



TRAVEL BAN ON ASMA

EU slaps sanctions on UK-born wife of Bashar al-Assad

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VACCINE FOR ALL

Star Health talks to Prof Robert Booy

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'CHETONAR GAAN'

An album of Salil Chowdhury tracks never recorded before

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POLLS LIKELY IN MAY

Population disparity in DCC wards

It's an obstacle to proper resource distribution, say local govt experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Polls to the split Dhaka City Corporation are set for May amid huge population disparities among the wards in the two corporations -- DCC North and DCC South.

The government's indifference to redrawing the boundaries of the 92 wards of the two DCCs has given rise to the controversy, local government experts say. They fear it might create obstacle to proper distribution of resources, which is a prerequisite for ensuring better services.

The local government and rural development (LGRD) ministry, which is empowered to demarcate the boundaries, has no plan to do the job before the upcoming polls, a senior official of the ministry told The Daily Star.

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Posters and banners mostly of people with political aspiration take over the walls of Lalbagh fort, considered a tourist spot in the capital.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Power outage plagues Ctg

Businesses, industries hit hard

PRABIR BARUA CHOWDHURY, Ctg

Chittagong district has been experiencing power outages up to six hours a day since early March.

Although summer is just beginning, the district is now facing a power shortfall of about 80 megawatt (MW), leading to power cuts six to eight times a day. The shortfall was 150 MW till Tuesday.

Sources at Power Development Board (PDB) in Chittagong Zone said suspension of power generation in three state-run power stations is the main cause of the shortage.

Raozan Power Station, and Shikalbaha 60 MW Power Plant have been shut for about five months for lack of gas supply, and Shikalbaha 150 MW Peaking Power Plant was shut till Tuesday since late November last year due to the same reason, said Md Moniruzzaman, public relations officer of PDB.

The three state-run power plants could generate 600 MW power on an average in a day.

Shikalbaha 150 MW Peaking Power Plant however resumed power generation of 70 MW on Tuesday as it got gas supply from Karnaphuli Gas Distribution Company Ltd (KGCL), PDB sources said.

Moniruzzaman said as the power station resumed



generation, it will help reduce the gap between demand and supply, but that is still insufficient. He said average demand of the zone in peak hour is about 700 MW while Chittagong district alone demands 550 MW daily. The zone comprises Chittagong district, Cox's Bazar, and three hill tract districts.

A high official of KGCL, on condition of anonymity, said they are not supplying gas to the out of operation power plants according to a decision of the government.

The total supply for Chittagong district is now about 470 MW that comes from the national grid and different local power plants, said Moniruzzaman.

Md Raisuddin Sarker, chief engineer at PDB, said they are being forced to manage power distribution through load shedding as sufficient power is not being generated.

He said they formed a load management body including representatives from the local administration.

The body will try to find out the actual demand for power in different areas, and will try to ensure equal distribution of electricity through load shedding, he said.

Meanwhile, residents and businesses of Chittagong district are suffering immensely from the shortage of power.

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ISI FUNDING FOR BNP

Pakistan rejects reports

STAR REPORT

The Pakistan foreign ministry has rejected the allegation of funding BNP by the country's spy agency ISI before 1991 national election of Bangladesh as reported in local and international newspapers.

According to the ministry website, a spokesperson on Thursday termed

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Apologise for baseless allegation BNP asks PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Threatening legal action, BNP leader Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday asked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to apologise to the people for bringing "false" accusation against BNP of

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DHAKA-CHITTAGONG

Part of 4-lane highway to be ready by June

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

The communications ministry is pushing hard to speed up the upgrade of Dhaka-Chittagong highway and complete at least part of the work by June.

The upgrade of 192-kilometre two-lane highway from Daudkandi to Chittagong into a four-lane one has remained stalled for about two years due to inapt consultancy, frequent change of project director and intervention in land-filling work by some ruling party men, according to ministry sources.

Taking the helm at the ministry in December last year, Obaidul Quader has had meetings with the concessionaires and also has been paying regular visits to the project sites to monitor the progress of work.

In a recent meeting with them, the minister has set a June 30 deadline to complete the upgrade of 25-km part between Comilla and Feni districts.

Ministry officials are hopeful another 57-km of the widened highway would be ready by December.

"The minister is under pressure to perform. He is desperate to have at least a part of the upgraded highway opened by the prime minister at the earliest," noted a senior official at the communications ministry.

Roads and Highways Department sources said expansion of the Dhaka-Chittagong highway, known as the country's economic lifeline, was essential as the road

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Mujib for confederation of Pakistan

SYED BADRUL AHSAN



On this day in 1971, the Awami League leadership stayed busy all morning

working out the finer details of the economy-related issues of a proposed governmental structure for Pakistan. The Awami League still

believed that a constitutional way out for a transfer of power from the junta to the elected representatives of the people was possible. What was, however, unknown was that the military regime was giving the finishing touches to the operation it had decided to launch

against the Bangladeshi. Rumours abounded about impending army action and yet there was too the confidence among the population that the junta could not but agree to the

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DMP moves to stop illegal parking

Starts using wheel clamps

M RAHMAN

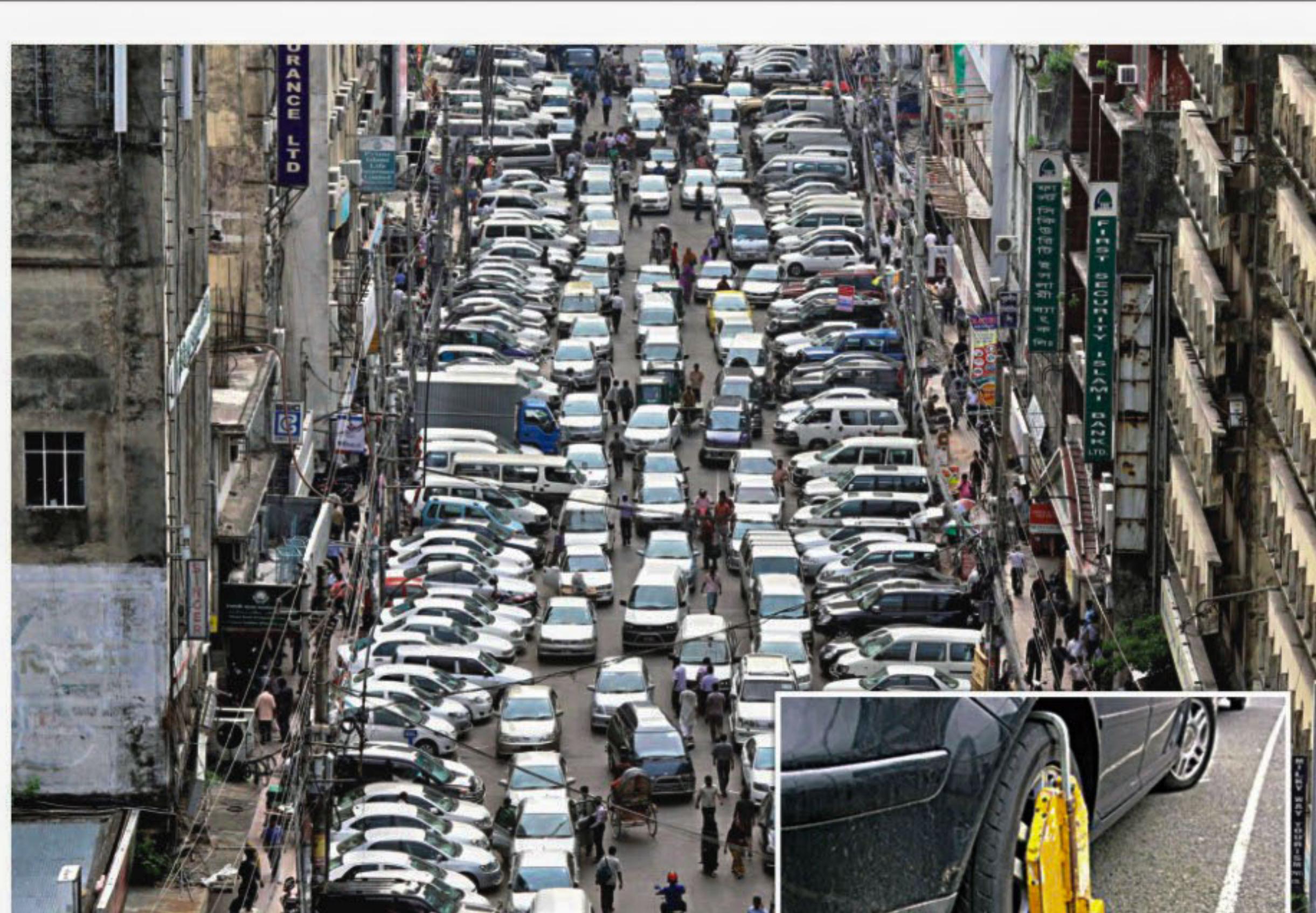
Dhaka Metropolitan Police has started using wheel clamps to lock illegally parked vehicles and ensure that they are towed away.

"We have procured 100 wheel clamps, which four divisions of traffic will use to tow away illegally parked vehicles from a certain area," said DMP traffic Chief Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman.

The use of clamps has started on March 11.

He added that no additional charge would be imposed for the clamps.

Traffic sources said for illegal parking an official



Parked illegally and in double, cars turn this four-lane street in the capital's Motijheel into a single carriageway. This is likely to change soon as traffic police has started using wheel clamps, inset, to immobilise illegally parked cars and have them towed away.

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BGMEA
BGMEA Complex, 23/1, Panthapath Link Road, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215

HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS

TO THE DAUGHTER OF THE FATHER OF THE NATION HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER, **SHEIKH HASINA** & HER GOVERNMENT FOR THE HISTORICAL VICTORY AGAINST MYANMAR ON MARITIME BOUNDARY DISPUTE.

The final verdict of the International Tribunal for the Law of Sea (ITLOS) was awarded on March 14, 2012 against Myanmar in favour of Bangladesh on its claim of 200 nautical miles exclusive economic and territorial rights in the Bay of Bengal. We feel proud may her leadership bring us more laurels for the country.

On behalf of Board of Directors.

Md. Shafiqul Islam
President