

Wasa pushes for area-wise water tariff

Posh neighbourhoods to pay more, people of low-income group less

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Wasa yesterday proposed resetting its tariffs such that low-income people can get water at a much lower rate than the wealthy.

Currently, residential users pay Tk 15.18 for every 1,000 litres (one unit) of water and commercial users Tk 42 – against Wasa's production cost of Tk 25-26 per unit.

Following a technical study in collaboration with Water Aid, Wasa is now proposing splitting the capital into 10 zones, with each zone having a separate tariff.

Wasa proposed Tk 37.50 per unit of water for households in upscale residential areas, Tk 31.25 for those in upper-middle-class neighbourhoods and Tk 25 for those in middle-class residential areas.

For lower middle-class areas, the

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How will we live without the sole breadwinner?

Says wife of Salam who died 'after police assault'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

After her husband's sudden death, Jamuna Begum is left hopeless.

Abdus Salam Sheikh, a ticket-counter staffer for K-Line Paribahan in Jashore's Chowgachha, died after a police official kicked him repeatedly in the chest.

The incident occurred when a bus passenger filed a police complaint against Salam after engaging in an altercation with him at the counter.

Aliar Rahman, a witness, said Salam fell sick after sub-inspector Jamal Uddin, of Nakol Police Camp, came to the spot and assaulted him.

Salam died on the way to Magura Sadar Hospital.

"How will we survive without the sole bread earner of the family? I want justice for my husband's murder," said Jumuna.

Salam's son Rifat Hossain said the family will file a case after getting the autopsy report.

The victim's elder brother Berek Sheikh claimed his brother did not have any previous illness.

"Such a trivial matter could have been resolved without the loss of my brother's life. We demand exemplary punishment to those who killed him."

Salam was buried at their family graveyard yesterday evening.

Russia preparing for next stage of offensive

Says Ukraine; EU mulls fresh sanctions against Russia

AGENCIES

Russia is preparing for the next stage of its offensive in Ukraine, a Ukrainian military official said, after Moscow said its forces would step up military operations in "all operational areas".

As Western deliveries of long-range arms begin to help Ukraine on the battlefield, Russian rockets and missiles have pounded cities in strikes that Kyiv says have killed dozens in recent days.

"It is not only missile strikes from the air and sea," Vadym Skibitskyi, a spokesman for Ukrainian military intelligence, said. "We can see shelling along the entire line of contact, along the entire front line. There is an active use of tactical aviation and attack helicopters."

"Clearly preparations are now underway for the next stage of the offensive."

With the conflict grinding on and increasingly spilling out into global energy and food crises, the EU's foreign ministers are considering banning gold purchases from Russia, which would align with sanctions already imposed by G7 partners.

More Russian figures could also be placed on the EU's blacklist. "Moscow must continue to pay a high price for

its aggression," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said after forwarding the proposed measures.

Brussels was expected to hold initial sanctions discussions yesterday, but not make a same-day decision, according to a senior EU official.

The Ukrainian military said Russia appeared to be regrouping units for an offensive toward Sloviansk.

The Ukrainian military said Russia appeared to be regrouping units for an offensive toward Sloviansk, a symbolically important city held by Ukraine in the eastern region of Donetsk.

The British defence ministry said yesterday that Russia was also reinforcing defences across areas it occupies in southern Ukraine after pressure from Ukrainian forces and pledges from Ukrainian leaders to force Russia out.

Ukraine says at least 40 people have been killed in Russian shelling of urban areas since Thursday.

Dozens of relatives and local residents

attended the funeral of 4-year-old Liza Dmytrieva in the central Ukrainian city of Vinnytsia yesterday. The girl was killed in a missile strike on central Vinnytsia on Thursday that killed 24 people, reports Reuters.

Rockets hit the northeastern town of Chuhuiv in Kharkiv region on Friday night, killing three people including a 70-year-old woman and wounding three others, said regional Governor Oleh Synehubov.

To the south, more than 50 Russian Grad rockets pounded the city of Nikopol on the Dnipro River, killing two people who were found in the rubble, said Governor Valentyn Reznichenko.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Russia was continuing to sow grief and death on Ukrainian soil eight years on from the shooting down of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 over eastern Ukraine by what international investigators have said was a Russian surface-to-air missile likely fired by Russian-backed militia in the region.

"But nothing will go unpunished!" he said. "Every criminal will be brought to justice!"



This handout picture released by Ukraine Emergency Service yesterday shows firefighters putting out the fire on a wheat field burned as a result of shelling in Mykolaiv region, amid Russian military invasion of Ukraine.

PHOTO: AFP

GATCO CASE

Hearing on charge framing against Khaleda done

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution's hearing on charges framed against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and 14 others in Gatco graft case was completed yesterday.

Mosharraf Hossain Kajol, public prosecutor of the Anti-Corruption Commission, said the charges brought against Khaleda and others of misappropriating around Tk 1,000 crore were primarily proved.

Judge Muhammad Ali Hussain of the Special Judge's Court-3 of Dhaka then fixed July 24 for holding hearing on behalf of Khaleda and others.

An application on behalf of Khaleda was submitted before the court yesterday, seeking an adjournment of the hearing, said one of her lawyers Zaynul Abedin Mesbah.

4 more Covid-19 deaths recorded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four people died from Covid-19 in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, the DGHS said in a press release.

The total number Coronavirus deaths in the country went up to 29,234, with the death rate at 1.46 percent.

The positivity rate yesterday was 11.12 percent, lower than that of Saturday – 13.70 percent. At least 900 new Covid-19 cases were recorded from 8,091 samples tested during this period. The total number of cases rose to 19,96,340.

Meanwhile, 1,983 patients have recovered from the infection, raising the number of recoveries to 19,24,960 and the recovery rate to 96.42 percent.

Of the deceased, two were male and two female – all aged between 61-90 years.

Rajbari court sends man to jail for embezzlement

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A Rajbari Court yesterday sent the CEO of e-commerce site Jeka Bazar Ltd, to jail for allegedly embezzling around Tk 60 crore, CID sources said.

Jabiullah Khan Jaber, son of Shukur Ali and resident of Kalukhali upazila, was accused in a case, filed on November 14 last year, for embezzling the money from 20,000 customers.

The Directorate of National Consumers' Rights Protection conducted a drive on November 2 in this regard after receiving complaints from customers about fake and adulterated products.

The CID arrested him from Faridpur Sadar's Alipur area on Saturday afternoon.

Fuel stocks

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Bank, Rupali Bank, Janata Bank, Agrani Bank, One Bank and Islami Bank and Eastern Bank to import fuel. But in recent times, those banks have declined to open LCs citing shortage of dollars.

"If they do agree to open LCs, they are making payments in multiple instalments, or delaying payments," the letter said. "As a result, the relations between local fuel distributors and international suppliers are being strained."

The letter stated that if the BPC failed to open adequate number of LCs, the energy security of the country will be in jeopardy.

The Daily Star tried several times to contact BPC Chairman ABM Azad, but could not reach him.

An official of a state-owned bank told The Daily Star that Bangladesh Bank was not being able to provide the banks with enough dollars.

The country's foreign exchange reserves stood at \$39.70 billion on July 14 in contrast to \$46.15 billion in December last year.

Against this backdrop, the inter-bank exchange rate of the taka yesterday stood at Tk 93.95 for a dollar yesterday, down 10.79 percent year-on-year.

Fuel prices in the international market has dropped in recent days. The latest average crude oil price in the international market is below \$100 for each barrel (about 159 litres). This was over \$115 last month. Similarly, the diesel price was \$171 on average last month, which is now below \$140.

Shooting kills four in Johannesburg suburb

AFP, Johannesburg

Gunmen opened fire on a group of men playing dice on a street corner in a Johannesburg suburb, killing four of them and injuring two others, police said yesterday.

Metro now set to cost 50pc more

FROM PAGE 1

percent till June this year, while that of the Uttara-Agargaon section, scheduled to be opened to the public on December 16 this year, is 93.76 percent.

Once completed, the metro rail will be able to carry 60,000 people per hour, bringing down the commute time between Uttara and Motijheel to around 40 minutes from the existing two hours.

It will save around Tk 3,500 crore annually in terms of travel time and vehicle operation costs, according to the metro rail authorities.

The government is implementing a time-bound action plan to build a 130km metro rail network with six lines in the capital and adjacent areas by 2030 to reduce traffic congestion and environmental pollution.

Sahapara still stalked by fear

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Many said they knew the attackers, who were residents of nearby villages. But they would not file cases against them for fear of reprisals.

"They are still facing implicit threats from the attackers," said a man, seeking anonymity.

Some of the attackers are roaming around the area with police, several others said, adding that police were present at the scene, but did nothing when the attacks happened on Friday.

They also alleged that some of the attackers were involved in the ruling

REASONS FOR REVISION

MAN Siddique said a large portion of the additional Tk 11,487 crore has been sought for acquiring land around the metro stations.

According to DMTCL officials, if the existing design is followed, commuters may face difficulties in getting in and out of the stations due to space constraints.

Taking this into account, the authorities have decided to build spacious exits and entry points as well as footpaths outside the stations, they said.

The DMTCL will have to buy land for footpaths, and most of the land around the stations is private property, they added.

As per the PM's directive, the authorities are going to extend the metro rail line up to Kamalapur from

Motijheel, and preparatory works for the extension are going on.

The length of the line will be 21.26 kilometres instead of the original 20.10 km.

As per the original plan, a walkway was supposed to connect Kamalapur – the country's biggest railway station – to Motijheel, Dhaka's commercial hub.

According to the proposal, a full-fledged station will be built at Kamalapur for the commuters' convenience, taking the total number of stops to 17.

MAN Siddique pointed out that the extension of the line is another major reason behind the revision.

Besides, the higher exchange rate of the dollar and the increase in the value-added tax and customs duty are among other reasons for the cost escalation, he added.

A court placed him on a three day remand in a case filed Friday night by a resident of Dighalia area named Kochi Sardar, said SK Abu Hena Milon, officer-in-charge of Lohagara Police Station.

He was accused of hurting religious feelings, he added.

Akash's father Ashoke Saha was detained by police on Friday night.

NHRC STATEMENT

The National Human Rights Commission in a statement yesterday urged the authorities to investigate the attacks on Hindu properties and the role of police during the mayhem.

even after weaning.

Parker and her colleagues investigated how orphaned elephants felt by measuring the quantity of hormones they release when faced with stress.

Scientists also found lower stress levels among young elephants growing up in groups with more animals of a similar age, suggesting that "playmates" are essential for them.

Social life helps orphaned

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support from the other elephants, said Jenna Parker, the main author of the study published this week in the journal Communications Biology.

The importance of family links was obvious when observing elephant herds, Parker told AFP.

The young rarely stray more than 10 metres (33 feet) away from their mother and "incredible" reunions

involving the entire group were seen after a few hours of separation, said the researcher at Colorado State University in the United States.

When poachers or hunters kill an elephant, that social cohesion disintegrates and threatens the group's wellbeing, particularly the young ones left orphaned, she said.

The bond between a baby elephant and its mother is believed to be strong