



PHOTO: PID  
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina chairs a meeting of the power, energy and mineral resources ministry in its conference room in Bangladesh Secretariat yesterday.

## 3 children out of 5 suffer from anaemia

Says study

BSS, Dhaka

At least three out of each five children under two years of age suffer from anaemia, a blood condition in which the red blood cells are deficient in hemoglobin, resulting in poor health.

According to a couple of studies carried out by ICDDR,B the prevalence of anaemia was recorded 64 percent among young children between 12-23 months, while this number goes as high as nearly 80 percent among infants aged under one year.

The main factors that are contributing to the high number of anaemic children in Bangladesh are poverty, poor dietary intake, sanitation and malnutrition. But the ignorance of mothers about supplementary feeding has a great role to compound the problem.

The two most stunning revelations of the studies were that there was a strong association between child anaemia and Vitamin A deficiency among mothers, while environmental toxins such as arsenic might have an impact on it, a claim which needs to be tested again through further research.

The monthly health and science bulletin of ICDDR,B said Bangladeshi mothers usually start providing rice-based supplementary food

to their babies along with breast milk after three months of age. But only a microscopic number of them have the knowledge that these rice-based food lack both iron and protein, two vital factors to block anaemia.

A national survey in mid nineties also identified that the diets of children in Bangladesh mark deficit of energy, protein, iron and other nutrients. The children having a low-birth weight are also more prone to anaemic conditions, read the studies done in both rural and urban settings.

A separate study conducted over 1,237 children under two years of age in 30 villages in Monohordi of Narsingdi found 60 percent rural children anaemic when a single parameter, haemoglobin level, was used. But only half of the anaemic children were iron deficient anaemic.

According to studies, early childhood anaemia adversely affects growth, immunity and cognitive development. Then problem, which is acute in developing countries like Bangladesh, is mainly thought to be linked with nutrition, but public health researchers have many more issues to intervene to save future generations.

## Loan from Indian Bank harmful

Says BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Standing Committee member Khandaiker Mosharrar Hossain yesterday said the deal signed between Bangladesh government and Exim Bank of India will be damaging for the country.

The BNP leader said this while distributing leaflets yesterday at Kakrail urging people to join today's mass procession organised by BNP. He also termed the deal as disgraceful for the nation.

Meanwhile, Jamaat-e-Islami acting Ameer Makbul Ahamad and acting Secretary General ATM Azharul Islam yesterday said people would not accept the undignified loan agreement signed with India.

In a joint statement, they urged the government to scrap the deal. "People will force to scrap the deal through movement if it is not cancelled," they said.

## Coal policy almost finalised

UNB, Dhaka

The long-expected coal policy has almost been finalised, Energy Secretary Mezba Uddin Ahmed said yesterday.

The energy secretary said this to reporters after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's meeting with the adviser, the state minister and other high officials of the power, energy and mineral resources ministry at the ministry's conference room.

Replying to a question, the energy secretary said after finalising the coal policy at the ministry level, it will be submitted to the prime minister as per her directives.

"After getting the valuable directives from the Prime Minister, we will take step to give final shape to the Coal Policy," Mezba

Uddin said.

Coal policy has long been kept pending though demand of coal as an alternative fuel to generate power is increasing at geometric rate in the perspective of gradually reducing stock of gas resources in Bangladesh.

Natural gas is the only significant source of commercial energy and accounts for almost 75 percent of commercial energy consumption in Bangladesh. The largest gas consumers are the power and fertiliser industries, which account for around 70 percent of daily production.

Current supply capacity of 1,450 mmcf, however, is insufficient to meet the projected growth in demand. Gas consumption, currently at 1,400 mmcf, is expected to grow at a rate of 10 percent per annum.

## Two killed, 3 hurt in Ctg road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Vehicular movement on the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway came to a halt for nearly three hours yesterday following a road accident that killed two people and injured three others.

Police quoting witnesses said the accident occurred when a Dhaka-bound oil tanker rammmed a CNG-run auto-rickshaw at Magpukur in Sitakunda upazila of Chittagong at about 11:00am.

Two passengers of the three-wheelers -- Wasim, 27, of Kumira in Chittagong and Yunus, 30, of Hatiya in Noakhali, died on the spot while the auto-rickshaw driver, Delwar Hossain, 27, sustained serious injuries, said Wahidur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Highway Police Station at Baro Awlia in the upazila.

Delwar Hossain was undergoing treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital while the other two, whose identity could not be confirmed, received treatment from Sitakunda Upazila Health Complex.

Hundreds of vehicles got stranded on both the sides of the highway following the accident.

A case was filed in this connection.



PHOTO: STAR  
A car ploughs through water on Khilgaon flyover yesterday. A torrential rain in the morning caused the waterlogging due to a block in the flyover's drainage system.

## ATTACK ON PROF AZAD Bhagne Shahid on 4-day fresh remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed acting chief of banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) Anwar Alam, also known as Nazmul and Bhagne Shahid, on a four-day fresh remand in connection with a case on an attempt on life of Prof Humayun Azad.

He was earlier shown arrested in the case for his alleged involvement with an attempt to kill Prof Humayun Azad.

Metropolitan Magistrate SK Tofael Hasan passed the order after Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Inspector Mustafizur Rahman, also the investigation officer of the case,

produced him before it on completion of his four-day remand. CID also submitted a ten-day further remand for interrogation.

On February 27, 2004, assailants stabbed prominent writer Humayun Azad brutally with machetes in front of Bangla Academy when he was on the way to his residence.

Shahid is a charge-sheeted accused in the case and was shown arrested on July 21.

Bhagne Shahid, who was appointed the top executive of the outfit after the arrest of their chief Saidur Rahman in late May this year, was arrested from a house near Bogra bypass area on July 13.

## Man dies on way to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An accused of a rape case died on the way to jail from the court yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Dulal Member, 50, son of late Rawshan Ali of Bhujpur village under Faticchhari upazila.

Judge Israil Hossain of Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-3 sentenced Dulal to jail over a gang rape case filed with Bhujpur Police Station on November 02, 2007, said court sources.

Dulal fell ill just as he was brought to court custody.

He was sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead, said Court Inspector Unu Mong.

## Separate railway ministry demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a sit-in programme yesterday called for separate ministry for railway to reduce road accidents in Bangladesh.

They said building integrated rail communications system in the country will help reduce transportation costs as well as environmental pollution.

Two green organisations, Protysha and Greenbelt jointly organised the programme in front of the National Museum at Shahbag yesterday noon demanding separate railway ministry.

Speakers said around 55,000 people were killed in road accidents in the last 15 years and thousands of crores of taka have been spent to modernise road communications during the period.

The campaigners said the railway system was a comfortable and safe mode of transport but the system has been destroyed in the name

of development.

Road communications is still being given top priority over railway despite increase in road accidents every year due to reckless driving, poor implementation of law and absence of proper driving policies, they said.

They pointed out that manpower in rail communications was not increased during the previous years rather trips of many long route trains were downsized.

Apart from developing rail centric communications system, improving waterways system and incorporating roads with rail and waterways are also imperative to ensure transportation to the country's ever-increasing population, they added.

Chairman of Paribesh Bachao Andolon (POBA) Abu Naser Khan, member secretary of Unnyandhara Trust Aminur Rasul, among others, spoke at the programme.

## Inform public about activities Islamic Foundation told

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday asked the Islamic Foundation authorities to step up publicity of its activities among people.

The president made the remarks while a delegation of Islamic Foundation led by State Minister for Religious Affairs M Shahjahan Mia called on him at Bangabhaban.

The president said publicity of programs and activities being carried out by Islamic Foundation is not enough so the authorities should take steps to enhance its publicity.

"People should be informed of all activities done by the government," Zillur said.

The delegation apprised the president that Islamic Foundation has been expanding pre-primary education and basic Islamic education across the country involving religious teachers (Alims) to keep the students away from unwanted activities. Some 60,000 alims will start teaching the children and elderly people about the basic education of Islam from first day of the holy month of Ramadan, the delegation informed.

They mentioned that some 67,000 imams of different mosques have already been trained nationally till yesterday.

Secretaries concerned to the president's office were present at the meeting.

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