

## WATER TREATMENT PLANT

# Wasa project not paying enough dividends

HELEMUL ALAM

Three years ago, Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Dhaka Wasa) inaugurated the Padma-Jashaldia water-treatment plant to bring treated water of Padma to Dhaka.

But the plant has supplied a significantly low amount of water when its actual capacity is taken into account.

Such ambitious but under-performing projects of Wasa are one of the main reasons behind the ever-increasing burden of water tariff, according to experts.

Wasa recently proposed to increase its tariff by at least 25 percent for residential connections and by 19 percent for commercial connections.

Right now, the residential tariff is Tk 15.18 per unit (1,000 litre) and commercial tariff Tk 42.

Dhaka Wasa spent Tk 3,800 crore to build the water treatment plant, inaugurated in June 2019, to reduce dependency on groundwater.

But Wasa failed to provide water according to its actual capacity, as it has yet to set up the project's main service lines.

Wasa is officially showing the plant's water production to be around 28 crore litres per day, against its 45 crore-litre

capacity. But the actual production is one-third of the capacity, according to Wasa sources.

Although Wasa is trying to reduce dependency on groundwater and is taking initiatives to set up surface-water treatment plants, it also increased its deep tube-wells to 1,029 (including those on standby).

In 2009, that number was 560.

Wishing anonymity, an official of Wasa said that "a project to strengthen the existing water supply distribution to Dhaka City to cope with production of Padma Water Treatment Plant Phase I" — worth around Tk 523 crore — is still seeking foreign funds to build a new network of pipelines.

As per the monthly water-production report of Dhaka Wasa in May 2020, average production of the plant was 148 million litres per day (mld).

But the November 2021 report showed 270 mld, although it did not significantly improve distribution lines within this period.

The plant's capacity is 450 mld.

According to experts, the diameter of the pipeline that starts from Jashaldia treatment plant and ends in Old Dhaka, is 2,000 millimetres. But the line is then

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Ambulances are always parked in a line in front of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University. The already narrow road gets even narrower due to this, making it harder for pedestrians, ambulances carrying patients and other vehicles to go through the road. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Another hike?

Dhaka Wasa proposes to increase tariff by up to 25pc yet again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

When Dhaka residents are already burdened with hikes of fuel, essentials and transport fare, Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Dhaka Wasa) recently proposed to hike water tariff by 25 percent for residential connections and 19 percent for commercial ones.

The proposal is now waiting for the approval of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives.

On July 7, the Wasa board approved a 5 percent tariff hike, which will be effective from September 1. But Wasa has again submitted a proposal to the ministry for another hike a few days back.

According to the proposal, water tariff would be Tk 19 per unit (1000 litres) for residential connection and Tk 50 per unit for commercial ones.

Right now, the residential tariff is Tk 15.18 per unit and commercial tariff Tk 42.

An official of Local Government Division said Wasa has submitted a proposal to the ministry. "After considering all aspects of the proposal, we will send it to the prime minister to get the final approval," he said.

Only the 5 percent hike would take residential tariff to Tk 15.93 and commercial tariff Tk 44.10.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

# 'Why protect money-launderers?'

Political parties urge govt to withdraw 'anti-people' decision to hike fuel price

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political parties yesterday came down heavily on the government for the recent record hike of fuel prices. They also raised the question as to why the government does not want to reveal the names of those who laundered money to the Swiss Bank.

Addressing a programme in the capital, Jatiya Party chairman and opposition leader GM Quader said the government has completely failed in running the country.

"Increasing the price of oil has increased the suffering of people, which the government could have avoided by adjusting the profit earned from fuel," said GM Quader at the programme at the JP chairman's office in the capital's Banani.

Quader demanded that the government withdraw the "anti-people" decision immediately.

The JP chairman also said last year around Tk 4 lakh crore was deposited to Swiss Bank from Bangladesh, which has been smuggled to America, Canada, Thailand, Singapore and other countries.

He also mentioned that the Swiss Bank is ready to give



PHOTO: STAR

information to the government if the latter wants to know about the depositors.

"But the government is not asking for the information. Because those who were involved are running the country with them," he also said.

Meanwhile, "Gonotantro Mancha" — a newly floated alliance comprising seven political parties — yesterday at a rally in front of Jatiya Press Club asked why the government does not want to reveal the names of those involved in the Swiss Bank

money laundering, strongly criticising the government's stance on money launderers.

Components in the Gonotantro Mancha are Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), Nagorik Oikya, Biplobi Workers Party, Ganosamhati Andolon, Gano Odhikar Parishad, Bhasani Anusari Parishad and Rashtra Sangskar Andolan.

While presiding over the rally, Mahmudur Rahman Manna, convener of Nagorik Oikya, said, "If a country's money is smuggled illegally and that country writes

to the Swiss Bank, they will provide information about the smugglers and how much they have smuggled."

"But the government has not asked for the list in the last few years fearing that the names of Awami League leaders will come up," he added.

"The government said they would change the country. But today, it has become a country for thieves and robbers."

He said Gonotantro Mancha aims to build a democratic society.

"We want to build a society where people in poverty can start to live well. We want to make arrangements so that there is a rule of law in the country," he added.

Zonayed Saki, chief coordinator of Ganosamhati Andolon, said the government decides the fate of the people at midnight just like they "rob" votes at midnight.

"This government talks about the spirit of the Liberation War and a country free of communalism, it is running the country against the very spirits of the Liberation War, equality, social justice and human dignity," said Saki.

## Teacher gets life-term for raping 11-year-old girl

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka tribunal yesterday sentenced a house-tutor to life imprisonment for raping his 11-year-old student in Dhaka's Sabujbagh area.

Judge AM Zulfikar Hayat of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-3 of Dhaka handed down the sentence in presence of the accused Raju Ahmed, said Fahmida Akhter Rinky, a lawyer of One-stop Crisis Centre.

The tribunal also fined him Tk 1 lakh, in default of which, he will have to serve six more months in jail, said public prosecutor Mahmuda Akhter.

In his judgement, the judge said the accused should have been given death sentence for his offence. But the tribunal decided to sentence him to life in jail as the baby boy, who was born following the rape, would be "deprived of a family".

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## INT'L MATH COMPETITION Bangladesh secures 10th position

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has secured the 10th position out of 50 countries in 29th International Mathematics Competition 2022 held in Bulgaria.

More than 700 students took part in the competition online and offline platforms.

The five-member team scored 197.8 in the week-long contest that began on August 1 in American University in Bulgaria in collaboration with University College London.

The team members are Sabbir Rahman, a fourth-year student of the computer science department at Buet; Atanu Roy Chowdhury, a

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

The footpath beside Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital's Gulistan area has become a haven for vendors, leaving little to no room for pedestrians to walk on it. As a result, people are often forced to walk on the busy street amid risk of accidents. Even though the authorities concerned conduct eviction drives from time to time, due to lack of proper monitoring, vendors occupy the sidewalk yet again. This photo was taken yesterday.



Dengue death toll 16

Total number of patients 3,498

364 still undergoing treatment

Number of recovered patients 3,118

90 more hospitalised yesterday

SOURCE: DGHS

PRAYER TIMING  
AUGUST 12

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4-25 12-30 4-45 6-41 8-00  
JAMAAT 5-00 1-15 5-00 6-44 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

CAREER OPPORTUNITY WITH  
The Daily Star

### Feature Writer

The Daily Star, the leading English newspaper in Bangladesh, is looking for a Feature Writer for its Commercial Supplements Section.

#### Main Responsibilities:

- To write features and articles.
- To edit and proofread articles before publication.
- To conduct research and generate relevant ideas.
- To assist in planning and producing commercial supplements.
- To assist in organizing roundtables and seminars.
- To assist in designing the layout.
- To assist the Commercial Supplements Editor in carrying out tasks for the smooth operation of the Commercial Supplements section.

#### Educational Requirements:

- Graduation from any reputed educational institution.

#### Skills Required:

- Excellent writing and editing skills in English.
- Excellent observational and critical thinking skills.
- Punctuality and ability to work with deadlines.

How to Apply: Applicants are requested to send their complete resume to:

career@thedailystar.net

N.B: The position must be clearly mentioned in the email subject line.

Application Deadline: August 20, 2022