



Paying more troublesome

1.3 lakh prepaid power consumers in Ctg have to endure hassles to top up their meters

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

The pre-paid metering system is causing hassles for almost 1,30,000 clients of Chittagong's Power Development Board (PDB). Absence of re-fill booths and repeated crashing of the central server system is proving to be a headache.

The simple task of topping up their meter-accounts, requires people to go down to the respective divisional offices of PDB. Many of them said that they have to stand in hour-long queues to refill their accounts.

Furthermore, according to consumers, sometimes the central server system remains down and they cannot refill their meter-accounts for hours. During that time, their houses, offices or other establishments remain in the dark in absence of electricity.

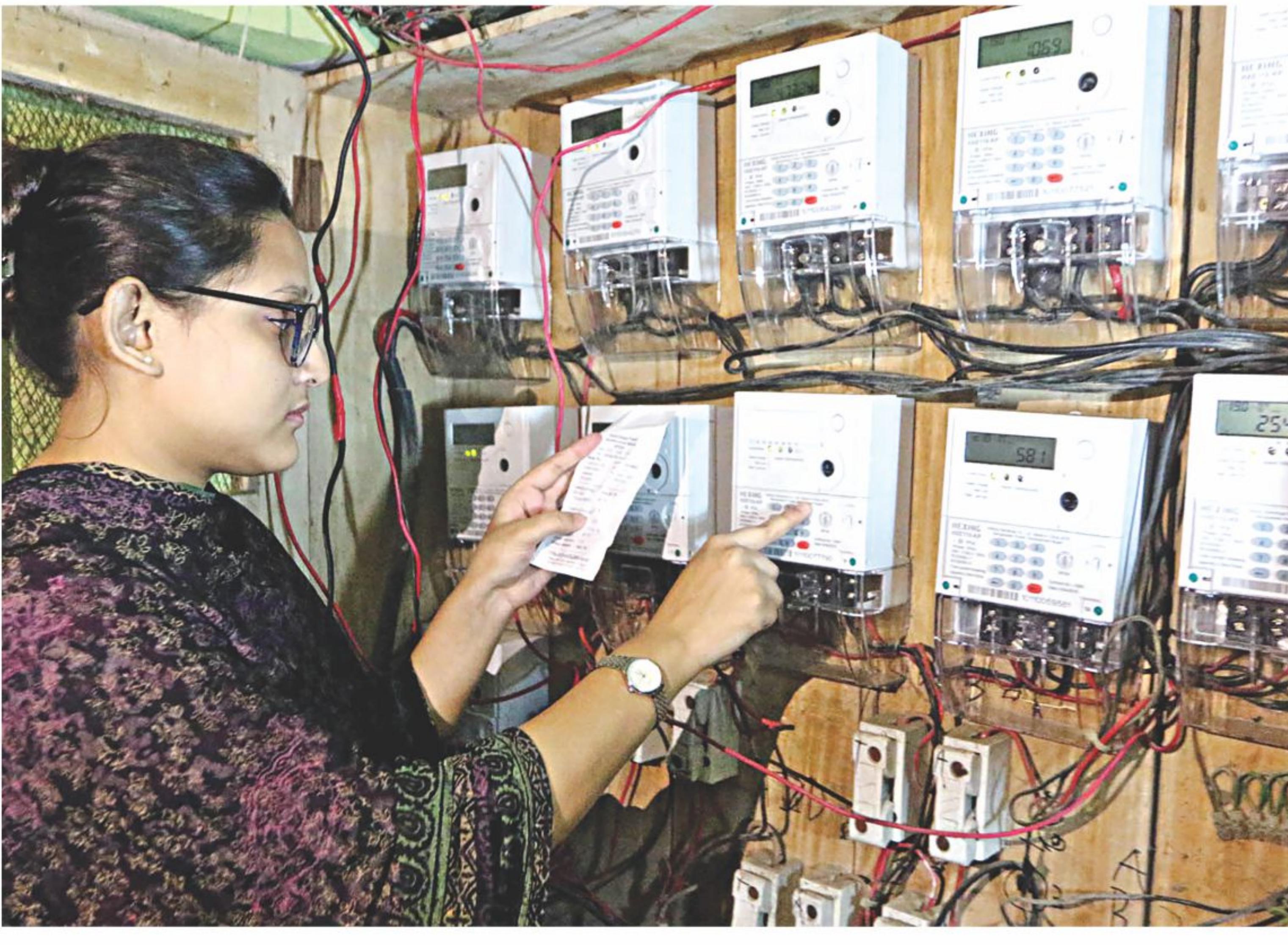
Recently, four divisions of Chittagong's Power Development Board (PDB) were brought under the pre-paid metering system.

Several hundred consumers of Stadium division of PDB, Chittagong had to face this very situation on September 13 for around seven hours as they could not refill their accounts due to a server problem.

Timir Chowdhury, a resident of Chittagong city's Jamal Khan Road area, said he had to wait for around two hours in MA Aziz Stadium's PDB office to refill his pre-paid meter-account on the day.

"I had to stand in queue with over a hundred people," he said, adding, "The PDB officials said they could not refill the

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A woman tops up her pre-paid meter. Users of pre-paid meter in Chittagong are facing various problems due to the absence of re-fill booths and crashing of the central server system.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

7 killed as buses collide in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Seven people were killed and 25 others injured as two buses collided head-on at Bohalbaria in Santhia upazila on Dhaka-Pabna highway yesterday.

The accident took place around 12:30pm when a bus heading for Pabna collided with another bus coming from the opposite direction at Bohalbaria on the highway, said Anwarul Islam, officer-in-charge of Madhupur Highway Police Station.

"Both drivers were driving recklessly. The accident happened as both of them lost control," he said.

Three of the victims could be identified. They are: Ayat Ali Biswas, 50, Abul Kalam, 37, and Ripon Hossain, 45, the driver of one of the buses.

Five people died on the spot. Among the injured taken to Pabna General Hospital, two died. A number of the injured were in critical condition.

Traffic on the highway was halted. Vehicular movement on the highway was restored around 3:00pm yesterday.

Former MP's gunman killed 'while cleaning his own gun'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Gunman Asgar Khan of a former lawmaker who was bullet-hit while cleaning his shotgun on Saturday died at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital early yesterday.

Asgar, 45, a retired army person, was serving as the gunman of advocate Reza Ali, ex-MP of Mymensingh-7, for two years. He hailed from Bagerhat sadar upazila.

He suffered bullet wounds in his abdomen when he was cleaning his licensed shotgun at Reza Ali's house in Dhanikhola area of Trishal around 8:00am, said Md Jakir Rahman, officer-in-charge of Trishal police.

On information, police arrived on the scene and sent Asgar to MMCH. He was later shifted to the Intensive Care Unit as his condition deteriorated. He died there around 12:30am yesterday, said the OC.

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Protesters wave Spanish and Catalan Senyera flags during a pro-unity demonstration in Barcelona yesterday.

Huge rally for unified Spain

Parties opposing Catalonia's split have small lead in opinion poll

REUTERS, Barcelona

Hundreds of thousands of supporters of a unified Spain filled Barcelona's streets yesterday in one of the biggest shows of force yet by the so-called silent majority that has watched as regional political leaders push for Catalan independence.

Political parties opposing a split by Catalonia from Spain had a small lead in an opinion poll published yesterday, the first since Madrid called a regional election to try to resolve the country's worst political crisis in four decades.

Polls and recent elections have shown that about half the electorate in the wealthy northeastern region, which is already autonomous, oppose secession from Spain, but a vocal independence movement has brought the current crisis to a head.

Spain's central government called an election for Dec 21 on Friday after sacking Catalonia's president Carles Puigdemont, dissolving its parliament and dismissing its government. That followed the assembly's unilateral declaration of independence in a vote boycotted by three national parties.

The regional government claimed it had a mandate to push ahead with independence following an unofficial referendum on Oct 1 which was ruled illegal under Spanish law and mostly boycotted by unionists.

Waving thousands of Spanish flags and singing "Viva España", protesters yesterday turned out in the largest display of support for a united Spain since the beginning of the crisis -- underlining the depth of division in Catalonia itself.

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Man dies in police custody

Family claims he was beaten to death at DB office

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A man was beaten to death in police custody in Rangpur yesterday, alleged his family members.

The victim, Sohel Rana alias Russell, 26, was the son of Ruhul Amin of Haldiri village under Kauna upazila.

He died around 10:00am at Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH).

Denying the allegation of torture, police claimed that Sohel was a drug smuggler and also an addict and was accused in different drug peddling cases filed with different police stations in Rangpur and Lalmonirhat.

They said detectives, led by Sub-Inspector Babul Islam, picked up Sohel in front of China Cinema Hall in Satmatha area around 10:00pm Saturday and took him to district DB office.

As he fell sick there, the police sent him to the

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Ex-secy's wife 'kills herself'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday recovered the bullet-hit body of a former secretary's wife from a hospital on Panthapath.

Family members claimed that Mahbub Sufia Khatun, 45, wife of Mahmud Reza Khan, former secretary of the liberation war affairs ministry, committed suicide at her Indira Road home in the afternoon.

GG Biswas, officer-in-charge of Sher-e-Bangla

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The great British cake off!

Queen to receive recreation of her 9ft wedding cake



MAIL ONLINE

The Queen is to receive a recreation of her enormous wedding cake to celebrate her 70th anniversary with Prince Philip.

Patisserie chefs at Le Cordon Bleu have spent months preparing the 9ft-tall, 500lb cake which will feature in a documentary to be screened tomorrow.

The massive creation contains 700 eggs and

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SIBL Foundation Hospital & Diagnostic Center

PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 30

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4-50 12-45 4-00 5-32 7-15

JAMAT 5-25 1-15 4-15 5-35 7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION