

# Second blaze hits crucial Iraq oil export pipeline

REUTERS, Shirqaat

A second blaze on Iraq's crucial oil export pipeline to Turkey sent smoke billowing into the air yesterday, and officials at the scene said sabotage was suspected. A North Oil Company official at the scene of the fire said it was caused by a blast on Saturday night. The fire was near the site of a blaze which erupted on Friday and which officials said had been caused by a bomb. Meanwhile, sabotage of a water pipeline yesterday caused huge floods in parts of Baghdad and

deprived 300,000 people of running water, the International Committee of the Red Cross said. ICRC spokeswoman Nada Dumani said a rocket-propelled grenade hit an open-air section of a pipeline linking the Sabah Missan pumping station with the eastern Baghdad district of Rasafa. Repairs to Iraq's key oil export pipeline to Turkey may take as long as a month, the US army said yesterday, as a fire continued to rage at the scene of the attack. "The Northern Oil Company is on site to make repairs which are estimated to take at least two weeks

to one month," said army spokeswoman Specialist Nicole Thompson. But an AFP photographer at the scene of the sabotage yesterday said it was deserted and said the fire sparked by the explosion early Friday was still burning. "The damage to the pipeline means seven million dollars losses every day," the US civil administrator for Iraq, Paul Bremer, said Sunday. Iraq's top oil official Thamer Ghadhban had earlier said the disruption meant a loss of money

## Businessman's dare against toll-takers ends in death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A businessman, shot by extortionists Saturday, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday morning. Mohammad Barkat Ullah, 35, was shot in the abdomen at Sat Masjid Ghat, Mohammadpur when he refused to pay toll to a gang of extortionists on Saturday evening. Barkat was rushed to the DMCH where he underwent an operation. However, he succumbed to his injuries at around 11:20am yesterday. According to the victim's mother Jobeda Khatun, Shamim and his gang had demanded Tk 5 lakh from Barkat about 15 days back and asked him to pay the money. When Barkat did not pay up,



PHOTO: STAR

Wife of businessman Mohammad Barkat Ullah consoles her daughter after he died taking bullets fired by extortionists in Dhaka yesterday.

# Fear stalks Ctg businessmen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Abduction fear is haunting the business community in the port city of Chittagong in the wake of the killing of a top ship-breaker and holding of another magnate to ransom, sources said. Multimillionaire businessman Rezaur Rahman Zakir, director of Ocean Trade Brokers Ltd. at Agrabad, was shot dead 24 hours after his abduction from the railway station on Monday. His firm had recently imported three old ships at a cost of about Tk 100 crore for breaking. Industrialist Jamal Uddin Ahmed, a local leader of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), was kidnapped 21 days ago from Chawkbazar. He is yet to be rescued despite a massive police hunt in Fatikchhari and adjacent highlands. "We now feel shaky to move around the city to run our business amid the law and order slide and the

wave of abductions, murders and other crimes," Chairman of Bangladesh Tea Traders Association (TTAB) Feroz Ahmed said. "Businessmen are scared to move out of office or residence. Even we hesitate to move with our foreign buyers or partners," he added. President of Clearing and Forwarding Agents Association M Salim Ullah echoed the same voice. "We feel really very shaky nowadays," he added. "The families of most businessmen are also worried over abductions and other crimes," he said. Feroz said: "After reaching office or any other place, the first thing we do is to informing family members that we are safe." "I myself used to relax sometimes by driving car on the city roads at night, now I don't dare to undertake such trips," he added.

# Strict policing of building code to reduce tremor risk: Prof Jamilur Reza

MONJUR MAHMUD

Strict enforcement of the Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC) that goes unimplemented even 10 years after its formulation will reduce earthquake damage to the built-in environment, said Professor Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, convener of Bangladesh Earthquake Society. "The Ministry of Housing and Public Works formed a committee in 1997 to develop a mechanism for its enforcement, but it did not make any progress," he told The Daily Star in a recent interview. In absence of any enforcement



Professor Jamilur Reza Chowdhury

being designed and constructed in zones 2 and 3, do not have adequate provisions for seismic resistance, said Prof Chowdhury, also the vice-chancellor of the BRAC University and former advisor to the caretaker government. The BNBC93, prepared by a team of consultants appointed by the government in June 1992, includes detailed guidelines for earthquake-resistant designs of concrete and steel structures and recommendations for horizontal and vertical reinforcement in brick masonry buildings, added the expert,

# PM turns down top brass promotion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has finally turned down promotion of around 180 officials to the posts of joint and additional secretaries following raging resentment over the selection. "The prime minister refused to approve the summary of a proposal for the promotion as it failed to ensure justice and select brilliant officials despite clear instruction from her," said a high official at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). The Superior Selection Board (SSB), the highest decision-making body of the civil administration, after

two rounds of meeting on August 9 and 13 sent the summary to the premier. The summary recommended promotion of 85 joint secretaries and 62 deputy secretaries. The selection of officials for promotion bred commotion in the administration and many aspirants complained to a number of senior ministers and policymakers of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) about picking up people on political grounds. The names of brilliant officials with good track records and 'sympathy towards the alliance govern



SHAZNEEN CASE

## Prosecution ends argument

COURT CORRESPONDENT

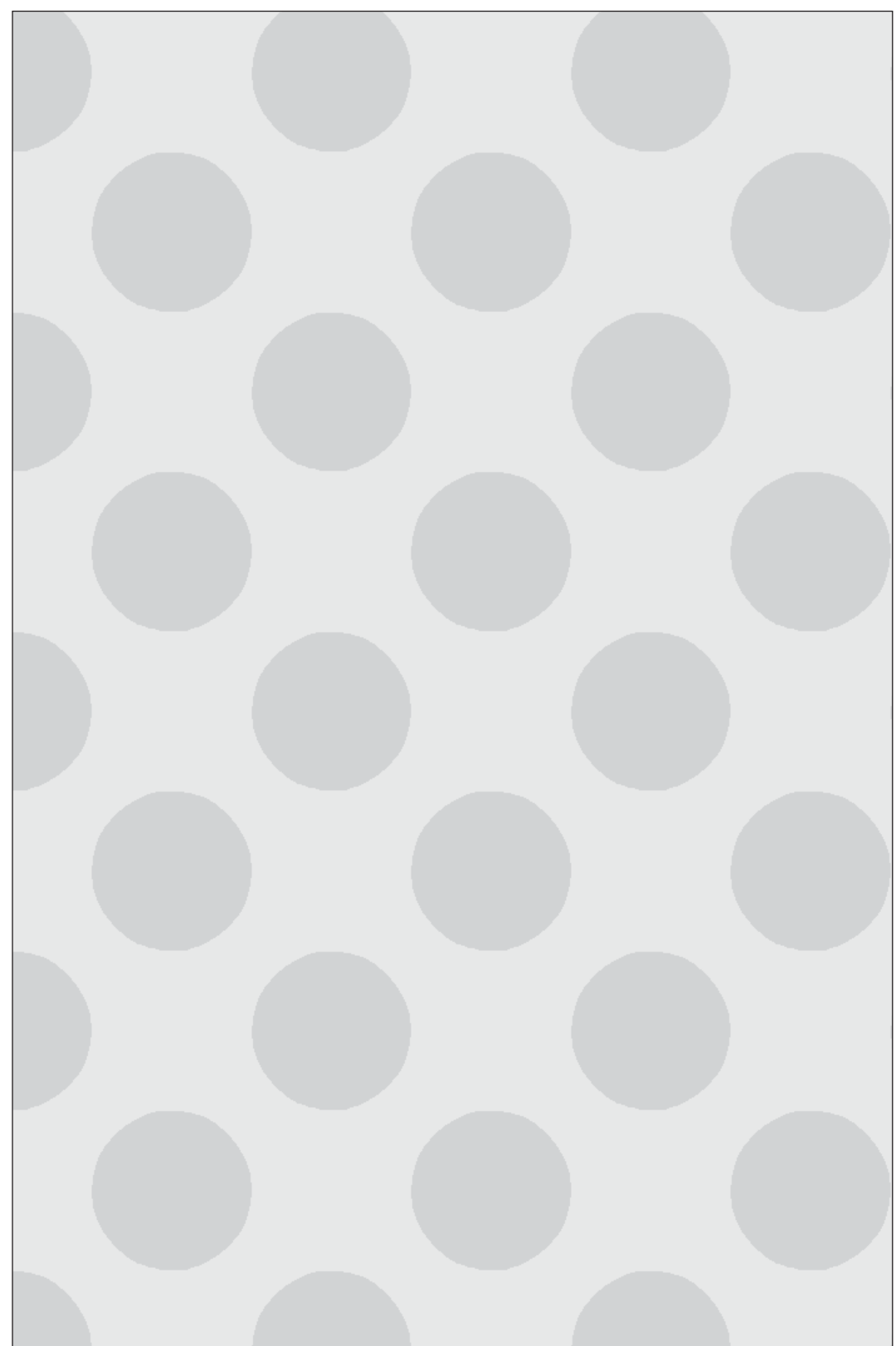
The charges brought against Shahidul Islam alias Shahid and five others, accused in the Shazneen case, were proved beyond doubt, said the prosecution and prayed for exemplary punishment to them yesterday in the Second Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka. The prosecution finished its argument yesterday and the process took about two hours. Judge Kazi Rahamat Ullah adjourned the hearing till today when the defence lawyers will begin their argument. Special public prosecutors ABM Sharfuddin Khan Mukul and Arfan Uddin Khan referred to some important parts of the statements of the prosecution witnesses and confes

# Fake notes at BB vault Probe team smells insider-outsider connivance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank (BB) investigators believe some outsiders in connivance with a section of the staff had deposited fake notes in Vault No. 8 in a planned way. The three-member probe team led by BB Deputy Manager Amirul Islam submitted its 19-page report yesterday. "The committee has failed to specify the officials or employees responsible for the fake note scam," Matin said. "But it has ascertained that a well-organised racket was behind the vice."

"When the Bangladesh Bank bundles notes, it uses a fresh fly leaf to wrap it up," a source said, reasoning why outsiders' involvement is suspected. "But the fly leaf of the fake notes was old and soiled." "All bundles in the vault bear marks of the hall number where they were counted. But the fake bundle did not have any such marks. It also did not have BB seal or signature." "We have just received the report. We will scrutinise it before taking any action," he added. "Police are



## Experts for quake preparedness

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An extensive seismic survey on tremor-risk zones and installation of necessary equipment to monitor earthquakes were sought at a meeting sponsored by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief yesterday. It also stressed the need to formulate a comprehensive contingency preparedness plan, both pre and post-quake, particularly for Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet and Mymensingh regions. Equipment worth no more than Tk 15 crore are required to monitor and measure tremors, the meeting observed.

## Khulna BNP leader terms govt 'illegal'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The senior vice-president of city BNP has termed the four-party coalition government illegal and unconstitutional. Abdul Gaffar Biswas, also the president of Khulna district unit of Motor-Bus Malik Samity, made the remark at a press conference yesterday

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Aug 18		6-30 pm
Aug 19	5-35 am	

Prayer Timings		
August 18		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-40	6-45
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation



Rashed Khan Menon and other members of his Workers Party of Bangladesh take out a procession in Dhaka yesterday, demanding trial of the perpetrators who shot him 11 years ago and an end to crimes rife in the country.

## Mobs kill 3 'muggers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Three alleged muggers yesterday died from beatings by mobs that claimed they were trying to flee snatching money from NGO workers at Chandanaish. Eight 'muggers' snatched Tk 25,000 from two workers of BRAC in the Kanaimatari area at around 1:30pm but people nearby got hold of four while escaping in groups. Abu Bakar Mithu, 25, and Giasuddin, 26, were caught by the mob at Barkal and Jabhed, 25, and Borhan, 25, in the Palerhat area. Jabhed was killed on the spot while Borhan and Mithu died on way to hospital. Condition of the other 'snatcher', who is undergoing treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital, is critical. Two cases were filed with the Chandanaish and Anowara police