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ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানে 'ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং কর্ণার' পুরালী ব্যাংকের প্রায় সকল শাখা এবং উপশাখায়

18,000MW power production planned for summer

Load shedding to stay tolerable, says energy adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Load shedding during the summer days will be kept at a tolerable level, Power and Energy Adviser Fouzul Kabir Khan said yesterday.

"I won't say there will be no power outage during the summer, but the load shedding will remain within a tolerable level. And there will be no difference between urban and rural areas," he said at a seminar, titled "Energy Crisis: Way Forward," organised by the Forum for Energy Reporters Bangladesh (FERB) at Bidyut Bhaban in the capital.

He said plans are in place to produce 18,000 megawatts (MW) during peak demand in summer, up from the current 16,000 MW. Additional demand will be met through coal and LNG imports.

Kabir added that when the interim government took charge, the power sector was in a disastrous state. "We have paid most overdue and late payments to companies," he said.

The overdue bill, originally around US \$3.2 billion, has been reduced to US \$600 million and is expected to hit zero by the end of the fiscal year in June, he added.

To clear the payments, the government cut allocations from unnecessary projects. Kabir noted that late payments had also raised power production costs.

On gas exploration, Kabir said the government only took steps it could complete within its tenure.



MD ABBAS, BACK from Rangamati

In the quiet village of Bottola, nestled in the hills of Rangamati's Naniarchar upazila, each day begins early.

As the sun rises, the village wakes up, and women like Mollika Chakma set out on their daily journey to fetch water – a task they have carried out for years, despite the pain and challenges it brings.

Stepping out of the house with an empty kolshi (pitcher), 38-year-old Mollika begins her daily walk – for water, for her family, and survival.

Like many women from nearby hamlets – Toroni Para, Dharmasrom Para, and Shikolpara – she walks nearly two kilometres to fetch water from a shrinking kuya (well-like water source).

"I've been doing this since 2010. The pain never goes away – my lower back, knees, and hands hurt all the time. Sometimes we even squabble with neighbours because the kuya is drying up," Mollika says.

Hundreds of women across Rangamati's remote hills have a similar story.

Water is collected three times a day – at dawn, midday, and late afternoon. During the dry season, many wait up to three hours, often returning home with empty kolshis.

Juleka Chakma, 50, has been carrying water since she was eight. "My knees and back feel like they're breaking. I have to take painkillers regularly," she shares.



A woman pours water into her pitcher from a shrinking kuya (water source like a well) in Bottola, a small village nestled in the hills of Rangamati's Naniarchar upazila. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

For others, the pain becomes overwhelming. "It gets worse during full moon days. Sometimes I faint from the pain," says Monika Chakma, who suffers from chronic back issues.

Beyond the physical strain, the emotional burdens run deep.

"If I come home late, my husband yells and accuses me of wasting time. Sometimes, he even hits me," confides a woman from Shikolpara, requesting anonymity.

The dangers grow after dark.

"We've been bitten by snakes, attacked by wild animals, and slipped on the rocky trails," says Ripona Chakma.

"During the monsoon, the paths become dangerously slippery. But what choice do we have?" she asks.

In Paschim Dewanpara of Sabekon union, the crisis is even worse. Villagers must cross rivers by boat to collect water.

Despite battling diabetes and heart disease, 47-year-old Champa Chakma still makes the journey. "My body can't

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'Anti-Hegemony Muslim Unity Platform' held a rally in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Five killed, eight hurt in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Five people were killed and eight others injured in road accidents in three districts yesterday.

In Chattogram, two members of a family were killed and seven persons injured when a pickup skidded off the Dhaka-Chattogram highway near Sitakunda while another van overtook the vehicle.

The deceased are Jakia Islam, 5, and Sakhina Begum, 60.

Jamal Uddin, father of Jakia, is among the injured, said Abdul Mobin, officer-in-charge of Baro Aulla Highway Police Station.

The injured were initially taken to local upazila health complex from where they were transferred to Chattogram Medical College Hospital.

In Munshiganj, a man was killed and another injured as a truck hit a motorcycle from behind on the Dhaka-Mawa Expressway in Sreenagar.

Alimul, 27, died on the spot, said Abdul Kader Jilani, officer-in-charge of Hasara Highway Police Station.

In another accident, one Farukuzzaman, 59, was killed as when his motorcycle skidded off a road after hitting a roadside railing of the expressway near Nimgtala Railway Station in Sirajdikhan, said police.

In Kuakata, seven-year-old Ibrahim alias Jaber was killed after being hit by a microbus on Kalapara Kuakata highway in front of the Pakhimara Water Museum.

The deceased was the son of Afzal Hawlader from Huichhanpara village near Kuakata.

Muslim platform holds solidarity assembly

STAR REPORT

The "Anti-Hegemony Muslim Unity Platform" yesterday held a rally in front of Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka to express solidarity with oppressed Muslim communities in Palestine, India, and Myanmar's Arakan region.

The event featured speeches from key organisers and speakers, including Muhammad Mizanur Rahman, Syed Muhammad Hasan Al-Azhari, Syed Saiful Islam Bari, Shafik Al-Mujaddidi, and Imran Hussain Tushar, according to press release.

Abul Kashem Muhammad Fazlul Haque, vice principal of Dhaka Quaderia Taiyabiya Alia (Kamil) Madrasa, read out a declaration of the rally.

"The core spirit of the July uprising was to stand against the oppressor and to play a vocal role against domination," the declaration said.

The platform pledged to rebuild the future of Bangladesh while "remembering and embodying the spirit of the July uprising."

It also called for the formation of global public opinion in support of oppressed Muslims in Palestine, India, and Arakan (Rakhine), demanding "direct intervention from the UN and the recognition of Palestine as an independent state," and calling for the repeal of the "unconstitutional Waqf Bill passed in the Indian Lok Sabha."

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