

## DHAKA

First heatwave,  
now water crisisSufferings of Dhaka dwellers  
continue to escalate

DIPAN NANDY

Amid the severe heat wave, there is an acute water crisis in various areas of the capital.

The areas include Shewrapara, Kathalbagan, Azimpur, Nandipara, Ibrahimpur, Solmaid, Matikata, Malibagh, and Mohammadpur. Besides, there have been complaints that water is not available at all in some areas.

Additionally, in some places, the available water is smelly and dirty, alleged locals.

However, Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) said there is no shortage of water supply in the city. There are temporary problems in some places based on the area, mainly due to the depletion of groundwater level, increased demand for water due to excessive heat and fewer deep tube-wells than required.

According to consumers of Nawabganj, Jafrabad and Katsur of Wasa zone 2; Barabagh, Manipur, Agargaon and Mirpur-12 of zone-4; Gulshan-1, road 83 of Gulshan-2 and Malibagh Bazar Road of zone-5, they are not getting water as per demand.

Residents of Nandipara and F block of Banasree under zone-6; Rasulpur, Pagla, Shahi Mohalla, Nurbagh, Adarshnagar, Nama Shyampur, Nishintapur, Delpara, Shantidhara and Daulatpur under zone-7 and Ibrahimpur, East Shewrapara of zone-10 echoed the same.

Monir Hossen of Kathalbagan Bazar said, "The little water that comes late at night does not meet the demand. We coped by collecting water from Wasa via their trucks."

Janatul Ferdousi, of Azimpur New Paltan Lane area, said, "We have very little water supply here."



**PRETTY IN PINK!** The coral hues of the Java cassia not only offer a visual delight to the city's dwellers beaten by the scorching summer sun, but also provide a moment of relief under its cool shade. With the city witnessing record-high temperatures this Baishakh, planting trees have become more vital than ever. The photo was taken at Hatirjheel yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



**"The little water that comes late at night does not meet the demand. We coped by collecting water from Wasa via their trucks."**

**Monir Hossen**  
Kathalbagan Bazar

FILE PHOTO

There is no water in the morning. We take water from the reserve tank on the ground floor, where there is also a shortage. We are living a miserable life in this scorching heat."

Mubibul Hasan, a resident of East Shewrapara, said he has not been getting water for some time. The residents of the building are suffering a lot. After a day or two, a small car from Wasa provides water to their buildings.

According to Wasa, the production of water in the city exceeds the demand. At present, the demand for water is 260 crore litres per day, while Wasa's production capacity is 270 crore litres.

Contacted, the officials said if there is a water problem, people should contact the Wasa hotline number 16162 and they will take measures to solve the problem within 24-72 hours.

"Besides, there are some complications in terms of water supply in some areas. Water supply has been continued in those places through alternative arrangements. There is no big problem anywhere in the city. Problems are emerging in some areas and are being resolved at a rapid pace," claimed AKM Shahid Uddin, deputy managing director of Dhaka Wasa.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Wasa has set up water tanks in different parts of the city to quench the thirst of people amid the heatwave.

Besides, Dhaka North City Corporation also distributes fresh water to pedestrians using three mobile vans, said Mokbul Hossain, spokesperson of DNCC.

High Court  
stays Rangpur  
case against  
Dr Yunus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed the proceedings of a civil case filed under labour law against Nobel Laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus, founding chairman of Grameen Krishi (Agriculture) Foundation, and seven others with Rangpur Labour Court.

The court also issued a rule asking the respondents to show causes why the proceedings of the case should not be scrapped.

Golam Mostafa, a former senior principal officer of Grameen Krishi Foundation, who filed the case, and chairman of Rangpur Labour Court have been made respondents to the rule, Prof Yunus' lawyer Abdullah-Al-Mamun told The Daily Star.

He said the HC also fixed May 22 for holding hearing on the rule.

The HC bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman

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**Nurul Islam, 70, sets off on his rickshaw every morning from his home in Keraniganj, only to wait at different intersections, nooks, and alleys for passengers. Beaten by age, strength and speed, he often paddles on Dhaka roads passing by commuters who mostly choose to ignore him -- some due to pity and most owing to the dilemma of delay. The photo was taken near Shapla Chattar in Motijheel recently.**

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## INTERNATIONAL LABOUR DAY

DEPRIVED  
at every turn

Harijan cleaners in Sreemangal earn only Tk 550 a month

MINTU DESHWARA

Sukon Basfor, 33, a Harijan woman, starts her day at the break of dawn. She works tirelessly for over four hours, from 5:00am to 9:30am every day, cleaning the streets from Purn Bazar to the Bus Stand area in Sreemangal.

Yet, for her backbreaking labour, she receives a meagre Tk 550 a month.

A non-Bangalee community, Harijans live in congested pallis (colonies) under the city corporations and municipalities. Most of the Harijan pallis in the country that shelter around 100,000 souls are located in the dirtiest places of the cities.

Harijans mostly work as sweepers and cleaners, keeping the streets clean. Despite this, they are considered "untouchable" by society.

While underpaid everywhere, Sreemangal sweepers have it particularly bad, earning a fraction of what their counterparts receive in the neighbouring Moulvibazar (Tk 3,500) and Sylhet (Tk 2,200).

Even Kulaura (Tk 3,000) and Chatak (Tk 2,500) municipalities pay more. Habiganj municipality, at Tk 900, comes closest to Sreemangal's abysmal wages, according to the Society for Environment and Human Development (SHED).

When asked why she is working for such a low salary, Sukon, with a sigh, replied, "What other option is there?"

Sukon's plight is echoed by her husband, Pradeep Basfor. Their combined income is barely enough to make ends meet. With two children -- an 18-year-old son and a 7-year-



old daughter -- household and educational expenses add another layer of burden. Their meagre earnings force them to strictly ration their diet, with fish and meat appearing on the table only once a month, if at all.

"Everything is so expensive these days. The little money we earn barely buys enough

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The 'confession'  
of an AL leader  
Says they resorted to various  
'misdeeds' to ensure victory  
for Ruhel in nat'l polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chattogram's Mirsarai upazila Awami League General Secretary AKM Jahangir Bhuiyan has admitted to a series of "misdeeds" aimed at securing victory for AL candidate Mahbub ur Rahman Ruhel in the Chattogram-1 constituency during the January 7 national polls.

Then he "promised" voters that they will not interfere in the electoral process in the upcoming Mirsarai upazila polls on May 8.

Five independent candidates including General Secretary of Chattogram north district unit AL Sheikh Aatur Rahman are contesting the polls.

Speaking at an election rally of Aatur on Monday, Bhuiyan said, "We did many misdemeanours to win... We made sure Ruhel, the son of our beloved leader Engineer Mosharraf Hossain, the candidate of people's leader Sheikh Hasina, emerged victorious on January 7."

"But we will keep the polling centre free from interference on May 8," he added.

"You [voters] can come to the polling stations and vote for whoever you want. We have no

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**Jahangir Bhuiyan speaking at a rally ahead of upazilla polls.**

PHOTO: COLLECTED

'It's an insult to  
our culture'Says Naripokkho on arresting  
man for posting excerpt of  
Lalon song on FB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Accusing an individual of "hurting religious sentiments" for posting lyrics from a Lalon song is an insult to our culture, said Naripokkho in a statement yesterday.

They vehemently protested the arrest of Sanjoy Rakhit, 40, who had posted lines from Lalongee on his social media account.

"It is the civic right of a person to practice their culture," said the statement.

This is not the first time a member of minority community has been arrested using the excuse of "religious sentiments being hurt", it added.

On Saturday, Sanjoy, a local goldsmith, posted two lines from Lalon's song "Sab Loke Koy Lalan Ki Jaat Ei Sansare". The post went viral and caused an uproar in the local Muslim community.

A crowd soon gathered near Sanjoy's house and locals informed the police, who went to the spot and brought him to the police station.

Police booked him under Section 54 of Code of Criminal Procedure, which allows police to arrest, without a warrant, someone they suspect to be linked to an offence.

Naripokkho said it is deplorable that written legal complaints are rarely taken into account, while Sanjoy was arrested based on "verbal complaints" of the locals.

Arresting members of the minority using the excuse

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