AFFILIATION WITH 7 COLLEGES

DU students block Shahbagh again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) students yesterday blocked the Shahbagh intersection for the second consecutive day to press home their four-point demand, including cancellation of seven colleges' affiliation with the institution.

About 500 students blocked the intersection around noon, causing severe traffic congestion in the area and called off the demo at 2pm with an announcement to boycott all classes and examinations from Sunday until their demands are met.

DU students alleged that the university's academic and administrative activities slowed down due to the affiliation with the seven colleges. "We will continue our demo until the university authorities formally take initiative to fulfill our demands," said Shakil Bhuyan, a 4th year student of Management department.

Earlier, the two-hour-long protest in the intersection halted vehicular movement in adjacent streets, including New Market to Matsya Bhaban and Shahbagh to Farmgate -- causing miseries for commuters. Many were seen walking to their destinations.

"I've been waiting here [Matsya Bhaban] for over an hour and I have to go to BIRDEM. I have an appointment with a doctor," said Anabil Saha, a resident of Demra. He was seen walking towards the hospital around 1:30pm.

Other demands of the students include publishing

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Dhaka University students blocked Shahbagh intersection for the second consecutive day, *left*. The blockade created long tailbacks, *bottom-right*, but youngsters took advantage of the empty road on DU campus to play a friendly game of football.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Poor pay more for water

Says BracU study on water governance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The capital's slum dwellers with access to official water supply consume 3.5 times less water than that of the affluent people though they all pay the same price, found a study of Brac Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD).

Slum dwellers and other informal settlers pay at least seven times higher for inadequate water than the official rate of Tk 11 per thousand litres, said Mohammad Sirajul Islam, head of BIGD's state of cities programme, while presenting the study findings at Brac Centre yesterday.

Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) provides water to 6.5 lakhs or at best 16 percent of the city's informal settlements, he said citing the study on water governance in the capital.

While the affluent living in areas like Gulshan and Banani consume an average of 310-litre water per person daily, a slum dweller uses an average of 85 litres. The standard requirement is 150 litres per person, Sirajul Islam said.

Based on affordability, per capita water consumption increases with higher income far beyond standard actual need. It means, there is a serious concern of inefficient water consumption and waste, thanks to inadequate water governance, he added.

That apart, 10 families in a building with a common water meter, for example, pay equal share though all the families do not consume the same amount. It also leads to waste of water, as there is no reward for saving water, said Sirajul Islam.

Despite the ever-depleting groundwater table in Dhaka and pollution of surface water sources, Wasa still depends on mining groundwater (78 percent) and the rest on purified surface water for its total daily production.

Though Wasa has undertaken three capital-intensive surface water treatment projects since 2010, it has simultaneously increased installing deep tube wells by 38 percent.

So, safe water management in Dhaka is in a deplorable state with highly inefficient water consumption, excessive dependence on groundwater and fast disappearing retention areas, found the study.

The Detailed Area Plan of Dhaka in 2010 identified 5,523 acres of conservable water retention areas that came down to 1,744 acres in 2017, according to a Rajuk finding, the study cited.

The study recommended household water management with individual metered water connection for rational consumption, harvesting rainwater, reusing water and putting an end to contaminating available river water.

Dhaka Wasa Managing Director Taqsem A Khan said according to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, there are one million slum dwellers in the capital. But, Taqsem said,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Insecticides ineffective on mosquitoes: icddr,b

City corporations to monitor effectiveness of chemicals used

HELEMUL ALAM

Amid a concerning rise in dengue cases in Dhaka, both its city corporations have decided to monitor the effectiveness of its insecticide, as the current stock was found to be ineffective in killing mosquitoes.

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) formed a 10-member technical committee -- headed by its Mayor Atiqul Islam -- on July 15 to examine the adulticide (substance to kill adult mosquitoes) they are using, said an official.

DNCC took the measure following findings of an icddr,b research, which said the insecticides sprayed by Dhaka city corporations have no effect on adult mosquitoes, as they have become resistant to permethrin (a major chemical component of the insecticide).

Other members of the DNCC committee include representatives of Communicable Disease Control (CDC) of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS); International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research (icddr,b); Plant Protection Wing of Department of Agricultural Extension; Prof Kabirul Basar of Jahangirnagar University; President of Bangladesh Crop Protection Association AK Azad and entomologist Dr Manzur Ahmed Chowdhury.

The decision came at a recent meeting with all stakeholders at DNCC Nagar Bhaban, said Mominur Rahman Mamun, chief health officer of DNCC.

At the meeting, experts suggested increasing the density of the adulticide currently in use, until new pesticide is purchased.

The icddr,b findings were presented at a meeting of the two city corporations in May.

Funded by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, researchers collected egg samples of Aedes Aegypti and Culex mosquitoes between September 2017 and April 2018 from different areas of the city, and grew the mosquitoes in laboratory.

Researchers then conducted tests on the mosquitoes in line with World Health Organization rules, said an icddr,b official.

If the death rate of mosquitoes during a certain period when insecticide is used is below 90 percent, they are assumed to have gained resistance to the insecticide, he said, referring to WHO protocol.

"We've observed that the death rate is very low," he said.

For a decade, city corporation authorities have been using 0.5 percent permethrin, 0.2 percent tetramethrin and up to 0.2 percent allethrin per litre of kerosene, and applying the mix through fogging machines to kill mosquitoes.

The icddr,b researchers have suggested using malathion and deltamethrin instead of permethrin.

According to the control room of DGHS, 5,546 people were infected with dengue and five have died across the country since January 1. Majority of the cases are in Dhaka.

MM Aktaruzzaman, manager of the malaria and Aedes-transmitted diseases programme at DGHS, said they definitely have to look for an alternative pesticide.

Contacted, Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sayeed Khokon said they will arrange a meeting with Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) that selects pesticides for city corporations.

"If the adulticide in use is ineffective, they will have to prescribe which pesticide DSCC should use," he said.

Different issues like environment and health are considered when selecting a pesticide, he added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

ACCIDENT AT SIRAJGANJ LEVEL CROSSING

Petition seeks Tk 1cr compensation for each victim family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A rights organisation yesterday filed a writ petition with the High Court, seeking its directives on the government to give Tk 1 crore as compensation to each family of 11 victims who died in an accident at a Sirajganj level crossing four days ago.

Eleven people -- including a newly married couple -- were killed when a Dhaka-bound train rammed their microbus in Ullapara on July 15.

Law and Life Foundation, in its petition, also requested the HC to order the government to give Tk 10 lakh in compensation to each of the injured passengers.

Citing the petition, the petitioner's lawyer Barrister Humayun Kabir Pallab told The Daily Star that the accident took place due to negligence of the government officials who are responsible for ensuring safety at the level crossing.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

DHAKA TODAY

FAIR
Brikkho Mela
Venue: National Parade Ground
Time: 10am-8pm

EXPOSITION
BIID Expo and Dialogue
An event for clean and efficient electronics.
Venue: Bangabandhu International Conference Centre
Time: 10am-8pm

SESSION
Career Talk by Filmmaker Giasuddin Selim
Venue: Pathshala, Dhanmondi 15/A
Time: 5pm

FAIR
Gulshan Eid Carnival
Organiser: Manvik Events
Venue: Khazana Gardenia Grand Hall, Gulshan 2
Time: 10am

Sohel Taj announces lifestyle reality show

PHOTO: STAR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

He has been building up to it for a few months now.

Tanjim Ahmad Sohel Taj, son of Bangladesh's first prime minister Tajuddin Ahmad and a former state minister for home affairs, yesterday launched a lifestyle-based television reality show to be hosted by him, ending all speculations about a cryptic video clip he posted on social media.

The 12-episode show, titled "Hotline Commando", will be aired on private television channel Rtv starting in September.

Announcing the show at a jam-packed press conference at a city hotel, Sohel Taj said the "Hotline Commando" team will go door to door asking people of their social, health and diet-related issues, and give expert suggestions.

"We will not be able to build 'Sonar Bangla' if people do not stay fit,"Sohel Taj told the press conference.

Sharing his motivation for coming up with the initiative, Sohel said he has received a lot of love, affection and respect from people, and the show is his way of paying back.

Asked whether he will join politics again, Sohel Taj said at present there is no scope for him to become active in politics.

"If the society and people are not prepared, how will you do politics? We will get solutions of various problems if we can develop the society and its people. May be this is my way of doing politics," he added.

Sohel was made a state minister for home affairs in Sheikh Hasina's 2009 cabinet but resigned from the post less than six months into taking oath.

He also resigned as lawmaker on April 23, 2012, and declared that he would no longer be actively involved in politics.

He has been living in Maryland, USA, with his family until recently.

A few months ago on his verified Facebook page, he posted a video teaser that said, "Sohel Taj is coming to you. Are you ready?"

"I could knock at your door -- whether you are staying in a village or town, Teknaf to Tetulia, Europe to America, Middle East to Asia."

Speculation surfaced among people and media that Sohel Taj, who has refrained from politics since 2012, may come up with a new political or social initiative.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

'We just want him back'

Says father of N'ganj student missing for over a month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than a month has gone by since Mishuk Khan, a student from Narayanganj, went traceless, said family members.

They demanded Mishuk's safe return and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's intervention in this regard at a press conference at Crime Reporters' Association yesterday.

The 19-year-old student of Narayanganj Polytechnic Institute has been missing since May 29.

The family said his phone was found switched off on that day after he saw his sister off at Shimrail bus stand on Dhaka-Chattogram highway.

At yesterday's press conference, Mishuk's father Humayun Kabir said, "We're very worried... We just want our son back."

Humayun said they searched every possible place and went to police and Rab but to no avail. "If he is detained by law enforcers for any crime, he should be produced before a court. Otherwise, please release my son," he pleaded.

Apart from Humayun, his wife Rafeza Begum and daughter Sumaiya Akter Ruma were present at the press conference.