



The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

Plus Rising Stars



COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know

www.thedailystar.net

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XIX No. 188

DHAKA THURSDAY JULY 23, 2009

SRABAN 8, 1416 BS

RAJAB 29, 1430 HJRI

24 PAGES PLUS RISING STARS PRICE: Tk 10.00

Daylight lights up evenings

Initiative offers some respite from outage; power demand now peaks after midnight as industries run at night

SHARIER KHAN

The Daylight Saving Time (DST) measure introduced last month reduced power demand of 150-200 megawatt (MW) in the evenings, easing the persistent load shedding situation by a small portion, according to Power Development Board.

Surprisingly, the traditional peak hours have moved to midnights from evenings. The country's power demand is shooting to its highest peak around midnight to 1:00am instead of the typical 7:00pm to 9:00pm.

"This means that the never-ending power

shortage has forced large power consumers like the industrial sector to be innovative. It is clear that industrial consumers are now running factories at late night shifts to avoid load shedding and production disruptions," said a top PDB source.

Consequently, the country is experiencing for the first time, regular power outages at 11:00pm or midnight.

In addition, the gap between peak and lowest power demands has reduced to only 300-400MW from the previous trend of 1,000-2,000MW. Typically, power demands in the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Ministers, bureaucrats trade blame

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the council of ministers and bureaucrats are blaming each other for the poor performance of different ministries and the failure to bring pace in administration work at Bangladesh Secretariat.

While most ministers and state ministers are irritated at the poor performance of top bureaucrats, senior officials at the secretariat say many ministers and state ministers are new in the cabinet with little experience in running ministries.

"I alone ran three to four ministries smoothly during our 1996-2001 tenure. But now I cannot run just one ministry properly as none intends to

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Govt moves to rev up tardy administration

Plans cut on meetings, visits

M ABUL KALAM AZAD and
HASAN JAHD TUSHER

The government has planned to cut a number of meetings at the Bangladesh Secretariat and declare closed to visitors for two days instead of present one day to speed up administrative functioning, highly placed sources said.

The government is considering the options, as no sign of dynamism in the administration is to be found even after six months in power, sources at the secretariat said.

They said sluggishness is evident in most of the ministries mainly because of rampant transfer and posting in the civil bureaucracy and lack of experience of the ministers and advisers as well as coordi-

nation among them.

Each of the ministries usually holds three to five meetings every day. Many of the meetings are not important and do not yield any result but the ministers, secretaries and other senior officials remain busy for it eating up valuable working hours, according to the sources.

"There will be no harm if some of the meetings are not held as the issues or agendas of the meetings can easily be resolved in other ways such as talks over telephone," observed a secretary of an important ministry.

Most of the meetings are unnecessarily lengthy, he said adding, "We have discussed these options at a secretary level meeting at the secretariat recently. Most of us were in favour of the options to

be implemented in near future."

A huge number of visitors enter into the secretariat from Sunday to Wednesday to visit ministers, secretaries and other officials as part of their lobbying to serve various purposes.

"They (visitors) are hampering normal functioning of the ministries," he said, adding that denying access to visitors for certain days would help expedite implementation of various decisions and development projects.

Sources at the secretariat said bringing dynamism in bureaucracy has become a headache of top bureaucrats since the government is very unhappy over continuation of inertia in the administration.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Most of the vegetable plants of this field in Shibpur of Narsingdi died due to poor rainfall this season.

Farmers look at sky, for rains

Vegetables dying, Aman seedbeds not prepared

PINAKI ROY

Farmers fear a draught like situation as they are unable to prepare Aman seedbeds and their land is developing cracks and vegetables are dying due to lack of rains even in July, the month of monsoon.

The situation is worse in the northern and central region where many farmers cannot process their green jute after a boom in production this year.

Rainfall in June was 37 percent below average and in the first 20 days in July 21 percent lower than average, informs the met office.

Agro-meteorologists say if the farmers don't get a wet spell in a week or two, the situation will turn really worse. They apprehend a threat to food supply as the farmers are getting late for preparing Aman seed beds.

Md Julhas Mia, a farmer from Kundarpara in Shibpur, Narsingdi, said he cultivated different kinds of vegetables including bitter melon, papaya, bean and aubergine on his land.

"But all those vegetable plants died due to lack of water. This year the bad weather put me in burden of huge loss," he said while showing his dead plants to The Daily Star journalist.

During a visit to local wholesale markets it was seen there are no other vegetables except kakrol.

Monsoon rains normally sweep the country from June to September and Bangladesh and other neighbouring countries get more than 75 percent of annual rainfall during this period.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

ILLEGAL MIGRATION Govt refutes Pinak's remark

UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka disapproved of Indian envoy Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty's allegation that Bangladeshis overstay in India as a spokesman for the foreign ministry said his observation does not match with the information available with the government.

The spokesman came up with the denial as government's

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Indian HC clarifies

UNB, Dhaka

The Indian High Commission here yesterday explained its High Commissioner Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty's remarks about non-return of Bangladeshis who obtain visa for travelling to India and "touts and brokers" standing in the visa-seeking queue--rejecting allegations of complicity between 'touts and brokers' and officials of the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Hasina seeks German help for renewable energy

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday sought German assistances for tapping all sources of renewable energy in the country and facing the challenges of global climate change.

She wished for the cooperation when German Ambassador Frank Meyke made a farewell call on her at the PM's office in the morning.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

DEATH OF 24 KIDS AFTER PARACETAMOL INTAKE

Ban slapped on Rid pharmaceutical

Asks it to suspend production, withdraw products from market

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

The Drug Administration yesterday ordered the Rid Pharmaceutical Company of Brahmanbaria BSCIC area to suspend manufacture and marketing of their products including vitamin and paracetamol suspension.

Following a controversy over the deaths of 24 children after taking drugs of the company, representatives of the Drug Administration

yesterday visited the company and took samples for testing.

"The company is also ordered to withdraw its products from the market and to publish an announcement in three daily newspapers immediately in this regard," said Director of the Drug Administration Mohammad Ismail Hossain.

Sources said the local drug superintendent

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

ADCOM OFFICE

Court orders probe into looting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court has ordered enquiry into the case filed in connection with the looting at firms owned by former caretaker government adviser Geeteara Safiya Choudhury and her husband former lawmaker Nazim Kamran Choudhury.

Abu Rushd Tarek, director of the companies who filed the case, told The Daily Star that the court asked the officer-in-

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Women riddle in Jamaat's reforms

Constitution claims representation of 20-25pc women in all forums but none found in 2 policymaking bodies; only non-Muslims must defend country's sovereignty

SHAKHAWAT LITON and RASHIDUL HASAN

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami submitted its 'reformed' constitution to the Election Commission (EC) yesterday claiming that it already has 20 to 25 percent women representations in all its committees.

But in fact its two top most policymaking bodies -- the 51-member central working committee and 15-member central executive committee -- do not have a single woman member.

The Daily Star obtained a copy of Jamaat's 'reformed' constitution submitted to the EC.

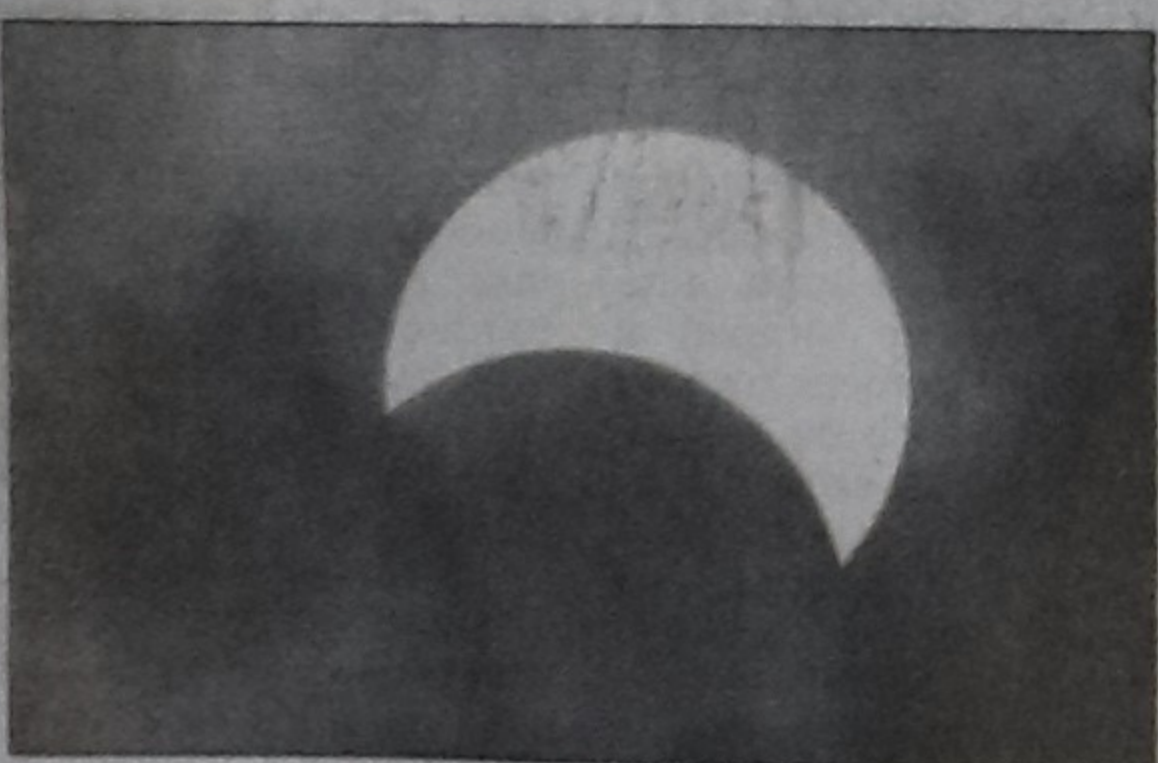
According to a special note in the constitution, the two top forums of the party are supposed to have at least 10 and 4 women respectively.

But lists of members of the two committees available on the Islamist party's official website have no women's representation.

In the special note of the 'reformed' constitution ratified by Majlis-e-Shura, the party's highest policy making forum, Jamaat however promises to have 33 percent women's representation in all its committees by 2020, in line with the Representation of the People Order (RPO).

According to a provision of RPO, a political party seeking registration with the EC as a parliamentary party, must include in its constitution the goal of having at least 33 percent women's representation in all its committees including the central committee by the year 2020.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



A shot of the solar eclipse taken from the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday morning.

PHOTO: STAR

Thousands watch long solar eclipse

MORSHED ALI KHAN and KONGKON KARMAKER, from Panchagarh

Thousands of people in Panchagarh witnessed the longest total solar eclipses of the 21st century at a local stadium yesterday, defying rain and a heavily overcast sky.

The district town has hardly ever seen a rare incident as attractive as the last total solar eclipse of this century

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Grand Opening of

Madambibir Hat Branch

47th Branch

Madambibir Hat
Bhatary, Sitakunda, Chittagong

23 July 2009

সাইথইস্ট ব্যাংক লিমিটেড
Southeast Bank Limited
A Bank With Vision

Head Office: Eunoos Trade Centre, Level-2/3 & 16, 52-53, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh

www.sebankbd.com