



Dust threatens public health

Construction work by pvt, govt agencies creating heavy dust in the city; authorities doing little

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

Mominul Haque has been suffering from obesity, so doctors advised him at least an hour's walk every day. But he can't go for that must-do exercise.

The banker is also allergic to dust, and much of the capital's Gulshan, where he lives, is covered with thick dust these days. So he is skipping his walk and, as a result, his weight gain continues.

"I feel irritation in my nose and start sneezing incessantly when exposed to dust," said Mominul, 45.

Like him, lakhs of city dwellers, including many with lung and allergy problems, have to negotiate such thick dust as they go about their daily business, thanks to massive construction work by private companies, government agencies, two city corporations and Wasa.

City and project officials claim they regularly spray water to stop dust from flying, but evidence suggests otherwise.

In many parts of the city, people moving with their faces and noses covered with scarves or bare hands is a common sight as hovering dust clouds vision.

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IT'S NOT FOG ... A cloud of dust shrouds the DIT Road near Malibagh Level Crossing. The construction of a flyover there and the authorities not bothering to spray water to minimise the dust is making locals and city dwellers, who use the road, suffer. *Inset*, a woman crossing the street covering her mouth. The photos were taken on Saturday.



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

EC must be competent, courageous

Civil society members meet search panel today to give suggestions

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

A group of civil society members would ask the search committee to pick competent, impartial and courageous people for constituting the five-member Election Commission.

The Daily Star yesterday talked to 10 of the 12 civil society members with whom the search panel exchanges views at Supreme Court Judges' Lounge at 4:00pm today.

Some of them said they would give written proposals to the committee while others said they would urge the panel to work out a set of criteria for picking the right persons for the next EC.

Of the 12, former election commissioner Sohul Hussain said he would share with the committee his five years' experience as a commissioner.

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EC FORMATION
BNP to send
in 5 names
by tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP has decided to propose five names to the search committee by tomorrow as requested.

The decision came at a standing committee meeting with party chief Khaleda Zia in the chair at her Gulshan office yesterday, a senior BNP leader told the Daily Star.

Khaleda asked her party

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Fingers crossed for Bajandar

'Tree man' now looks good; if he's fully cured, it'd be a milestone in medical science

SHAHEEN MOLLA and MUNTAKIM SAAD

Abul Bajandar, dubbed the "tree man" because of branch-like warts growing on his hands and legs, is happy as doctors are hopeful of curing his extremely rare skin disorder.

Almost all the warts have been removed and those have not reappeared.

Bajandar, 27, had 18 surgeries after his admission to the burn and plastic surgery unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital a year ago. He might need another four or five operations in the next two months.

The man from Khulna has been suffering from epidermodysplasia verruciformis, a

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PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Bajandar waves sitting on his hospital bed on Saturday. He underwent several surgeries to remove warts, *inset*, from his hands.

FERTILISER SCAM Probe body formed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Industries yesterday formed a probe committee to investigate corruption and anomalies in the urea fertiliser transportation and distribution system following a series of reports published by The Daily Star in the last few days.

Industries Minister Amir Hossain Amu formed the three-member committee at a meeting with top officials of the ministry.

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PM'S COMMENTS IN JS Yunus Centre responds

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina responded to some questions raised by the members of parliament during the PM's question hour. Those answers were reported by different newspapers the following day. In reference to some of the prime minister's comments made during the JS session, the Yunus Centre has sent the following 'rejoinder'.

Here is what the Yunus Centre says:

Many of these accusations have been made

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