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Auto-rickshaws stay off roads for second day

Star Report
Auto-rickshaws barring some did not ply on the streets of Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and elsewhere in the country for the second day yesterday protesting the fuel price hike.
The absence of the familiar smoke-belching auto-rickshaws and auto-tempos carrying a bulk of city's commuters caused inconvenience to people. The rickshaws charged higher rates. Few auto-rickshaws however defied the wild-cat strike and reaped a bonanza on the day.
Some stray incidents aside, the strike was peaceful. In the evening some unruly elements set fire on an auto-rickshaw near the Dainik Bangla cross-
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BNP agitation begins today

The four-day agitation programme of main opposition BNP, demanding cancellation of 'anti-people' decision to enhance the prices of petroleum products, begins today, reports UNB.
The BNP will hold protest rallies and bring out processions in all thanas, district and divisional headquarters today.
On Friday, processions in all wards and villages in support of Sunday's dawn-to-dusk nationwide hartal.
On Saturday, BNP will take out torch processions across the country to drum up support in favour of the hartal.
BNP Secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan in a statement yesterday called upon the leaders and workers of BNP and its front organisations to observe the programmes and make the Sunday's hartal a success.
Another report adds, an emergency meeting of Dhaka city BNP will be held today at 7 pm at 29 Minto Road official residence of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament.
A joint meeting of central and Dhaka city committees of Jatiyatabadi Mohila Dal will also be held today at 5 pm at the BNP central office.

Fuel price hike was inevitable: AL presidium

By Staff Correspondent
The Awami League Presidium at a meeting last night resolved that price increase of petroleum products was inevitable for keeping it at par with the price in world market.
Prime Minister and AL chief Sheikh Hasina chaired the 90-minute meeting held at the Ganabhaban, said party sources.
The meeting was continuation of the previous day's meeting of the presidium.
Though a number of Presidium members argued in favour of two-phase increase of petroleum prices, the meeting noted that the country could no longer bear the burden of Tk. 450 crore as revenue loss in the fuel sector per year.
The meeting also took stock of the latest situation arising out of sharp reaction of various quarters to the price hike and expressed concern at the hartal call for August 24 protesting the price increase.
Besides, the AL presidium noted that rampant power failures throughout the country made people's life miserable.

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Congestion surcharge on Ctg port Port users likely to sue CFTC

Port users may seek legal actions against CFTC which, they said, imposed congestion surcharge on Chittagong Port without any valid ground in contravention of international shipping rules, reports UNB.
"If possible, we'll go for legal action," said Farid Ahmed Chowdhury, leader of the Bangladesh delegation which negotiated with the CFTC in Singapore, at a press conference yesterday at the BGMEA office.
The Singapore-based Chittagong Feeder Trade Committee (CFTC) imposed congestion surcharge for one month from August 15, forcing the port users to lose a huge amount of money.

Chowdhury said as per the code of conduct of the UN convention on shipping, the CFTC could not explain valid reasons or account for the surcharge before the users.
"It's contrary to the international shipping convention. Therefore, imposition of any such surcharge by the CFTC is totally illogical and illegal," he told newsmen.
In this situation, Chowdhury mentioned that the port users have the right to take legal action against them as per

the code of conduct of the UN convention on shipping.
Mahbub Ali, senior vice-president of BGMEA and also a member of the delegation, said the exporters would have to spend Tk 25 crore as surcharge in one month.
"Why we'll bear the extra cost when we're not responsible for the congestion in the port?" Garments exporters will have to pay major portion of the surcharge, he said.
Farid A Chowdhury said during the meeting with the CFTC on August 14, the

See Page 12 Col 7

Judgement in Yasmin murder case Aug 31

From Our Correspondent
RANGPUR, Aug 20: The judgement in Yasmin rape and murder case will be delivered on August 31, the District and Sessions Judge, Rangpur, declared in the court on conclusion of arguments today.
The arguments continued for four days.
The case was divided into two parts and the trial was held separately in two courts. Judge Abdul Matin was the presiding judge in both the courts.
In the first part of the case, trial of the three main accused out of nine was held in the Special Court, Rangpur.
They were charged under the Children and Women Repression Act. Hearing and arguments in this case concluded on February 15.
In the second part of the case, trial of all the nine ac-

See Page 12 Col 4

Flood situation in six southern dists worsens

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Aug 20: Flood situation in the low-lying areas of Barisal, Bhola, Patuakhali, Jhalakati, Barguna and Pirojpur districts have deteriorated following sharp rise in water levels of the rivers in the region.
The water levels in Meghna, Kirtankhola, Paira, Arial Khan, Sandhya, Agunmukha, Bishkhali, Baleswar and Tetulia have marked a sharp rise while some of them are flowing above the danger marks.
Crops on thousands of acres of land and dwelling houses in the low-lying areas of the affected districts have been inundated.

Flood water has already entered Patuakhali town areas inundating Sadar Road, Shimulbagh, Chalkbazar, Katpatty, Purnabazar, Nawabpara and Muslimpara.
Some char areas of Mirganj and Galachipa thanas were submerged with the rise of water level in the river Paira.
Sea is still very rough. Fishing boats and trawlers have taken shelter in Alipur Mahipur Channel, some 6 kilometres from Kuakata Sea Beach.
In Bhola, the low-lying areas and the offshore islands — Manpara, Char Kukri Mukri, —
See Page 12 Col 3

Tragic death of two BUET students

From Our Correspondent
COX'S BAZAR, Aug 20: Tragedy befell on two BUET boys, on a study trip to this beach town, as they got stuck in quicksand today.
One body which could be recovered was that of Maruf Hossain, 22, a third-year mechanical engineering student. His classmate, 25-year-old Mukit, was still missing.
District officials were conducting search till filing of this story late evening.
They were part of a group of 50 students, all from the same class at the mechanical engineering department, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology.
It all occurred at 6:30 in the evening near the Laboni point of the beach when they tried to swim in the sea.
Maruf was declared dead by doctors at Seaside Hospital, where the body is now lying.
They were all staying in Parjatan's Pantha Nibas.

Feni BNP calls dawn-to-dusk hartal today

FENI, Aug 20: The BNP has called for a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the district tomorrow, reports UNB.
District BNP Joint Secretary Joinal Abedin announced the hartal at a press conference at his residence here today protesting police firing on Jubo Dal leader Saifuddin Iran, arrest of Iran and Pintu, and terrorism by AL cadres in the town.
On Tuesday night, a young man named Baharuddin was beaten to death by some youths on Kodolgazi road in the town. Awami League claimed Bahar was its activist.
On the same night, JCD activist Ayub Ali, 18, was seriously injured when some unidentified gunmen fired shots at him at Birinchi in the town.

Four held for dishonouring National Flag

From Staff Correspondent
BARISAL, Aug 20: Police arrested four people who allegedly dishonoured the National Flag and were involved in anti-state activities.
Police said the employees at Deputy Commissioner's office, identified as Shamsul Alam and Altaf Hossain, and two others — Abdul Alim and Ilias — were charged with changing the flag at the DC's office for the last two days.
Alim and Ilias allegedly inscribed some Arabic slogans on the flag, which the two employees flew atop the DC's office building.
The Nazir at the DC office filed a case with the Kotowali thana.

11 senior police officials await transfer

By Staff Correspondent
The Ministry of Home Affairs has prepared a list for transfer of 11 senior police officials and sent it to the Prime Minister's Office for her approval, official sources said.
According to the list, Anwar Iqbal, SP at the Police Headquarters, has been transferred to Special Superintendent of Police (SSP), SB, in Dhaka; Ruhul Amin, SSP of SB, has been posted as SP of Railway police; Abdur Rouf, SP of Chittagong and Anisur Rahman, AG at the Police Headquarters, have replaced each other Sultan Ahmed, DC of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, has been transferred to Narsingdi as SP and Habibur Rahman, SP of Bagerhat, has been posted as SSP of CID in Dhaka.
Besides, Phani Bhushan Chowdhury, SP of Nilphamari, has been posted as SSP of CID and Nazmul Huq, Additional SP of Chittagong, as current charge SP of Nilphamari.
Shah Zaman Raj, SP of Chuadanga, has been posted as SP of Bagerhat and Mokhlesur Rahman, Additional SP of Dhaka, as current charge SP of Chuadanga, the sources said.

Tk 10 cr project to develop Dhanmondi Lake

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has taken up a Tk 10 crore project for the development of Dhanmondi Lake and its adjoining areas to help maintain ecological balance, a DCC press release said yesterday, reports BSS.
The Dhanmondi Lake and its adjoining areas will be developed to make it a place for pisciculture, recreation and tourism, the press release added.
The proposed project work is expected to begin from March next year.
Mayor of DCC Mohammad Hanif has directed the engineering department of the corporation to complete the work within the stipulated time.

Bangabandhu Murder Case Army chain of command was not broken on Aug 15: PW-8

By Staff Correspondent

Maj (retd) Shahadat Hossain, eighth prosecution witness in the Bangabandhu murder case, during his deposition told the court that he saw senior Army officers assembling at the office of his unit Commanding Officer in the morning of August 15, 1975.
During cross-examination, he also said that it was not true that the chain of command in the Army had broken down. He said that he was the Adjutant of his Unit and was much under the Commanding Officer of his Regiment.
"Because of some disgruntled officers, the top brass of the Army on that day seemed to be scared," Shahadat said.
When the lawyers suggested that he was a tutored witness, he said, "It is not true."
Shahadat Hossain in his deposition said that he was a Captain and Adjutant of First East Bengal Regiment under 46 Brigade, when Bangabandhu and his family members were killed on August 15, 1975.
He was repatriated to Bangladesh in December, 1973 and he joined the First East Bengal Regiment.
He is now working as Secretary, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC). He had joined the BPC in 1986 after his retirement from Army in 1983.
The deposition of Shahadat

was taken down by SPP Ramzan Ali Khan. He was assisted by Mosharrar Hossain Kajol and Touhidul Islam Bahar.
The PW-8 also identified the paraji and spectacles of Bangabandhu which were produced before the court at the end of his deposition.
The proceedings began at 10:55 am yesterday in the court of the District and Sessions judge, Dhaka and continued for about five and a half hours.
The court was adjourned till

10:30 am Tuesday. Lt Col MA Hamid, the then Station Commander of Dhaka will make his deposition before the court on Tuesday.
Of the 14 lawyers of the state defence, four cross-examined the PW-8 while the other 10 lawyers declined to cross-examine the witness as the names of those absconding accused were not mentioned during the deposition. They, however, adopted the cross-examination of their previous lawyers. Lawyer of one
See Page 12 Col 4

HC grants Beximco prayer

By Staff Correspondent

The Beximco Investment Company Limited (BICL) has sought two weeks' time to reply to a show-cause notice to explain why a petition from one of its creditors, Eastern Bank Limited (EBL), seeking its liquidation, would not be accepted for hearing by the Company Bench of the High Court.
Yesterday was the date for hearing, fixed by Justice Mohammad Fazul Karim on July 31. The court granted the time following a prayer by BICL counsel Barrister Rafiqul Hossain.

Two killed in Sunamganj boat capsized

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 20: Two persons were killed in a boat capsized in the Chapir haor in Derai thana of Sunamganj district yesterday afternoon.
Official sources said, an engine boat sailed for Jagdal from Derai thana headquarters overturned and capsized due to strong wind.

All but two managed to swim ashore. The dead were identified as Arab Ali, 60 and Jansher Ali, 55.

Uproar in BGMEA meet on GSP issue

Garment factory owners belonging to two factions flexed their muscles and shouted at each other yesterday before deciding on some recommendations for resolving the GSP problem, reports UNB.
At a general meeting of BGMEA on GSP issue, the feuding groups at the height of their frenzy attempted to assault each other blaming opponents for a move to destroy the readymade garment industry.
Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association had called the meeting at a city hotel to discuss the problems relating to generalised system of preference (GSP) following the threat of the European Union.
Soon after BGMEA President Mostafa Golam Quddus finished his opening speech, a garment factory owner accused association's former chief Anisur Rahman Sinha of trying to create division among the BGMEA members.

The agitating owner alleged that Sinha, by issuing a press statement on Monday, made "cheap" remarks on the GSP issue and his statement created a sharp division among the general members of the BGMEA.
This sparked off an uproar in the meeting. The situation aggravated following some comments made by Anisul Haq, the Managing Director of Mohammadi Group, known as a close aide of Sinha.
Supporters of the two groups sprang to their feet, shouted at the top of their voice and came closer as if to fight a battle.
The pandemonium continued for over 15 minutes until Anisul Haq apologised for interrupting the meeting. Earlier attempts by Quddus and Sinha to pacify the agitators went in vain.
"I'm very sorry for interrupting the meeting... Let's fight unitedly to resolve the GSP problem," said an embarrassed
See Page 12 Col 3

WASA water dangerously contaminated

Star Report

Water supplied in the city is dangerously contaminated.
A recent sample test has revealed traces of excreta in the WASA supplied water and declared it unfit for human consumption. Though reported earlier and mostly from the older parts of the city, faecal contamination of the supplied water rang the alarm bell again as one reader faxed a copy of the test report to The Daily Star office yesterday.
Conducted Sunday last in the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research (ICDDR,B) laboratory, the test of a sample collected from a residence at the city's Indira Road detected the presence of 15000 faecal coliform per 100 ml. To
See Page 12 Col 1

Decision on Khatib likely next month

By Special Correspondent

The governing body of the Islamic Foundation yesterday took up the enquiry committee report on the incident at an Eid-e-Miladun Nabi function at Baitul Mukarram mosque premises on June 17.
Because of the incident, President Shahabuddin Ahmed had left the function without delivering his speech.
The governing body, however, decided to shelve for the time being any decision on the issue and on the fate of Khatib of Baitul Mukarram Maulana
See Page 12 Col 8

Petrobangla driller murder: One held

By Staff Correspondent

Police were yet to find out the motive behind the murder of a senior driller of Petrobangla, Hiralal Ghaura, who was found dead at his office at Lake Circus under Dhanmondi thana in the city Monday.
Meanwhile, police arrested Sohrab, a senior driller, in connection with the death of Hiralal. He works in the same office at Lake Circus.

Project to improve JS support services AL-BNP dispute over authority to supervise implementation

By Nurul Kabir

Implementation of a project to improve support services in Jatiya Sangsad is facing fresh troubles as the ruling party and the Opposition have been engaged in a dispute over the 'appropriate authority' to supervise the work.
The project involves over Tk 50 crore, funded by donors.
According to sources, the ruling Awami League (AL) maintains that the Jatiya Sangsad Task Force, constituted last year, will supervise the overall reform process while the recently constituted Steering Committee will implement the project. But the major opposition party in Parliament, Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), says the Steering Committee is the sole authority to supervise implementation of

parliamentary reforms, and with its formation, the Task Force has automatically been abolished.
The funds already allocated for the reform programme will go back to the donors if not utilised within this year, sources in the UNDP said. The UNDP is co-ordinating the donor agencies.
The project includes providing all the 330 members of Jatiya Sangsad with separate rooms and staff, setting up of an Institute for Parliamentary Studies, modernising the parliament library. Earlier, the UNDP had a Needs Assessment Report, done by some 'experts', to identify the areas where improvement was necessary.
Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury, who is the head of

both the JS Task Force and the Steering Committee, on Monday said he did not find any dispute between the JS Task Force and the Steering Committee. "The Task Force is supposed to be responsible for the overall implementation of the reform projects while the Steering Committee will look after the day-to-day affairs in the implementation process."
While talking to this correspondent at his office, the Speaker emphatically said that he would go ahead with the implementation of the projects after those are approved by the Jatiya Sangsad Commission. Headed by the Speaker, the JS commission, comprising Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, Law, Justice
See Page 12 Col 7

Can you please help Simky's father, Mr Home Minister?

Star Report



Nurat Huda Simky

For over 10 days, seventeen-year-old Simky has been missing. Her sister Sweetie, two years' elder than her, was just luckier. She returned home. Poor Simky didn't.
Their father, not knowing where to knock after normal process failed to bear fruits, was frantically looking for a journalist, of all the people.
And Shamsul Huda came to The Daily Star. He thinks the Home Minister is the one who can help him find her daughter. Police? Yes, he had knocked that door, but was told: "We'll definitely try to find your daughter. But you do too."
The problem is Huda knows who they are. So do the local police, if what the officer in charge at Keraniganj police station said had some meaning.
On August 9 evening, Simky, along with her sister Sweetie, was walking back home from her uncle's house. Some men, brandishing knives and such other weapons, jumped on

ment to local police. Haunted by the frightening event, the girl still is in bad shape, mentally.
The incident took place in Zinjira, the other side of the Buriganga that separates the area from capital Dhaka. And anybody having some knowledge of the crime scene there knows what it is.
The Keraniganj police, approached immediately, were efficient enough to catch at least one of the accused, Anu, but not enough to rescue Simky, prompting the poor father to believe he would need to go further.
Huda thinks Minister Rafiqul Islam is a "sensitive person", and asks if one of us at Star knows him personally and can make him act.
Huda strongly believes her daughter is the victim of an old enemy between a group of "well-identified terrorists" of the locality and himself.
"They are known cadres of
See Page 12 Col 4