



The usually busy Shahbagh intersection remained largely empty yesterday as many people were yet to return to the capital after the Eid holidays.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Eid waste cleared after initial delay

Dhaka residents suffer before sanitation drive gains pace; total 47,000 tonnes removed

DIPAN NANDY

Although authorities promised a swift cleanup of sacrificial waste during Eid-ul Azha, many Dhaka residents faced significant inconvenience before the capital was eventually cleaned.

On Eid day, Thursday, State Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Mir Shahe Alam announced that all sacrificial animal waste in the capital would be removed by 2:00am. Later that night, officials from both Dhaka South City Corporation and Dhaka North City Corporation claimed at separate press briefings that the city had been nearly fully cleaned.

However, the situation on the ground the following day painted a different picture. While major roads appeared relatively clean, sacrificial waste remained scattered in



DSCC and DNCC removed more than 47,000 tonnes of animal waste during this year's Eid cleanup campaign.

numerous alleys and residential neighbourhoods until Friday afternoon.

Residents' frustration gradually gave way to relief as waste removal efforts intensified. Following inspections of the cleanup operations by the prime minister on Friday, sanitation activities gained momentum across the city.

Authorities subsequently took administrative action against two officials over alleged negligence in waste management duties.

DNCC Zone-5 Regional Executive Officer Sadequr Rahman and DSCC Zone-1 Regional Executive Officer Kazi Saleh Mustanzir were attached to the Ministry of Public Administration. Departmental action was also ordered against them for alleged dereliction of duty.

During visits to various parts of the capital on Friday,

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Return rush yet to peak

Journeys mostly smooth as offices reopen today



PHOTO: TITU DAS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The post-Eid return rush to Dhaka was yet to peak yesterday, with passenger flow remaining manageable at the capital's key entry points despite government offices and many private offices set to resume today.

A moderate crowd of returnees was seen arriving by bus, train and launch at major entry points, particularly in Jatrabari, Kamalapur, Gabtoli and Sayedabad.

This year, government and numerous private-sector employees enjoyed a seven-day holiday from May 25 to 31. Police and transport officials expect heavier traffic in the coming days once garment workers begin returning to the capital.

Several returnees shared their experiences with The Daily Star, mostly reporting smooth journeys. Passengers who spoke to this newspaper also said

bus fares were normal.

Golam Mortuza, an employee of a private firm, returned from Thakurgaon by bus in around six hours, compared with over 13 hours for his trip out of Dhaka a week ago.

He said most AC buses bound for northern districts had almost doubled their fares before the holiday, but the rates were normal yesterday.

Ahmed Forkan, a government employee returning from Cumilla, said he reached Dhaka by bus without any hassle. Another Cumilla returnee, Maksuda Akter, said her only delay was at the toll plazas.

Al Amin, an employee of a Gulshan-based financial institution, started his journey from Bagerhat's Sarankhola at 1:30pm yesterday. Although his trip was mostly smooth, he faced a 30-minute tailback at the Hasnabad entry point in Keraniganj around 7:00pm.

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Soleman the 'SOLAR MAN'

Self-taught innovator builds low-cost, mobile solar-run irrigation device

MD QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, Thakurgaon

In Molani village under Thakurgaon Sadar upazila, Soleman Ali, a self-taught innovator, is harnessing solar power to help Boro paddy farmers with a low-cost solution for irrigation.

Relying on his own technical expertise, curiosity and persistence, Soleman developed a transportable solar-powered irrigation device that can lift water from deep underground, offering a practical, affordable, and portable alternative to commonly used irrigation pumps amid rising fuel prices and frequent power outages.

Both local farmers and those from other areas are already being benefitted from the innovation, either by renting or purchasing the device.

After Soleman had left primary school due to financial hardship, he took up work as a bicycle mechanic to support his family.

Later, he learnt assembling instant

3,000.

Soleman has built and sold over 100 devices so far, including 25 this year.

He also earns roughly Tk 36,000 annually by renting out each unit.

At present, he struggles to meet growing demand, operating six units himself while 20 more are being rented.

Farmers said they have been benefitted from using Soleman's solar irrigation units.

Md Babar Ali, 53, of Thakurgaon's Baliadangi, has been using a 2,440-watt unit for nearly four years, irrigating about four bighas of Boro field every season and supplying water round-the-year to his fish hatchery without additional costs after an initial investment of around Tk 2 lakh.

In Haripur, Md Shaheen, 30, purchased two units last year and is now irrigating around 65 bighas of land at a much lower cost than conventional methods.

The affordable technology has also drawn interest from farmers beyond



power supply (IPS) systems, which sparked his interest in using solar powered electrical devices.

Without any institutional or industrial support, Soleman began working on his solar-powered irrigation system in 2013. The prototype, built with solar panels and other components collected from market, was successfully developed following continuous trial and error.

He later upgraded the system by adding a gearbox to the pump to regulate water flow, and a mechanism allowing the solar panels to be adjusted to the sun's position.

He also mounted the entire structure on wheels, making the system fully transportable.

During a recent visit, Soleman demonstrated how the device operates on solar energy.

The device ranges from 1,220 4,400 watts, priced at Tk 60,000 2,10,000. The popular 2,440-watt variant, priced at Tk 1.5 lakh, has a three-horsepower pump powered by four 610-watt panels, that can lift about 700 litres of water per minute, enough to irrigate 8-10 acres of Boro fields in a season.

While conventional irrigation costs Tk 7,000-8,000 per bigha, his system reduces the cost to around Tk 2,500-

Thakurgaon, including in Panchagarh, Sunamganj, Natore, and Rangpur.

Soleman's use of solar energy, however, extends far beyond irrigation - from welding machines to livestock and poultry farm equipment, as well as electrical appliances. In fact, his home runs extensively on solar power.

The innovator's widespread adoption of solar power has locally earned him the nickname "Solar-man Soleman".

He has also secured financial stability for his family. His four sons are now self-reliant in businesses, and his two daughters have been married off.

Soleman said a non-government organisation, Eco-Social Development Organisation (ESDO), has distributed his solar-powered irrigation pumps among 18 beneficiaries under its agriculture-related projects, with 16 more units in the pipeline for delivery.

He urged the government for support.

Dr Muhammad Shahid-Uz Zaman, executive director of ESDO, said Soleman's device can irrigate croplands at significantly lower cost, benefitting small and marginal farmers.

Mazedul Islam, deputy director of the Department of Agricultural Extension, recommended scaling up the technology to ensure affordable and accessible irrigation for farmers.

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