



MOTIJHEEL AT 9:15AM



DHANMONDI 8/A AT 11:00AM



ASAD GATE AT 7:35AM

FROM LEFT ... Even though there are no parking signs there, poorly parked and doubled parked cars choke the street in front of Motijheel Ideal School and College. A parent guides two children through standstill traffic on Dhanmondi 8/A. Gridlock on Mirpur Road near Asad Gate. The photos were taken on Wednesday. PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ/PRABIR DAS

Morning jam

FROM PAGE 1
 were recently assigned to observe and report on the mad morning rush.
 Frustrated, many students were seen getting down from their vehicles and walking to their schools.
 Talking to this newspaper, several experts and commuters blamed excessive traffic, congested streets, and traffic mismanagement for the morning tailbacks.
 A proactive role by the school authorities, the guardians and the traffic police in managing traffic could help a lot, they added.
 "The most difficult task is to control cars. The owners act as if they are VIPs. They don't hesitate to park their cars, and pick and drop their children wherever they wish," a community police member in Mohammadpur

area said on Wednesday.
 He said the tailbacks can be avoided if all guardians and students get down a little away from the schools and walk to schools.
 Most parents take their cars straight in front of the school gates and drop their children there, said Maruf Hossain, who works for a private firm in Dhanmondi.
 "It obstructs other cars and contributes to the tailbacks," he added.
 The nightmarish morning jam costs city dwellers both time and money.
 "My office is in Bangla Motor. Usually, it is a 30 minute journey from my home, but it takes more than an hour to reach there, thanks to the jam on Asad Avenue," said Jiban Ahmed, who lives in Mohammadpur Town Hall area.

"To save time, I often jaywalk across Mirpur Road [near Asad Avenue] and take another vehicle to go to work," he said.
 City's traffic situation deteriorates during the morning when the schools start and in the afternoon when they end, said Farhad, a traffic constable who was deployed near the Mastermind School on Dhanmondi-12.
 Lutfar Rahman, who lives in Mohammadpur, said, "When a street gets totally jam-packed with vehicles, traffic police should allow other vehicles to use an alternative street with less heavy traffic. It does not happen in most cases."
 Besides, there should be more coordination between traffic police and community police for better traffic

management on different streets, said Kamrul Islam, who lives in Dhanmondi.
 Contacted, Shafiqur Rahman, assistant commissioner of Mohammadpur zone (DMP-traffic), said the traffic situation in Mohammadpur and Dhanmondi during the morning hours would improve drastically if the school-goers take school buses instead of cars.
 "All the prominent schools should introduce school buses and encourage their students to use them," he told The Daily Star.
 Asked, Shafiqur admitted that they cannot control traffic properly on many streets due to manpower shortage.
 "We need some 12 to 15 traffic policemen to control vehicular move-

ment on the intersection in front of Arong. But we have just four to five men," he said.
 "During the school hours, we have to take traffic policemen from other spots and deploy them on the streets near some prominent schools to control the situation there," he added.
 Urban transport expert Prof Shamsul Hoque said in any urban area, school-goers and commuters are the ones who use the streets most.
 That is why, he said, an urban area has to be planned in such a way that the two groups do not have to rush to the streets at the same time at the same zone.
 He also said in many developed countries, children of a particular area

cannot get enrolled to a school outside the area.
 "If we can introduce such a system in Dhaka, it will definitely help reduce the morning jam," said Prof Shamsul, who is also a former director of Buet's Accident Research Institute (ARI).
 The streets of an ideal city should cover 25 of the city's total area. But in Dhaka, it is just eight percent, he said.
 "The number of city dwellers and private vehicles are increasing rapidly. Such low number of streets [in Dhaka] is one of the major reasons behind the tailbacks," he added.
 Currently, over 10 lakh vehicles are registered with the government for operation in Dhaka, according to the statistics of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA).

MISCONDUCT, CORRUPTION Law ministry dismisses lower court judge

ASHUTOSH SARKAR
 The law ministry yesterday dismissed a lower court judge from his service for committing misconduct and corruption.
 The ministry issued a gazette notification on the dismissal of former Jamalpur additional district judge Md Sirajul Islam, now attached to this ministry, after the president approved the decision of his dismissal.
 Law ministry sources said the Supreme Court authorities in August had decided to relieve four lower court judges, including Sirajul, of their service for their corruption, irregularities and incompetence and had asked the law ministry to implement the decision.
 The ministry then sent the relevant papers to the president at different times for his permission to issue notifications on their dismissals.

Campaigners to write to Indian PM

FROM PAGE 20
 Being jointly implemented by Bangladesh and India some 14 kilometres off the Sundarbans, the project has drawn widespread criticism and protest from different quarters at home and abroad.
 Recently, the United Nations Organisation for Education, Science and Culture (Unesco) urged the government to relocate the plant to a "more suitable location" where it would not have a negative impact on the Sundarbans.
 Expressing concerns, the UN body said the World Heritage Site and its biodiversity will be dangerously affected if the thermal power plant is built at Rampal.
 It also requested the government to conduct a revised Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) before going ahead with the plant.
 Prof Anu said they wrote an "open letter" to Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 28 but did not get any positive response from the government.

"India is the main partner in the project. For this, we felt it necessary to announce a programme addressing the Indian government," he said, explaining the reasons behind the plan to write to the Indian prime minister.
 If the Sundarbans on Bangladesh part is damaged, the other part in India will also be affected, he added.
 The campaigner further said India's state-run energy conglomerate National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), Exim Bank, construction company BHEL and coal supplier Coal India are playing vital roles in the project and they will be benefited at the cost of the Sundarbans.
 On NTPC, he said there were protests against the company for causing pollution and breaching promises, and several of its proposals were rejected by the environment ministry and the green tribunal of India.
 Sri Lanka last month announced cancellation of an agreement signed

with NTPC to build a coal-based plant in its coastal area.
 The Rampal project is a joint venture between NTPC and Bangladesh Power Development Board.
 Prof Anu alleged that the government, being defeated in terms of scientific information and logic, is now using force to serve the interest of some foreign and local quarters, and to destroy the Sundarbans.
 The government has used police, administration and Chhatra League to obstruct several programmes, including a cycle procession, in different parts of the country recently, he alleged.
 On September 30, Chhatra League activists scuffled with demonstrators who had organised a cycle procession protesting against the power plant. At one stage, police fired water cannons to disperse the protesters.
 About the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) project in Pabna, Prof Anu said the government is pushing the country towards

a grave danger with the project which is supposed to be implemented incurring a huge debt.
 Referring to media reports, he said the government has signed agreement with Russia to build the nuke plant without specific provision about disposal and treatment of radioactive waste. "It's a dangerous project; we are protesting against it and have already given an alternative proposal."
 Sheikh Muhammad Shahidullah, convener of the committee, said there is a conspiracy to hand over the country's gas resources to foreign companies, instead of empowering Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company (Bapex).
 Prof Anu said they will hold rallies with divisional representatives from October 13 and will arrange other programmes ahead of the Dhaka March programme scheduled to be held on November 24-26.

Ex-army officer found dead in Mohakhali

Suspect house help on the run
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 A retired brigadier general of Bangladesh Army was killed allegedly by his house help in a Mohakhali flat on Wednesday.
 Widowed Brig Gen (ret'd) Wajih Ahmed Chowdhury, 76, was a father of two.
 Accusing house help Abdul Ahad, 35, a murder case has been filed yesterday with Kafrul Police Station.
 Family members alleged that Ahad, who is now on the run, made off with a few valuables, including a laptop, a mobile phone and a TV set, from the flat.
 Wajih was living with his younger son Fuad Ahmed Chowdhury at the flat on the second floor of a five-storey building in Mohakhali DOHS area. Wajih's elder son lives in the US.

Focus on free trade zone

FROM PAGE 1
 re-export operations."
 At present, Bangladesh has no agreement on free trade zones with any country.
 Details of any of the agreements to be signed could not be known, but officials said areas of cooperation will be pinpointed for enhancing trade and investment. The cooperation plan will have a roadmap for increasing Chinese investment in Bangladesh and setting up joint venture companies.
 In Anwara of Chittagong, already some 784 acres of land have been acquired for setting up a special economic zone for Chinese investors.
 China Harbour and Engineering Company and the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEZA) have signed an MoU for developing the special economic zone, and the Chinese company has already started development work there.
 The BEZA has sought \$280 million in soft loan from China for developing the zone, and a preliminary agreement on the loan is likely to be inked during the Chinese president's visit.
 BEZA Executive Chairman Paban Chowdhury said a special joint venture would be formed for running the zone.
 Chowdhury said a proposal had been sent to the government to arrange for the inauguration of the zone during Jinping's visit. He expressed hope that it will be opened by the Chinese president.
 A five-year MoU will be signed for a project to help Bangladesh mitigate disaster risks. The Chinese government may provide \$500 million for the project. But it has not been decided yet whether it would be a grant or a loan, officials said.
 Another agreement is expected to be signed for construction of three bridges with Chinese soft loan.
 The Chinese embassy in Dhaka has already sought to know the names of the three bridges and the estimated cost. So far, eight bridges have been constructed in Bangladesh with

EXPECTED MoUS AND DEALS TO BE SIGNED
Energy cooperation
Telecommunication technology cooperation
Strengthening investment on production capacity cooperation
Special assistance project for disaster management and reduction
Special assistance projects of bridge construction
Loan framework agreement for Dasherbandi Sewerage Treatment Plant

Chinese funding.
 Besides, separate agreements might be signed on cooperation in energy and telecommunication sectors.
 Since taking office in 2009, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited China twice, the last time in June 2014. After that Bangladesh sent lists of dozens of projects to the Chinese government for soft loan. The Chinese side also gave verbal commitment for giving assistance amounting to \$10 billion to \$30 billion. But there has not been any written response.
 In August this year, Finance Minister AMA Muhith in a letter to the Chinese ambassador in Dhaka mentioned several lists on various projects and wanted to know Beijing's view on them.
 "We would like first to know which of these projects are likely to be considered by you. This is very important because some of these projects have also been referred to other development partners for preliminary consideration," Muhith said in the letter.
 During the Chinese president's visit, Bangladesh expects to land pledges worth billions of dollars from him and have already got indication to this effect from the Chinese side, said

the finance ministry official.
 The official also said a package MoU might be signed about the projects that will get finance from China in the next five years. The Chinese side had sent a wish list from among the list of projects earlier sent by Bangladesh.
 Bangladesh has received commitments about some of the projects from several other development partners.
 Last month, the finance ministry again sent a revised list of 27 projects to the Chinese embassy. Besides, various line ministries sent lists of projects to the PMO for approval.
 The list of the projects will be finalised after talks with the Chinese government.
 Negotiations over three projects, including one for building a tunnel in the Karnaphuli river, are at final stage, and the two sides are expected to sign loan agreements on them during the Chinese president's visit.

Woman turns

FROM PAGE 20
 After Jahangir went to sleep, Khodeza took out a sheet and hit in Jahangir's neck around 5:00am. Then she wrapped his body in a mattress, said OC Iftekhhar.
 In the morning, Khodeza locked the house and left home with her sons. Around 11:00pm on Wednesday, she along with her two sons showed up at the police station and informed police about the incident, he added.
 "I killed my husband and I will accept whatever you [police] decide," Sub-Inspector Rehana Akter of the police station quoted Khodeza as saying.
 Police recovered Jahangir's body around 2:00am yesterday and sent it to Chittagong Medical College morgue, the police official added.
 Quoting locals, Mohammad Nazimuddin, chairman of Bhatiari Union Parishad, said the couple used to quarrel frequently.
 Mosaddek Ali, Jahangir's paternal cousin, filed a case with Bhatiari Police Station accusing Khodeza.

Leash on NGOs

FROM PAGE 1
 constitutional institution is considered as a criminal offence, there would be no democracy for which they had fought the 1971 Liberation War.
 She said they would sit in a day or two and decide what to do next.
 Eminent jurist Shahdeen Malik said the provision conflicts with the fundamental right to freedom of expression.
 "It also indicates intolerance to critical opinions. It is not conducive to democracy and democratic rights of the people," he told The Daily Star.
 Supreme Court lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua, who works on human rights and freedom of speech, termed the provision completely irrelevant to this bill. "If the bill is challenged at court, I think it would be cancelled."
 He said inclusion of the provision in the bill shows the government is "intolerant", and that is why it is making this type of "oppressive law".
 The lawyer also said the constitution has been amended 16 times and it would require further amendments in the future for the betterment of the people.
 "If you cannot talk or criticise, how will amendments be brought to the constitution in the future," he asked.
 The bill should have focused on ensuring transparency of the use of foreign donations for NGOs and checking terror financing, added the lawyer.
 Dr Iftekhharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), said, "If making a comment becomes a criminal offence, this is a very bad example of law."
 "This is very risky for Bangladesh's democracy and its future. It is also in conflict with the country's constitution."

"We don't know whether there is such restriction on freedom of speech anywhere in the world. It is frustrating," said the TIB executive director.
 He said the Jatiya Sangsad passed the bill unanimously without involving them at the final stage of its preparation.
 "The government had engaged us in preparing the contents of the bill. We had concerns over some provisions and the government assured us of addressing those. We expected that the government would engage us again before finalising it. But in the end, the government didn't do so which is very disappointing."
 Describing the constitutional institutions as people's organisations, he said how it would be possible to increase efficiency and transparency of these organisations if restrictions are imposed on making statements on those.
 Badiul Alam Majumdar, secretary of Shushasoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan), said the new law would tarnish Bangladesh's image in the international arena and would bring no good to anyone.
 "We communicated this to the government before the passage of the bill and urged it not to include the provision. But the important people in the government were rigid."
 "It was not expected. It [the bill] is not a positive thing for the nation," said the official of the civil society platform working for good governance.
 During the bill's passage, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, who moved it in the House, said, "There was a time when we tolerated many things of NGOs. If they spend 25 percent [of foreign funds] and gobble up the rest, we can't stay silent."
 The bill is aimed at empowering the NGO bureau to inspect, monitor

and assess activities of NGOs.
 The original bill placed in parliament in September last year didn't have the controversial provision.
 But a parliament watch report by the TIB and its executive director's remarks on the role of the main opposition in the House in October last year irked lawmakers, who demanded punitive action against the TIB.
 In its report, the anti-graft watchdog pointed out a "low-level of participation" of MPs in lawmaking, question-answer sessions and discussions on important issues in the current parliament.
 The TIB also called the Jatiya Party "so-called opposition" in parliament and said it was rather working as "B-team of the government".
 Replying to a query, TIB Executive Director Iftekhharuzzaman at that time termed the main opposition's role "puppet show."
 During the bill's scrutiny, the parliamentary standing committee on the law ministry picked the issue and said it would propose inclusion of a punitive provision in the bill for making derogatory remarks on the constitution and constitutional bodies.
 After the committee disclosed its proposal on May 18 this year, Shujan President M Hafiz Uddin Khan, said this would be a "black law", formulation of which reflected the government's "dictatorial" attitude.
 "No organisation which works as watchdog on parliament and other constitutional bodies will be able to do its job in fear of action if the proposed law is passed in parliament keeping such provision," he said.
 "It is clear that the government's aim is to gag those watchdog bodies so that they cannot criticise it," added Hafiz Uddin, also former adviser to a caretaker government.