between 2008 and 2020.

If the target can be achieved, it would reduce infections by five million, number of people living with HIV by 3.1 million, number of AIDS-related deaths by 40 percent and a steady decline in HIV prevalence in the region by 2020, it added.

The launching ceremony of 'The AIDS Commission Report: Redefining AIDS in Asia' was held at Sasakawa auditorium of ICDDR,B in the city.

The Centre for Gender, Sexuality and HIV/AIDS, a UNAIDS Collaborating Centre, and James P Grant School of Public Health at Brac University organised the launching programme.

The report said many Asian countries have established National AIDS Commissions but they have not been able to effectively coordinate the AIDS responses in their countries for lack of mandate, secretarial support and overall direction by the top level political functionaries.

Though 14 Asian countries have national strategic plans, most of the plans lack key planning components for the operation, management and financing of the responses, it added.

The report revealed that low level of condom use during paid sex contributes to increasing HIV infection in the region.

Though three out of four

# Shameem made HC to Brunei

UNB, Dhaka

M Shameem Ahsan, currently serving as the Ambassador of Bangladesh to Iran, has been appointed High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam.

Shameem Ahsan, who joined Bangladesh Civil Service Foreign Affairs Cadre in January in 1986, held many important posts in the foreign ministry and missions of Bangladesh abroad, says a foreign ministry press release.

adults living with HIV in Asia are men, the proportion of women has risen from 19 percent in 2000 to 24 percent in 2007.

Geeta Sethi, APLF Coordinator of Regional Support Team, Asia and the Pacific, Joint United Nations Programme of HIV/AIDS, presented an overview of the report that highlighted the state of the AIDS epidemic in Asia, national responses, community involvement, the future of the epidemic in Asia, money needed to curb HIV and strategies and implementation of programmes.

Dr Mohammad Ishaque Khan, line director of National AIDS and STD Programme, Mohammad Abul Kalam Azad, additional secretary to health and family welfare ministry, Dan Odallo, UNAIDS Country Coordinator, Prof Anwar Islam, director of James P Grant School of Public Health at Brac University and Prof Mahmuda Islam, member of AIDS Commission in Asia, spoke at the report launching ceremony.

# ATN to air debate contest today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

ATN Bangla, a private satellite channel, will start airing the BSB-Cambrian Inter-university Television Debate Competition today, says a press release.

A total of 16 universities took part in the competition titled 'Prjanma Bitarka'. ATN Bangla Chairman Dr Mahfuzur Rahman inaugurated the competition on Wednesday.

The motion of today's debate is 'The nuclear cooperation agreement between India and the US will jeopardise the stability in Asia'. The Northern University and United International University have taken part in the debate.

The competition will be aired on 4:05pm every Thursday.



Newly elected members of the executive council of American Alumni Association pose with outgoing committee members at the annual general meeting of the association held in Dhaka recently.

## Panasonic ideas for life

Saves 50% energy! and BUILT-IN Air Purifier

**INVERTER** **2in1**

Now everyone can enjoy up to 50%\* energy savings with the full range of new Envio with Inverter. You can also switch it on separately as an advanced air purifier or as an air conditioner, or both. The power is yours!

\*Compared to non-inverter models

**NEW envio Environmental Innovation**

### Gift Offers

From November 27, 2008 to December 31, 2008, with every purchase of Panasonic Air conditioner you will get a scratch card to win guaranteed gifts -

CASH BACK OF TK. 3,500 OR FREE STANDARD INSTALLATION UPTO 20FT PIPING OR PANASONIC INVERTER AIRCONDITIONER OR PANASONIC INVERTER REFRIGERATOR OR PANASONIC WASHING MACHINE

Participating Models	
Inverter Deluxe Envio	S13HKH (1 ton), S18HKH (1.5 ton), S24HKH (2 ton)
Deluxe Envio	C12HKH (1 ton), C18HKH (1.5 ton), C24HKH (2 ton), C28HKH (2.5 ton)
Standard/Super Tropical	PC12GKH (1 ton), PC18HKF (1.5 ton), PC24HKF (2 ton), PC30EKF (2.5 ton), PC36EKF (3 ton)

M. K. Electronics (Stadium Branch): 95, B.B. National Stadium market, Dhaka-1000. Mob: 01718152737; Tel: 9558487, 9554232 & (Gulshan Branch): Hamid Tower, 24 Gulshan C/A, Circle-2, Dhaka-1212. Mob: 01712714095 Tel: 9894225, 9863108, AB Electronics (Stadium Branch): 52, 52/B, B.B. National Stadium market, Dhaka-1000. Mob: 01816135865 Tel: 7169128, 9556338 & (Dhanmondi Branch): Road#4, House#7, Momtaz Plaza, Dhanmondi, Dhaka. Mob: 01670017231 Tel: 9664331. Future Electronics: Latif Center, (2nd Floor), Zindabazar, Sylhet. Mob: 01727363258 Tel: 0821-2831101. J.B. International: Omari Menton, 349/Ka (New), Baduratala, (1st floor), Kandirpar, Comilla. Mob: 01817029983 Tel: 081-77143. Sayed Enterprise: Ka 162/2, Khilkhet Bottola, Dhaka-1229. Mob: 01715011714. Lifeline International: 147/A-1, Monipuripara, Airport Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka. Mob: 01552319195 & 01199020491. Shohele Enterprise: 49/2, M.M. Ali Road, Jessore. Mob: 01717110377. ABC Electronics: Latif Center, (3rd Floor), Zindabazar, Sylhet. Tel: 0821-711600. The Air Con: 39, South Avenue (2nd Floor), Gulshan-1, Dhaka. Mob: 01713038565 Tel: 9861845. Techno Cool Associates: LA-60, (3rd Floor), Progati Sarani, Middle Badda. Tel: 8854692 Mob: 01819120568. R.B. Electronics: 209, Highway Plaza Market, Lalkhan Bazar, Chittagong. Mob: 01727605526 & 01819382517.