PM inaugurates 20-storey car parking in city

UNB, Dhaka

present

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday inaugurated the 20-storied Sadharan Bima Tower with huge car parking facilities and United Hospital Limited, a modern private hospital, in the city. Sadharan Bima Tower, a com-

mercial building in Dilkusha Commercial Area, has parking facilities for around 545 vehicles at a time on eight floors of the building. This the first governmentsponsored big car parking lot, which is likely to reduce traffic

congestion in the busy Motijheel-Dilkusha Commercial area. Communications Minister Nazmul Huda, Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas. Dhaka City Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka and Advisor to the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs Barkatullah Bulu were

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

Israeli army chief admits failures in Lebanon

Israel's embattled army chief Dan Halutz admitted for the first time yesterday to failings during the Lebanon war amid increasing public discontent over how the offensive was handled

"Parallel with our success, during combat we observed failures in certain areas, notably in the areas of logistics, operations and command," Halutz wrote in a letter to the army, having so far resisted calls for his resignation.

The general, who has been slammed for army conduct and selling shares just before the offensive began, said the mistakes needed to be examined but stopped short of calling for a state commission, the most sweeping type of inquiry

"We have to proceed to a meaningful examination of the successes

and the errors. We have to extract professional lessons, as we are faced with more challenges... This test concerns us all, from me down to the last soldier."

Israel's 34-day assault -- waged by the most powerful army in the Middle East -- failed to achieve its stated aims of stopping rocket attacks by Hezbollah or freeing two soldiers captured by the Shia guerrillas on July 12. The war estimated to have cost

Israel 5.7 billion dollars and the army lost 121 soldiers. Forty-one civilians were also killed by more than 4,000 Hezbollah rocket attacks

Against rising media pressure and public discontent, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is set to decide within days whether to back a state commission on inquiry into the war, which could spell serious trouble for his government.

His spokeswoman Miri Eisin told AFP that Olmert "will let it be known soon what parameters the inquiry into the Lebanon failures should have"

Calls are increasing for Olmert to set up a state commission that would have its powers set by law and members chosen by the supreme court. Opinion polls say two-thirds of Israeli Jews favour such a fullscale inquiry.

"Olmert's Associates: No Choice But State Commission Of Inquiry, said the front-page headline in Israel's biggest selling newspaper Yediot Aharonot, as aides apparently counselled the premier in a closed meeting Tuesday.

Such a commission was ordered after both Israel's 1973 Yom Kippur War over which a torrent of criticism eventually forced then prime minis-Golda Meir to resign and ter SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

Hasina ridicules PM over graft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government has fuelled 'terrorism, corruption, price hike and looting' during the present regime.

"By withdrawing corruption case, she [prime minister] says she has stopped corruption, by leaking out question papers, she says she has stopped copying and by patronising criminals and militants, she says she has stopped criminal activities,' Hasina told a discussion at the Institution of Engineers Bangladesh.

Swadhinata Chikitshak Parishad (SCP), a pro-Awami League (AL) doctors' organisation, arranged the discussion marking the national mourning day August 15 -- when Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with most of his family members was assassinated in 1975.

The prime minister has boosted corruption and for this the country topped the corruption list for four SEE PAGE 19 COL 6



Wastewater from a dyeing factory floods Tejgaon-Gulshan link road in the city causing difficulty to pedestrians and spreading stinking odour in the area. Locals say the factory often releases wastewater on the road.

Dialogue decries systematic

violation of citizens' rights

4 customs men suspended for mistakenly raiding **IGP's** house **STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

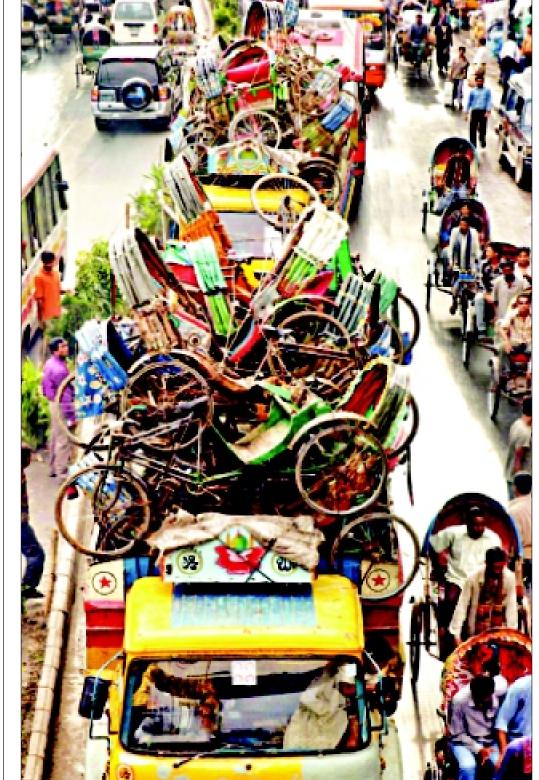
The National Board of Revenue (NBR) suspended four customs officials yesterday, a day after they were arrested for 'mistakenly' entering the Uttara residence of the inspector general of police (IGP). The suspended officials are

Customs Excise and Vat superintendent Monwar Hossain Bhuiyan, and inspectors Ali Hossain, Kamal Pasha and Golam Rasul, said sources in the NBR.

Inspector Ali Hossain was assigned to investigate the Vat registration file of 'Black Rose, a rest house at holding No. 14 on Road 7/C of Uttara Sector 9. Earlier, another guesthouse 'Sunwoa' having the same holding number had evaded Vat worth Tk 17 lakh.

On Wednesday afternoon, Ali Hossain along with the three officials were going to the rest house. SEE PAGE 19 COL 6

AL objects to



US envoy hopes hurdles to go for fair polls STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador Patricia A Butenis yesterday expressed her hope that all the impediments would be removed to make the coming national election free and fair. Butenis made the comment to

the press after paying a courtesy call on Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) chief and former president Badruddoza Chowdhury at his KC Memorial office in Baridhara.

During the half an hour meeting, the US ambassador and the former Bangladesh president discussed the latest political situation of Bangladesh and mutual interests of the two countries.

The two came out with the view that impediments to an acceptable election in the country should be removed.

The United States does not support any particular political party and expects free and fair SEE PAGE 19 COL 6

VAT on mobile

Such violence and immunity to criminals usually begin on a small scale but gradually increase to such an extent that they occur systematically, threatening the whole society,

Samaj Rupantor Oddhyan Kendra (SROK), a social studies centre, organised the dialogue on 'Extra-legal state intervention in citizens' rights', held at the Jatiya Press Club.

Referring to extra-judicial killings by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab). Dr Shahdeen Malik in his keynote

presentation said when the state ignores its fundamental duty of safeguarding rights of citizens, and systematically violates citizens' rights, it cannot but become a matter of grave concern and apprehension. "I am afraid, we may have reached that plateau where violations of citizens' rights are no longer

sporadic or isolated events, but are the results of total disregard of the fundamental norms of governance and respect for rights of citizens," he said.

controversy over confirmation of two judges of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court (SC) and recognition of Kawmi madrasas, the SC advocate said systematic violation of citizens rights cannot but lead to violation of institutional norms, practices and conventions

"As a result, these institutions

11 killed in two Nat'l minimum wage to be wage to be

home in Kashiani upazila of

Gopalganj by the truck after lifting

ration from Jessore Cantonment.

reported that four members of a

family died when a truck hit their

microbus from behind on the

Dhaka-Chittagong Highway at

Tolatuli in Chandina upazila yes-

The dead are Foyjunessa, 45,

her daughter Jannatul Nayam, 13,

grandson Redwan, 5, and son-in-

law Ruhul Amin, 35. They all hailed

from Sengaon village in

Shaharasti upazila of Chandpur

to the spot, recovered the bodies

and sent them to Comilla Sadar

On information, police rushed

terdav morning.

district.

Our Comilla correspondent

STAFF CORRESPONDENT Legal experts and academics at a dialogue in the city yesterday apprehended that ignorance about the urgency of protecting fundamental rights and preventing extra-judicial killings in the name of 'crossfire' would lead the society to selfdestruction.

they observed.

destruction since it is killing people violating their right to justice and speaking lies that the killings took In an oblique reference to the place in 'encounters' Immunity to the killers is more dangerous for the society, he said. "You can never say that the number of such killings will not reach hun-

dreds evervdav. SROK Chairman Prof Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, who chaired the dialogue, said the iudiciarv is SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

began to flounder, as we have seen

this week in the Supreme Court and

institutions of so-called education

which will now be equated with

public universities. These are clear

signs of a collapsing society, at least

anarchy is not too far away," Dr

said the present government is

pushing the nation towards moral

Columnist Syed Abul Maksud

Malik said

polls monitor by NGOs in question

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jalil yesterday said election-monitoring by NGOs controlled by ruling party men and accused of financial corruption will bring no good result for democracy.

"Election monitoring is an internationally recognised system for ensuring free and fair election. But most of the local organisations listed in the Election Working Group of Asia Foundation for monitoring the upcoming election are run by ministers of the present government, their family members and people related with the ruling coalition," Jalil said in a statement. "We have already objected to

the efficiency and neutrality of these NGOs for the sake of a free and fair election," Jalil, coordinator of the AL-led 14-party opposition SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

Shab-e-Barat on Sept 8 BSS, Dhaka

The holy Shab-e-Barat will be observed on the night of September 8, a press release of Islamic Foundation said last night.

The National Moon Sighting Committee took this decision at a meeting held in the conference room of the Islamic Foundation in the evening, as the moon of Hijri month Shaban was not sighted anywhere in the country yesterday. Chaired by Religious Affairs Secretary M Ataur Rahman, the meeting was attended by Islamic Foundation Director General M Fazlur Rahman, Meteorological Department Director Akram Hossain Baitul Mokarram National Mosque Khatib Maulana Obaidul Haque, Senior Pesh Imam Mufti Nuruddin, Lalbagh Shahi Mosque Khatib Maulana Aminul Islam and other members of the committee

The Hijri month Shaban will be counted from August 26.

PHOTO: STAF

Seized illegal rickshaws piled up in Agargaon in the capital for long are being moved to Feni by trucks yesterday, allegedly to distribute among destitutes.

"We (the government and the

Maoists) have agreed to accept the

interim constitution Friday though

there has been no agreement on

certain political issues, including

the position of the king," Tourism

Minister Pradip Gyawali, a member

of the government talks team, said.

Koirala and Maoist leaders reached

a landmark agreement in mid-June

to prepare an interim constitution

that is aimed at allowing the rebels

SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

to join the government.

Prime Minister Girija Prasad

Nepalese constitution ducks monarchy

AFP, Kathmandu

The committee drafting Nepal's interim constitution said it would present the document today but Maoist rebels said they were angry it had sidestepped the central issue of the monarchy's future. give up absolute rule.

The rebels who have waged a decade-long "people's war" to oust the monarchy said Thursday the committee's inability to decide whether Nepal should remain a kingdom raised doubts about the government's sincerity in seeking peace

"We should have given a common view on political issues including on the king's position" but the government's reluctance to "enter these agendas shows they're not sincere enough towards the peace process," rebel peace negotiator Dina Nath Sharma told AFP.

Iran heads for showdown at UN in nuke row

AFP, Tehran The committee which had rebel

and government representatives is Iran appeared headed for a show to hand the draft interim constitution down at the UN Security Council for approval to the rebel leadership next week over its nuclear and the seven-party alliance which programme, facing the threat of took power in April after mass sanctions after failing to freeze key protests forced King Gyanendra to fuel cycle work.

Western nations reacted coolly to Iran's response to a international offer of incentives in return for a halt to uranium enrichment, with the United States warning it fell short of UN demands and France insisting Tehran immediately suspend nuclear activities

However, fellow permanent Security Council members China and Russia have appealed for a peaceful solution to the longrunning standoff.

The Security Council adopted a resolution last month giving Iran until August 31 to freeze its SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

phone SIM card declared illegal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday declared illegal the supplementary duty and Vat amounting to Tk 1,628 on mobile SIM (subscriber identification module) cards imposed by National Board of Revenue (NBR) last year

An HC division bench yesterday bassed the order on completion of hearing of a rule that was issued last year in response to a writ petition filed as public interest litigation.

Abu Sayeed Khan, a freelance ournalist, on June 25, 2005 had filed the writ challenging the legality of the government's imposing supplementary duty and Vat of Tk 2,172, on June 9 last year.

However, on June 30 the NBR brought down the amount to Tk 1,628, of which Tk 900 is Vat and the rest is supplementary duty. The petitioner argued that the

NBR fixed the tariff value for SEE PAGE 19 COL 5



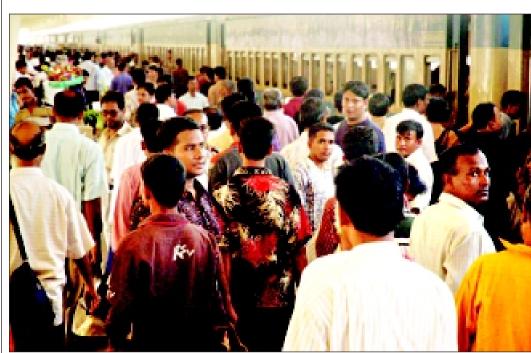
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eleven people, including seven retired army personnel, died and 30 others were injured in road accidents in Jessore and Comilla yesterday.

In Jessore, a truck with 47 exarmy men on board collided with another one at Saidpur Bottala on Jessore-Magura Road at around 4:30pm, killing seven on the spot and injuring 30 others, according to our correspondent. Four of the dead were identified as Aminur, 50, Shahjahan, 55, Jamshed, 50, and Zafar Ali, 45. Identity of the remaining three could not be known.

The injured are undergoing treatment at Jessore General Hospital and Combined Military Hospital

The army men were returning Hospital morgue for autopsy.



Travellers heading for Chittagong thronged Kamalapur Railway Station in the capital yesterday as a transport strike in the port city left Dhaka-Chittagong bus services stalled. (Report on page-2)

announced bv October

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The long-awaited national minimum wage for the workers is likely to be announced by October, said Syed Shujauddin Ahmed, secretary of labour and employment ministry, yesterday.

"The process to fix the national minimum wage is on. National minimum wage for workers will probably be declared in the first week of October," Shujauddin said while addressing a roundtable SEE PAGE 19 COL 7



🖗 সিপিডি প্রথম**্র্**যালো The Daily Star সশীল সমাজের উ 芦 চ্যানেল আই

Channel i will telecast a special programme today at 5:30pm on "Regional Dialogue on National **Election 2007: Civil** Society Initiative for Accountable **Development**" organised by Centre for Policy Dialogue, The **Daily Star, Prothom Alo** and Channel i in Pabna on August 19.

Prayer Timing		
August 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-05
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-33	6-36
Esha	8-00	8-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		

PHOTO: STAF

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