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## Outage mounts as gas runs low

### Govt starts to shed more electricity from Dhaka in nights; PDB fails to get rental power this month

SHARIER KHAN

The government has taken a decision to shed 150-200MW of power in Dhaka city from midnight to 9:00am to meet the demand of electricity for irrigation during Boro season.

The nightmare called load-shedding is back with a vengeance as the mercury is shooting up, while gas supply to the power stations is running alarmingly low.

The frequency of load-shedding in the last few weeks has become unbearable as power failure is not only taking place in usual alternate hours during the day; it is taking place deep in the night as well.

The frequent power cuts are taking a toll on household electronics and electrical equipment. People who use instant power supply (IPS) system that uses rechargeable batteries to give backup power during outages are now

making new complaints. Their IPS is failing to provide a backup as the system is not getting adequate electricity to get recharged.

The woes have multiplied for many residents because the outage severely hampers pumping of water to the rooftop reservoir tanks.

Things now look even bleaker as the summer is still months away and the irrigation season is just beginning. The level of load-shedding is already hovering between 1,200 megawatt and 1,400 MW officially and 2,000 MW unofficially.

The country's official demand of electricity now stands at 5,250 MW, which is unofficially 6,000 MW, against a supply of 3,800-4,000 MW.

However, there could have been a respite if the Power Development Board (PDB) got adequate gas supply to run all its power plants.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



Electricity traders by the Buriganga in Keraniganj have lately switched to heavier generators to meet the growing demand. Their business booms as the locals depend on these generators more than ever for worsening power crisis.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Ray of hope from Wasa

### Phase II of Syedabad treatment plant to start next month

HELEMUL ALAM

The construction work of Syedabad Water Treatment Plant phase-2 is to start in the first week of April.

On completion, which is expected to be in three years, it would reduce the capital's dependency on underground water.

Liyakat Ali, deputy managing director of Dhaka Wasa, said the target capacity of the plant is 22.5 crore litres of fresh water a day.

The process of setting up two more plants in Pagla of Keraniganj and in Khilkhet is also on. Once completed, these would halve the capital's dependency on underground water, said an official of Wasa.

Now, 87 percent of Dhaka Wasa's daily treated water supply, 190 crore litre, come from under ground.

A few months ago two deals were signed between Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority and Danish contractor MT Højgaard to set up the phase-2 of Syedabad Water Treatment Plant.

They are now waiting for the signing of the loan agreement with the Danish government, said the official.

A pre-treatment unit will also be constructed under the project. The unit would work for phase-1 and phase-2 of the plant, which will use the water of the Shitalakkhya, said another official of Wasa.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



### Zia was first president of Bangladesh

#### Claims BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ziaur Rahman was the first president of Bangladesh, as he took charge of the country after proclaiming independence in 1971, senior BNP leaders claimed yesterday.

It was his leadership that won the nation independence, they added.

The opposition leaders were addressing a discussion organised by BNP at the city's Mahanagar Natya Mancha on the occasion of the Independence Day.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

## Defeated force may disrupt trial

### PM alerts about plot against war crimes trial

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged the people to remain alert and united so that the process of the trial of war criminals cannot be disrupted under any circumstances.

"Bangabandhu had started the trial of the war criminals. Insha-Allah, we will complete the unfinished task of Bangabandhu," she said at a discussion marking the Independence and National Day at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre yesterday.

"More conspiracies will be in place...All people must remain alert to foil the conspiracies," the premier said.

Hasina said though the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared general amnesty after the independence, the great leader never pardoned those who killed patriotic people, raped women, looted valuables and set afire their houses.

Referring to a recent trial of a World War-II war criminal aged 90-year who has been given life-term imprisonment Hasina said if it happened why in Bangladesh the war criminals would not be tried?

The anti-liberation force who had been in power for long time would try to halt the trial of the war criminals by using their huge black money earned through corruption and irregularities, she apprehended.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

## War tribunal to get rolling tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The war crimes tribunal will start working from tomorrow at the old High Court building, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed said yesterday.

The trial of war criminals is not related with politics and no one would be harassed for political purpose, he told reporters after attending a workshop at IDB Bhaban.

The minister said those who committed crimes, assisted criminals and took part in the genocide during the Liberation War would be tried under the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act 1973. "The government will ensure international standard in holding the trial," he observed.

On Mojaheed's intention to hire lawyers from abroad for the trial, Shafique Ahmed said it would require Bar Council permission. Besides, there is

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

## Youth stabs classmate, her parents

### Held them hostage for six hours for money

MUKHLESUR RAHMAN

A male student stabbed a female classmate and her parents after holding them hostage at their Kalabagan residence for ransom in the city yesterday.

Ashraf Ali, 22, a student of Daffodil Institute of Information and Technology (DIIT), stabbed Fauzia Faria Barsha, 22, and her parents Aminur Rahman, 58, and Rokhsana Momtaj, 55.

Ali held them hostage for about six hours to realize Tk 20 lakh and a private car as ransom.

Barsha told The Daily Star that Ali had an affair with Ishika, one of their common friends. Three months ago, Ishika turned down Ali, as he hailed from a poor family in Gazipur.

Being spurned, Ali was behaving "abnormally" in recent days, said Barsha.

Beli, a domestic help and a witness, said Barsha came home around 7:30pm along with Ali, a regular visitor to the house. They entered the sitting room on the second floor.

Around 11:00pm, Ali was seen holding a knife in one hand and dragging Barsha to the bedroom of her parents on the same floor.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



Ashraf Ali

## Congratulations



Brave and Truthful Officer Colonel (Retd) Md. Shaheed Uddin Khan, psc was born in an elite Muslim family of Nalchity Upazila (Sujan Vila) under Jhalakathi district.

A brilliant army officer Mr. Khan was sacked by the Former government on May 31, 2005. His job was reinstated with due promotion vide circular dated March 23, 2010. Lt. Colonel Shaheed Khan was promoted to colonel with retrospective effect till July 15, 2009 and was sent to retirement on the day.

During his service-life Mr. Shaheed was sincere in his duties and had gained much goodwill. During his deputation at BDR, he seized a huge quantity of smuggled goods which was owned by an influential person of the then government and thus he started facing hostility of the government.

He achieved Personal awards and his 6 Rifle Battalion also became champion during his duties at Chapainawabganj in 2003 in the anti-smuggling drive of BDR, which was a record of 32 years of BDR. He was able to seize smuggled goods worth about Tk 100 (hundred) Crore only in 8 months.

He served in the UN Missions in Mozambique and Congo. He was an Instructor as Captain as well as a Major in Home of Infantry, Sylhet.

Mr. Khan served in the 55 Infantry Division Headquarters in Jessore Cantonment as GSO-2 (Operations) twice. He also served as Brigade Major in 46 Independent Infantry Brigade on completion of his staff course. He successfully participated in all the Military courses at home and abroad. He also displayed gallantry in the Chittagong Hill Tracts for nearly 6 years.

We all are very much proud of our man of the land, Colonel (Retd) Shaheed.

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