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No ETP plan in 4 years

Environment ministry blames industrialists, seeks help from the top to end river pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After over four years' futile negotiations with factory owners on preparing an action plan on setting up effluent treatment plant (ETP), the environment ministry is now seeking intervention from the highest level of the government.

State minister for forest and environment in a statement in parliament has blamed different factory owners' associations for not cooperating with the move taken in 2005, which resulted in increased river pollution by rampant dumping of industrial wastes.

The state minister's written reply to a notice on freeing the Buriganga and Shitalakha rivers from pollution was placed in the House yesterday. Ruling Awami League lawmaker Asma Zerin Jhumi in the last session submitted the call attention notice.

The answer, however, mentioned Mostafizur Rahman as the state minister for forest and environment although Hasan Mahmud replaced him a few months ago. The forest and environment ministry has prepared

the answer on the lawmaker's notice.

The ministry said it formed a committee led by director general of the Department of Environment on August 13, 2005 and included representatives of various factory owners' associations to prepare the action plan for setting up ETP at industries to reduce pollution. The committee was also asked to monitor the implementation of the plan.

The committee held two meetings on December 12, 2005 and April 26, 2006 to this end, but the progress in preparing the action plan was frustrating.

During the caretaker government regime, a meeting chaired by the then forest and environment adviser was held on March 22, 2007. The meeting fixed October 2007 as the deadline for setting up ETP in the factories. Any factory failing to set up ETP within the timeframe would be shut down, the meeting decided.

But the deadline did not yield the desired results as almost all the factories remained indifferent to the deadline.

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Every morning, around 150 chicken vendors become busy on Joykall Mandir Road near Bangabhaban in the capital, to push flour-dough inside the beaks of saleable chickens to gain extra profit from their weight manipulation.

PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

Obama invites Hasina to join meeting on UN peacekeepers

UNB, Dhaka

US President Barack Obama has invited Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to join a meeting of heads of the governments of 10 UN peacekeeper contributing nations with him in New York on September 23.

President Obama will exchange views and experiences on UN peacekeeping operations across the world during the meet.

US Ambassador to Bangladesh James F Moriarty

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PM dispels security threat over Asian Highway

Probe on to see if RMG unrest is provoked 'to get financial benefits', she tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the House yesterday came down heavily on those who are opposing being connected to the proposed Asian Highway that would link Bangladesh with other Asian and European countries via India.

Ruling out any possibility of threat to the sovereignty of the country from the proposed highway, she told parliament Bangladesh would have control over its parts of the routes that would make re-

entry into India via Bangladesh.

In reply to a question, Hasina, also the leader of the House, said her government is investigating whether some vested quarters are behind the labour unrest in the ready-made garment sector to get financial benefit from the government.

"The masterminds behind the unrest in the export-oriented garment industry must be uncovered," she said replying to a supplementary question from independent lawmaker Fazlul Azim.

The premier also said that alongside

government efforts the garment owners have also the responsibility to maintain discipline in their factories.

She reassured parliament that industrial and community police would be formed to maintain peace in industrial belts, particularly in garment sector.

In an oblique reference to BNP and its allies, the premier said, "They are frightening people with bogus boo saying that India will grab everything once Bangladesh is connected with the Asian Highway."

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8 RENTAL PLANTS

PDB tender goes online

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Power Development Board debuts in floating its tender notice online today for eight rental power projects totalling 530MW capacity on its website www.bpdb.gov.bd.

Power Secretary Mohammad Abul Kalam Azad inaugurated the launching of the online tender yesterday evening at the PDB office. PDB Chairman ASM Alamgir Kabir and other high officials were present at the ceremony.

"This has been done in line with the government's commitment to a Digital Bangladesh," said a PDB official.

The PDB aims to award the five-year contracts by November 19. The rental plants are a 100MW diesel-fired plant in

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Keep multiple spots, allow mailed bids

Ministries advised on tender dropping

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All the ministries have been advised to create scopes for submitting tender schedules at multiple spots and allowing sending of the schedules through post to handle obstructions in dropping bid documents.

The Central Procurement Technical Unit (CPTU), which monitors the transparency of procurement process and deals with dispute and legal

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Traffic police himself is violating the automated traffic signal at Kakrail-Bijoynagar intersection in the city yesterday, throwing traffic management into disarray.

PHOTO: STAR

Traffic signal system made spectator of total chaos

KAILASH SARKAR

It is none but the traffic police who violate the automated traffic signal themselves in the city, which encourages drivers and commuters to disobey the rules.

The encouragement further comes from the total inaction of traffic police in stopping and penalising violators, especially public motor vehicles that stop to drop and pick passengers at traffic lights, block roads or park randomly, largely contributing to the city's congestion problem.

Traffic police often even resort to risky and drastic measures to stop vehicles when the lights are red by blocking the way of running vehicles to stop them. They say otherwise drivers do not brake.

Talking to The Daily Star, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner AKM Shahidul Hoque also said, "People of our country do not have the habit of obeying traffic rules. They do not stop until traffic

police take position in front of vehicles. So, how is it possible to follow the signalling system?"

All main intersections in the city--no matter with or without automated signals--are controlled manually at present because of excessive traffic. And in the control are untrained traffic constables and ansar members as sergeants mostly remain busy with filing cases against vehicles that break laws and collecting fines from them.

Movement of the VIPs also forces traffic police to ignore automated signals, throwing traffic management into disarray.

DMP Joint Commissioner (Traffic) Mohammad Shafiqur Rahman said, "Traffic signals are operated from the control room at Shahbagh where it is not possible to visualise the traffic situation on the city roads."

"Traffic police have to stay at the spots to control vehicles movement considering the flow of transport on different

roads and routes. With the huge flow of vehicles on limited road space, it is hardly possible to follow the automated signal system," he said.

According to sources of DMP and Dhaka City Corporation, the automated signals were installed at the city's 68 strategic intersections in 2008 at a cost of Tk 25 crore to make traffic movement smooth.

The traffic lights keep on changing round the clock but are not followed at all.

"The traffic department has 2,200 members, including 750 sergeants. We have engaged the entire force and even hired 400 ansar men to control the traffic," the DMP commissioner told The Daily Star.

He admitted that the ansar members are not trained in traffic controlling while DMP's own constables are also not capable of dealing with the heavy rush of vehicles.

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AUG 21 ATTACK

2 Huji men's bail cancelled

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday cancelled bails of two Harkatul Jihad (Huji) members, granted earlier by another court, in one of the two August 21 grenade attack cases on grounds that the charges brought against them were heinous and unpardonable.

Meantime, another Dhaka court yesterday fixed October 4 for hearing on the government petition seeking cancellation of bails granted to two Huji members in the other case.

The Huji members are Munshi Mohibullah alias Mohibur Rahman, brother of Huji Chief Mufti Abdul Hannan, and Arif Hasan Sumon, who obtained bail from a speedy trial tribunal.

Metropolitan Sessions Judge ANM Bashir Ullah issued the cancellation order after an hour-long hearing in presence of the two Huji members.

In the order, the judge said the charges brought against the Huji members were heinous. They along with the other accused killed 23 people including Awami League leader Ivy Rahman,

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SIRCAR'S GRAFT

Two jurists decline to comment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two amici curiae yesterday declined to give their opinions to the High Court (HC) on the legality of forming a parliamentary committee to investigate corruption allegations against former speaker Jamiuruddin Sircar.

Barrister Rafique-Ul Huq and Advocate AF Hassan Arif expressed reluctance to deliver opinions due to different reasons.

Rafique-Ul Huq told the court that he earlier made statements to the media on the issue and therefore, he should not place any more opinion before the court.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

74 retired 'politically'

JS review body on armed forces gives account of 7 years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The high-powered review committee of the Armed Forces Division (AFD) has so far found that 74 armed forces officers were sent into retirement on political grounds in the last seven years of past caretaker and BNP-Jamaat alliance rule.

Planning Minister Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) AK Khandker, who is also in-charge of the defence ministry in parliamentary business, said this in parliament yesterday.

He also informed the House that the process of formation of a commando unit of Bangladesh Navy is underway to ensure security of the country's maritime boundary.

In reply to a query from ruling Awami League (AL) lawmaker Waresat Hossain Belal on alleged irregularities in forced retirement in the armed forces, the planning minister said some other applications are also under consideration of the review committee.

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আর তাকিয়ে দেখা নয়, স্বপ্নের গাড়িটা এবার ড্রাইভ করে নিয়ে আসুন বাড়িতে।

আপনার স্বপ্ন পূরণে টাকা কেন বাধা হয়ে দাঁড়াবে? আমাদের কারি সোন সহজেই আপনার স্বপ্নকে সত্যি করতে পারে। আপনি খুব দ্রুত আর সহজেই এই লোন পেতে পারেন, পরিশোধের শর্তও খুব সহজ। তাহলে স্বপ্ন পূরণে আর বাধা কোথায়? আজই শুরু করুন খোঁজ।

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