



Polybags rule despite ban

Invade markets even 9 years after ban due to lack of monitoring

RIZANUZZAMAN LASKAR

Polythene bags, banned with much fanfare over nine years ago, are making their way back to the market for lack of monitoring and suitable alternatives.

Paper and net bags hit the market as alternatives after the ban, but traders still prefer plastic bags to the webbed and wafer-thin ones.

They argue that paper bags tear easily and net bags are inconvenient to carry goods in rainy weather.

Grocer Mazharul Islam in the capital's Malibagh area said many customers ask for plastic bags to carry groceries.

"It is cheap, user-friendly and easily available. You can order a hundred kilogram of polythene in the morning and get it by evening," said Mohammad Al Amin, another grocer at Karwan Bazar.

The government imposed a nationwide ban on polythene bags (below 100 microns) in 2002 after thousands of discarded bags clogged up the drainage system in urban areas.

Plastic bags choked the drainage system adding to the

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Man dies in Rab custody

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A middle-aged man died under Rapid Action Battalion custody yesterday.

Belal Hossain, 40, of Kachua in Chandpur district, was taken by Rab-2 to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with severe injuries on Saturday around 8:00pm.

He died at the hospital's intensive care unit yesterday at 4:45pm.

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Bill soon to enact civil service law

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A bill will be placed in parliament as early as possible to enact the civil service act intended to establish an efficient and professional civil administration, said the LGRD and cooperatives minister yesterday.

Replies to lawmakers' queries in parliament, LGRD

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PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ AND SHAWKAT JAMIL
Urchins rummage through plastic bottles and polythene bags in the river Buriganga yesterday. Inset, use of polythene as shopping bags.

Bike-jackers turned pro

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and
NAJMUL ALAM NOBIN



kind of bike he rides and security arrangements in the area where the bike is usually parked.

Informants in cases spend weeks gathering information so that the next stage of the theft goes smooth.

"Each informant gets paid around Tk 5,000 for every successful theft,"

said Sub-Inspector Abdul Aziz of Mirpur Police Station describing how the gangs function.

The organogram of motorcycle-stealing gangs surfaced after Mirpur police arrested five operatives of such a gang in Dhaka, Narayanganj and Munshiganj on May 24. They also got hold of four stolen motorbikes and equipment for picking locks and hot-wiring bikes.

In the last few months, police recovered more than 15 stolen motorbikes and private cars from different places in Mirpur and

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3 killed in UP polls violence

STAR REPORT

Three people were killed in post-polls violence in Brahmanbaria and Noakhali Saturday night and yesterday.

The deceased are Anis Uddin Thakur, 45, younger brother of Sarail Upazila Chairman Rafiq Uddin Thakur, Nilu Miah, 28, supporter of a defeated candidate of Sarail sadar union in Brahmanbaria, and Babul Hossain, 26, of Noakhali's Chatkhil upazila.

Our Brahmanbaria correspondent reports, a chase and counter-chase took place between the supporters of two rival chairman candidates -- Moniruddin Ahmed and Abdul Jabbar -- at Kotta village at about 5:10pm

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Resist pickets

AL asks its MPs, city leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League (AL) has directed its leaders and lawmakers in the capital to resist the BNP-Jamaat supporters in every street if they become unruly and resort to violence during hartal hours.

It also advised the home ministry to deploy more forces in every corner of

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Blasts kill 39 in Pak hotel, supermarket

AFP, Peshawar

Twin bomb blasts minutes apart ripped through a crowded supermarket-hotel complex killing 39 people and injuring over 80 in Pakistan's northwestern city of Peshawar late Saturday.

The attack, one of the deadliest since US Navy SEALs killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan on May 2, hit the Khyber Super Market area, which includes residential flats for students, shops, a fruit juices kiosk and a hotel.

At around 11:30pm local time, a first explosion lured in onlookers and emergency services before a second more powerful blast, believed to be from a suicide strike, went off. The second explosion was heard for miles around.

"Death toll has risen to 39 in the blasts as four wounded people died in hospital," senior local police official Ijaz Khan told AFP, adding that the explosions were just four minutes apart.

The blast was initially blamed on Pakistan's Taliban but a Taliban spokesman yesterday denied responsibility.

Those killed included two journalists working for local English-language newspapers Pakistan Today and

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PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL
Labourers plant grass at the city's Suhrawardy Udyana for beautification of the proposed Independence Memorial Tower, construction of which is yet to start. The authorities just keep uprooting grass to replace with new patches from other parts of the park, making huge dent on public fund, instead of focusing on the main task -- the tower construction. The photo was taken a few days ago.

Strange beautification

PWD uproots, then plants same grass at Suhrawardy Udyana

TAWFIQUE ALI

The Public Works Department (PWD) is uprooting and then planting the same grass on the 67-acre Suhrawardy Udyana (park) as a "decorative" work but construction of the proposed Independence Memorial Tower is yet to start.

"We plant the same grass that we uproot after levelling the ground," said Abdul Hakim, who was working in the park opposite the Fine Arts Institute of Dhaka University.

Abdul Latif, a supervisor, said they uproot the grass to replace with new patches of grass from other parts of the park. The only difference is that the planted grass is symmetrical in height.

The park has been divided into seven sections and work orders have been awarded to seven contractors for grass plantation, project officials said. The work started in January.

Fazlur Rahman Bhuiya, chief arboriculturist of PWD, said they are planting flat-leaf grass brought from Ramna Park.

But one of the contractors, AD Majumdar Sadhu, said the grass was from Savar.

During visits to the site last week, this correspondent found most of the park's ground levelled and covered with grass.

Several PWD officials said such ornamental work is simply a waste of public money. Even the top project officials seemed critical about the rationale of the enterprise.

Mizan-ul-Alam, the project director and deputy secretary of the liberation war affairs

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SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET No scrutiny, passage today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliament is set to pass the supplementary budget of the current fiscal year today, without proper examination of the reasons for over Tk 7,779 crore excess spending by 31 ministries and divisions.

The House cannot scrutinise the excess expenditure because its Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is indifferent to its functions prescribed in the Rules of Procedure

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