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The task force has been formed with Managing Director of the Sonali Bank as its

The committee has already started collecting information in this regard.

Anybody knowing any particular information relating to undue interference by the collective bargaining agents (CBAs) or trade unions in the bank management, their indisciplined activities, corruption and misbehaviour, is requested to contact the member of the committee, Md Shamsuddin General Manager (Administration), Bangladesh Bank Motijheel.

The committee also sought the cooperation of bank officers and staff, clients and patrons, and general public in this re-

Such information and their recommendation should reach the committee within Septem-

case politically motivated'

and Sessions Judge's court today said the case was false and

There was no existence of Yasmin and as such trial of Yasmin murder case does not arise, defence counsel Nazrul Islam said. Islam is defending accused Mahtab Hossain, former OC Kotwali thana. Dinajpur. He argued that his client did not suppress anything and there is no evidence of lapses in his duty. Mahtab has been falsely implicated in the case. he argued.

Another defence counsel, Abdul Haque Pramanik, defending accused former police See Page 12 Col 4

New envoy to Canada soon

By Staff Correspondent appoint a new High Commissioner to Canada after the return of M R Osmany whose contractual appointment has been

from sources in the Prime Minister's Officer and the Foreign Ministry that Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, who was earlier tipped for the job, would not be appointed to the post.

the name of Mosharraf Hossain to the host country was taken at See Page 12 Col 2

'His Excellency'

The synonym of Bengali word Mahamanya used before the President as per government decision will be 'honourable', not 'His Excellency', reports UNB.

yesterday gave this clarifica-

Inside Today Article

The Fateful

Mid-August

Column: Window on Asia by Shahed Latif Page 4

Focus

Change of attitude—a precondition for good governance Page 5

International

US, UN urged to help salvage ME peace Page 8

Business

EU fish ban: quality control still remains a problem

DSE index hits new low in 17 months Pages 6, 7



his slumber and enforce his orders on the shop owners?

The loadshedding has made

a comeback with repetition of

late last year and early this

year's situation when power

failures for several hours and

low voltage of electricity be-

since Thursday when a safety

valve at the gas grid at Nars-

inghdi went out of order, reduc-

ing supply to the gas-fired

power stations and forcing

At the same time a number

The seventh prosecution

witness in the Bangabandhu

murder case told the court yes-

terday that the incident of

killing of Bangabandhu and his

family members on August 15,

1975 was reported by him ver-

bally to the Commanding Offi-

who was an Army Captain and

Commanding Officer of the

troops brought from Comilla

for guarding Ganabhaban and

Bangabandhu's Dhanmandi

Fourteen lawyers of the 14

Bashar. When the court was ad-

journed at around 4:30 pm

resume at 10:30 am today. Maj

The government is locked in

a "constant argument" with the

donor agencies over the strategy

to redress the problem of

flooding and too much depen-

dence on ground water, Food

and Agriculture Minister Motia

is whether we will endorse their

readymade prescription to go

for building more and more

embankments or they will

agree to our proposal for dredg-ing the rivers", she said.

ing a five-day international

workshop on "South Asian

Meeting on Food, Ecology and

Culture: In the Context of

Livelihood Struggles of Rural

Communities" at Bishnupur, a

quiet village under Delduwar

istan, Canada, Malaysia and

the US are participating in the

workshop, organised by 'U-

BINIG', a non-government or-

Experts from India, Pak-

thana in Tangail

The minister was inaugurat-

"The debate with the donors

Chowdhury said yesterday.

Lt Col (LPR) Abul Bashar,

cer of his Regiment.

The situation worsened

came the order of the day.

them cut down the output.

DHAKA TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1997

RABIUS SAANI 14 1418 HIJRI

Fuel prices increase: Petrol now Tk 21 per litre, diesel Tk 12.95 Fuel prices increased as the 21 and Tk 23 from Tk 13.70 and government yesterday refixed Tk 14.65 respectively. the rates of petroleum products, Price of kerosene has been including petrol, octane and refixed at Tk 12.95, furnace oil

diesel, reports UNB. Price of LPG (liquefied

petroleum gas) also went up with the refixing of price with approval of the cabinet. The rate of diesel has been refixed at Tk 12.95 per litre from Tk 12.70 while petrol and

octane prices rose sharply to Tk

JMB approach road to be completed by Nov

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 18: The 17km approach road of Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge is expected to be completed by November this year, reports UNB.

Officials said nine culverts and five bridges were constructed on the approach road from Nakla of Raiganj thana to Siraigani Sadar.

The works on the project started in 1994.

— Star photo

Clinton to visit

Bangladesh

early next yr

will visit Bangladesh early next

year at the invitation of Prime

Minister Sheikh Hasina, dip-

lomatic sources said in Dhaka

First Lady Hillary Rodham

He will be accompanied by

A source in the State De-

partment informed Bangladesh

Ambassador to the United Sta-

tes KM Shahabuddin of Clin-

ton's planned visit to Bangla-

It was immediately conveyed

to Prime Minister Sheikh

Hasina through a faxed message

by the Bangladesh mission in

Washington on Sunday, the

visit by a US President to

dent to visit Bangladesh when

she met him at the Oval Office

of the White House on February

See Page 12 Col 7

4 this year. And he accepted it.

This will be the first ever

Hasina invited the US Presi-

yesterday, reports UNB.

Clinton.

sources said.

US President Bill Clinton

Tk 5, jute batching oil (JBO) Tk 17, light diesel oil (LDO) Tk 14, special boiling point (SBP) Tk 28 and MTT Tk 17.

The rate of LPG has been refixed at Tk 250 per cylinder, up from Tk 185.25.

An official announcement said the cabinet approved a proposal for refixing the petroleum prices in keeping with international market and devaluation of taka against the

The approval was given in a cabinet meeting held at the PM's office with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair yesterday.

The cabinet also endorsed in principle amendment to the Private University Act 1992.

Ministers, State Ministers, Cabinet Secretary, Prime Minister's Principal Secretary and other secretaries were present in the meeting.

SSP fertiliser import

Ban order 'misquoted' to favour 3 companies?

By Toufique Imre e Khalidi

Commerce ministry officials misquoted a prime ministerial directive to ban import of a particular type of fertiliser in order to allow a couple of businessmen to make money. The question is, was it a deliberate mistake?

The ban, which came following a Cabinet decision, sought mainly to protect Bangladeshi farmers' interest, but loopholes, some feel deliberately created. eventually helped three companies owned by two business-

They opened letters of credit to import 70,000 tonnes of SSP (single super phosphate) fer tiliser and bureaucrats in different departments issued "clarifications" and "circulars" to validate the LCs.

They together should make some Tk 13 crore in profits in a

to current prices. The directive from the Prime Minister's Office said "colourcoated and granular" SSP would no inger allowed to be impor into Bangladesh. The con erce ministry officials

"mistook" it for "colour-coated granular" The omission of the word "and" made the big difference. Golam Mostafa, who came up with two companies called Maru Trade Ltd and Commodity Trading Co (CTC), and Ainul Huq of A R Trading took full advantage of it, if the chronology of events had any meaning, according to documents obtained

by The Daily Star. Colour-coated granular means it can be colour-coated but not granular or granular but not colour coated. This is contrary to what the Cabinet See Page 12 Col 1

monopolised market, according

Focus on city crime-III Over 1500 acres of govt land under illegal occupation

By Morshed Ali Khan

More than 1,500 acres of land in the city belonging to different government organisations are under illegal occupation, according to sources in the

Land Ministry. Most of these lands, classified by the Land Ministry as 'unused', is under the 'occupation of slum dwellers. The lands belong to the Housing and Settlement Department, PWD, RAJUK, Railway and Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), the sources said quoting a recent Land Ministry survey. But they did not give the break down as to which organisation lost how

much land in the process. Other land grabbers in the city are 'big shots' in posh residential areas, musclemen, religious organisations and political parties.

Officials concerned in these organisations said the problem of land grabbing remained unresolved for years because they had no authority or responsibility to recover the lands. But a Land Ministry official

said. "It is the responsibility of each department of ensure that its resources are protected as in the case of private landowners. The occupiers build settle

ments on these lands while the owners - the government departments - just overlook the matter, he said There are 3,007 slums in the

city, occupying prime lands. The slum dwellers pay rent to the 'landlord', popularly known as 'chairman'. Police said. without the chairman's permis sion, none is allowed to build any dwelling in the area. The rent for each shack

varies on location and size. The 'most expensive' shacks are along the railway tracks in Kawran Bazar where a single room may cost upto Tk 1,000 a month because a market, a commercial area and a busy truck terminal is nearly. Part of the rent money collected by the 'chairmen' (there are at least three in Kawran Bazar area) roll into the hands of big

The landowner, in the case of Kawran Bazar area, is Bangladesh Railway. It is unable to evict the occupiers. "When we go to clear the site, thousands of people are mobilised to resist us. Who wants a problem on a national scale? Even the policemen are reluctant," said a BR official. So the

illegal occupation goes on. A Land Ministry official pointed out that in 1996, it had allotted to RAJUK the huge stretch of land beside Hotel Sonargaon for a beautification project. RAJUK was also supposed to build the World Trade Centre at the same spot. The site is now a huge slum, accommodating several thousand families. When contacted, a RAJUK official said the slum dwellers have to be rehabilitated to clear the site. "After the Bhasantek incident, all departments oncerned are afraid to evict any such settlement. So we will have to wait," he said. Officials of the Land Min-

See Page 12 Col 3

Occidental looking for new site to drill relief well

From Iqbal Siddiquee

SYLHET, Au dental is now lo fication of gas leakage through some points there, said an official in the Moulvibazar district administration this afternoon.

The official, who visited the the official said.

Occidental had selected a

of gas leakage in the area. Meanwhile, the gas leakag spread during the last few It is now migrating to the

Security measures have again been tightened in and around the gasfield area. Even a good number of government officials including Petrobangla officials, and employees of

the situation, organised garare stealing valuable t from the forest, official alleged

Nepal requests for transit

from Sept 1

By Staff Correspondent Nepal has requested Bangla-desh for transit facilities through the Fulbari-Banglabandh route from September 1, the Ambassador of Nepal in Dhaka said last night.

Nepalese envoy Lok Bahadur Shreshta said his government in a letter last week has requested that Dhaka take necessary steps to establish customs, immigration and warehouse facilities for the movement of Nepalese goods. The communication mentioned that India had agreed to provide Nepal transit facilities through Bangladesh since last May.

Initially, Nepal would like to use the Fulbari point on the Indian side and the Banglabandh point on the Bangladesh side.

Sources in the Bangladesh government said that Dhaka will try to accede to Nepal's request immediately but could not confirm if it could provide the transit arrangements from September 1 as requested.

Education policy Nat'l committee in favour of guidelines for students politics

By Mizan Ali The National Committee on Education Policy has recommended that there has to be a guideline for students politics in educational institutions, according to sources in the com-

mittee. The sources said there is a consensus among the members of the committee for a guideline for students politics on the campus. However, salient features of the guideline could not

be known. Talking to The Daily Star chairman of the committee

Prof Shamsul Huq said that he received reports from the 19 sub-committees and the final report was being prepared for submission to the Prime Minister on August 26. See Page 12 Col 2

4 fall sick after taking breakfast at film star

Razzak's house By Staff Correspondent

Four persons fell sick at the Gulshan residence of film star Razzak after taking breakfast yesterday.

Police suspected that a maid of the house may have mixed poison with the food.

The sick persons included Razzak's wife, a relative and two assistants. They were taken to a local clinic.

Gulshan police arrested the maid identified as Joynab Begum, aged about 30.

However, details about the incident could not be known immediately. Police were interrogating the maid last night. A case was lodged with Gulshan thana in this connection.

Miscreants set foreign ship on fire, says port authority From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Aug 18: The Mongla Port Authority has admitted that M V Alexandra, a Panamanian flag carrier which was anchored at the outer anchorage with 5,000 tonnes of Vietnamese rice for Brazil was set on fire by a gang of unidentified miscreants.

According to other sources the miscreants, in collusion with the Greek captain of the ship, beat the crew mercilessly after setting the vessel on fire. The assaulted crew saved themselves by jumping from the ves

The sources said that all the cabins of the ship were damaged by the fire. But the engine room

was not damaged. The Greek captain is staying in a residential hotel in Khulna city along with six foreign crew who are being suspected to be involved in the incident, being

termed a sabotage by official and unofficial sources.

The incident is being investigated, the sources said.

Trader, teacher murdered in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent JHENIDAH, Aug 18: A businessman was stabbed to death and a teacher beaten to death in wo separate incidents in the district yesterday. Raghunath Saha, 42, a busi-

the town was stabbed to death

nessman of Chaklapara area in

nath was returning home with See Page 12 Col 1

CBA interference in banks: Task force to prepare action plan

In view of the interference by the trade unions in the management of Bangladesh Bank and other banks, the government has constituted a fivemember task force to prepare an action plan for its remedy. reports BSS.

chairman under the "Commercial Banking Restructuring Project," said a press release yes-

ber 15, the press release added. 'Yasmin murder

From Mozammel Haque RANGPUR, Aug 18: Defence Inadequate gas supply, over-hauling of a number of power counsel while submitting arguments in the Yasmin rape stations coupled with the lack and murder case in the District of their maintenance are playing havoc with power supply in the country.

politically motivated.

The government is likely to

cancelled. Meanwhile it was learnt

The decision not to forward

'Honourable,' not

residence, was being cross-examined by the defence lawyers in the Court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka. absconding accused completed An official handout issued their cross-examination of

> Bashar was being cross-examined by the lawyer of one of the five accused in custody. Proceedings of the court will

make his deposition after the cross-examination of Bashar is completed.

25 were sent to guard the residence of Bangabandhu and the

rest were at the Ganabhaban. The troops which came from Comilla for a month took over their duties on August 1, 1975

Bashar said he heard that 11

By Staff Correspondent (retd) Shahadat Hossain will

> Earlier, in his deposition before the court on Wednesday. Bashar said that he came to Dhaka with 105 troops of which

and had returned on August 17.

military personnel were involved in the killing. When asked by the lawyers to name those who told him about involvement of the military personnel, Bashar said he

could not remember their names at that moment. To another question he said

that he did not contact the

Army Head Quarters at the Can-

More embankments or river dredging?

argument, says minister

By Reaz Ahmad, back from Tangail

ganisation. The workshop is be-

ing held at UBINIG's regional

project site at Bishnupur. Ex-

perts from home and abroad

will focus on post-GAAT food

security in the world, particu-

larly its impact on LDCs (Least

tia Chowdhury said, the gov-

ernment considers dredging of

rivers and re-excavation of wa-

ter bodies, as the "ultimate solu-

tion" to flooding. "The Prime

Minister herself is trying to

make the funding agencies un-

derstand the multifarious bene-

and International Monetary

Fund (IMF), Motia Chowdhury

said they are "continuously ar-

guing" that dredging is a costly

is insisting why, in a country of

rivers, we will remain depen-

dent on ground water. Rivers

are loosing their depth due to

siltation which is causing

affair. "But, our Prime Minister

Naming World Bank (WB)

fits of the strategy", she added.

Speaking as chief guest, Mo-

Developed Countries)

See Page 12 col 6

Parents of Salman Shah interrogated

five hours on Sunday, the PDB

thority (DESA) sources said

that there had been 50 MW of

loadshedding in the city yester-

day until early afternoon. But

in the peak hours there was a

135 MW shortfall out of a de-

problem had been compounded

by a failed transformer at

fix the transformer. But the 50

MVA transformer playing a vi-

tal role in distributing power

from a 11 KV system resulted in

a loadshedding of at least 20

See Page 12 Col 7

The city's gasping power

Efforts were being made to

mand of 925-1050 MW.

Paribagh since Thursday.

Dhaka Electric Supply Au-

sources said.

WHO CARES! This photograph of glittering shops of New Elephant Road was taken at 8:30 pm yesterday. Despite a

DCC order to close shops at 7 pm to avoid massive loadshedding, such scenes are common at various shopping centres

in the city everyday. While the shopowners make hay while the 'sun shines', the bulk of the loadshedding is applied

on numerous residential areas of the city making life miserable for law-abiding citizens. Would the Mayor wake from

City experiences severe loadshedding

135 mw power shortfall

during peak hours

By Special Correspondent

of power stations, including the

Kaptai power station, were un-

dergoing maintenance or re-

mained closed for mechanical

could not escape the loadshed-

ding while attending a meeting

of the Awami Jubo League at the

Institution of Engineers on

Sunday. It was interrupted for

about 45 minutes when the au-

ditorium was plunged into

current spell of loadshedding in

the city on Sunday, with a 140

been a total of seven hours of

loadshedding yesterday and

In central Dhaka, there had

It was one of the worst in the

darkness

Bangabandhu Murder Case

PW-7 says he heard

11 army personnel

were involved

MW shortfall

Even the Prime Minister

problems, PDB sources said...

Parents of film star Salman Shah yesterday renewed their allegation to the CID investigators that their son was killed. but failed to give any satisfactory answer in support of what they said the pre-planned mur-

der, reports UNB. Late Salman's father Kamruddin Ahmed Chowdhury mother Neela Chowdhury and uncle Jaglu were interrogated by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) at its Malibagh office from 10 am to

about 6 pm.

See Page 12 Col 4 Wazed Mia

indisposed By Staff Correspondent Dr Wazed Mia, husband of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

is indisposed. Mia was admitted to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in Dhaka at 2 pm yesterday after suffering from cardiac

Doctors attending him at the CMH told The Daily Star last night that the ailment was not serious and he was released in

floods," she said.

in the neighbourhood.

the afternoon Mia, member of the Bangla desh Atomic Energy Commi ssion, was taking rest, said Gonabhaban sources last night

In this regard she also

quoted former finance minister

Saifur Rahman as saying that

raising embankment on the

river Monu had endangered life

over the fact that 80 per cent of

the monsoon waters flow into

the Bay of Bengal but there was

no investment in the last 25

years to preserve water for agri-

pattern should be changed to

preserve soil fertility. "We are

producing three crops in a year

causing long-term effect on the

soil fertility. From now on, we

will discourage Boro cultiva-

tion in the winter and try to

gradually replace it with wheat,

which will lessen pressure on

of chemical fertiliser in the

name of "Green Revolution" and

See Page 12 col 6

She was also critical of use

soil fertility," she said.

The minister said cropping

cultural use in the dry season.

She expressed her dismay

Petrobangla Govt, donors locked in constant

bangla was found dead in his Kalabagan office in the city

der Bogra district. His body, bearing injury marks, was found hanging from the ceiling at an office of the

sailants first beat Hira Lal to death and then hanged him from the ceiling to cover up the murder. An official at Dhanmondi

incharge of Petrobangla, has filed a murder case with the thana. Police detained Abdul Hamid, the night guard of the office for interrogation.

driller found dead in city office A senior driller of Petro-

yesterday, police and hospital sources said, reports UNB. The dead was identified as Hira Lal Goura, 40, of village Buriganj of Shibganj thana un-

Petrobangla at Kalabagan at about 2 pm. Police suspected that the as-

thana said the hanging condition indicated that Hira did not commit suicide as his toe was touching the floor. AQM Rafiqur Rahman, an

9 The Occifor a new location for driving the relief well as the second location has been abandoned due to intensi-

Magurchhara Gasfield area today, said, the US company has asked for a suitable location on the eastern side of the Forest Department land. If the Forest Department de lines to provide the land, the cany may ask the Fulbari Tea state authorities, which is also located just adjacent to the main gasfield,

new site for drilling the relief well about 640 metres off the main well in the last week of July. Accordingly, it also began some preparatory work there. But, the site has been abandoned due to the intensification southern side alarmingly, said the official adding that gas was seen leaking through thousands of points around the gasfield area today.

adjacent Fulbari Tea Estate also being refused entry into Due to the restrictions imposed o all including the forest huge forest areas at ne gasfield remaine uncared for for the last two months. Taking advantage of

last night by a gang of miscre-According to police, Raghu-

Tk 40,000. When he reached Chaklapara at about 10pm, the

VOL. VII NO. 204 REGD. NO. DA 781