

The exclusive address  
at Gulshan  
**PROPERTY CROWN**  
2600 sq ft Luxury Apartment

THE NAME MOST TRUSTED  
**PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT LTD**

PROPERTY HEIGHTS  
12 RK MISSION ROAD  
FAX 880-2-9559415PHONE  
9563117, 9563126, 9559412-3

# The Daily Star

**MARBLE MARBLE MARBLE**

WE HAVE HUGE READY STOCK OF  
ITALIAN CARRARA, PERLATO SICILIA,  
BOTTICINO, INDIAN KESSWARI GREEN,  
MALAYSIAN AND PAKISTANI MARBLE  
OF DIFFERENT TYPES.

**NIRMAN INTERNATIONAL LTD.**  
199, TEJGAON I/A, DHAKA.  
TEL: 605957, 607363 SHOW ROOM: 861985

## Cabinet okays proposal to amend SEC Act '93

The Cabinet yesterday approved the proposal for amending the Securities and Exchange Commission Act, 1993, reports UNB.

The cabinet meeting, held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair, also approved the proposal for setting up an embassy in the Maldives.

Proposals for amending the Administrative Tribunal Act 1980, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker (Remuneration and Privilege) Act 1974 and the Bangladesh Whips Order, 1972 were also approved by the Cabinet.

## BNP celebrates 19th founding anniversary

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) yesterday celebrated its 19th founding anniversary, reports UNB.

Hundreds of leaders and workers of the BNP and its front organisations thronged the mazar of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman, the founder of the party, in the morning to pay tribute to his memory.

They laid flowers at the mazar, offered *fateha* and prayed for salvation of the departed soul as well as peace, progress and prosperity of the nation.

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleida Zia, now in the USA, in a message congratulated the partymen and the people of all walks of life on the occasion.

The day's programmes began with hoisting the national and party flags at the party central office and its offices across the country. BNP has also chalked out a 10-day programme to celebrate its 19th anniversary.

As part of the central programmes, BNP central committee organised a discussion at the Engineers' Institution in the afternoon. Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury addressed the function as chief guest while party secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan presided over it.

Speakers at the discussion  
See Page 14 Col 3

## Acquittal of 6 Appeal against verdict in Yasmin murder case demanded

By Staff Correspondent

Sammilita Nari Samaj has demanded of the government to appeal before higher court against the verdict in the Yasmin rape and murder case that acquitted six persons.

Acquittal of the persons accused of concealing evidences proved government's weak investigation system, leaders of the Nari Samaj said at a press conference at the Jatiya Press See Page 12 Col 3

## US Open Jana Novotna in qtr-finals

From Tawfiq Aziz Khan

NEW YORK, Sept 1: Jana Novotna of Czech Republic moved into the quarterfinals of the 1997 US Open Championships ladies' singles as she removed the persistent Mary Joe Fernandez of the USA 7-5, 6-4 at the Arthur Ashe Stadium this morning.

The number 3 seed with her experience and steady handling of the 'baseline expert' moved to See Page 12 Col 7

## Inside Today Article

**South Asian Business Summit: Minding Our Own Business**

Column: Frankly Speaking by Faruq Choudhury  
Page 4

**Focus**

Justice Muhammad Ibrahim—an Exponent of Civil Liberties  
Page 5

**Business**

Banks beat borrowers down  
DSE index experiences 5-point fall  
Pages 6, 7

# Bangladesh-Nepal transit route opens

From Rafiq Hasan

PANCHAGARH, Sept 1: Bangladesh-Nepal transit route was formally opened at Banglabandha today, allowing the land-locked Himalayan kingdom to use Mongla port.

Commerce Minister Tofael Ahmed and his Nepalese counterpart Sarbendra Nath Shukla jointly inaugurated the transit, provided under a 1976 agreement between Bangladesh and Nepal but kept ineffective so long due to India's denial of a 'corridor' upto Bangladesh.

The two ministers cut a ribbon, hand in hand, at a simple function at Banglabandha on the Bangladesh-India border, about 50 kilometres from the district town.

"Today, it's a historic event," Tofael said. "I like to consider the inauguration as a milestone in harnessing well-defined complementarities among SAARC member-states and sharing resources for mutual benefit. It is the beginning of a new chapter of economic cooperation. Tofael said.

Shukla echoed his counterpart. "At last, a long desire and dream of our two peoples have materialised," a beaming Shukla told thousands of people who thronged the venue. Shukla arrived on Sunday for the inauguration.

Nepalese ambassador Lokendra Bahadur Shrestha, Commerce Secretary Alamgir Faruq Chowdhury, and Deputy Commissioner of Panchagarh Saiful Islam also spoke at the opening ceremony.

Thousands of local people including women and children in festive mood joined the function held at the zero point of Bangladesh-India border.

The transit agreement between Dhaka and Kathmandu had not been effective in long 21 years as there was no permission from India to use a 61-kilometre corridor between Banglabandha and Kakarbhitta in Nepal.

Last July, New Delhi gave permission for using the corridor for third-country transit, allowing the Nepalese to use the Mongla port in Bangladesh for their external trade.

The South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) also provides for transit facilities among the member countries of the SAARC for promotion of trade and commerce.

Transit through Bangladesh for Nepal will benefit both the countries, reducing transportation cost of exports and imports for Kathmandu and increasing revenue earnings for Bangladesh.

See Page 12 Col 4



Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed and his Nepalese counterpart Sarbendra Nath Shukla opened the Bangladesh-Nepal transit route at Banglabandha in Panchagarh yesterday. — PID photo

## Bangabandhu Murder Case '18 bodies were disposed of without religious rites'

By Staff Correspondent

A total of 18 bodies brought from the residences of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Abdur Rab Serniabat and Sheikh Moni were "disposed of at Banani graveyard with the same clothes they were wearing," said Maj Gen (ret'd) MA Rab, 10th prosecution witness in the Bangabandhu murder case.

Rab made his deposition yesterday in the Court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka, for about 20 minutes and his cross-examination by lawyers of the state defence and those for the accused in custody was also completed on the day.

"Circumstances did not permit washing of the bodies. It was also not possible to arrange coffins for them and their *janaza* were also not held. We had just rather pressed the bodies under the earth," Rab said during the cross examination.

"No claimant came for the bodies before or after it was disposed of at the graveyard," he said answering the question of another lawyer.

"I was ordered to dispose of 18 bodies from those residences which I carried out. I could not do much for time constraint and because of the situation prevailing then.

"The body of Bangabandhu was not among the 18 bodies." On August 15, 1975, when Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members were killed, he (Rab) was serving in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and was the Commanding Officer of the first supply and transport battalion, the PW-10 added.

Of the 14 lawyers for the 14 absconding accused, one cross-examined him and the others examined him. Two out of the five accused in custody also declined to cross-examine him. During the day's proceedings See Page 12 Col 4

## Gold price goes down

By Govinda Shil

Gold price has gone down substantially over the last three months in the city markets.

One tola (11.664 gm approximately) of gold now costs at least Tk 400 less than it was late last year.

The price went down to even Tk 5,750 a tola in June this year but became stable at Tk 6,300 since August 8. The price was Tk 6,700 late last year.

Jewellers at the Baitul Mukarram market said their sales did not increase though the price fell substantially.

"Although the price fell, the market did not get enough response," said Bablu Dutta Milton of Lily Jewellers. The sale was as usual.

Aftab Ahmed Khan of

## PW-9 says he saw 'sadistic rejoice' after killing

There was a sadistic rejoicing after the killing of father of the nation Bangabandhu Mujib as about 100 officers at 46 brigade headquarters were seen hilarious, reports UNB.

The ninth prosecution witness said this in the trial court yesterday.

Asked by a defence lawyer, PW-9 Lt Col (ret'd) M A Hamid admitted it and said he saw all greeting one another.

Further quoting a book written by Hamid, defence lawyer Abdur Razzaq Khan said both Khaled Mosharrar and Shafat Jamil were seen in cheerful mood at 46 brigade at about 11 am. And the witness said it was a comment by himself in his See Page 12 Col 6

## Rail, road communications to and from Sylhet remain disrupted

From Morshed Ali Khan and Iqbal Siddiquee

SYLHET, Sept 1: Road and train communications to and from Sylhet still remain severely disrupted causing sufferings to thousands of travellers in the region.

The rail communication came to a halt after the gas well explosion at Magurchhara, near Srimongal on June 15. The road communication was disrupted as a steel bridge on Khowai river at Shaistaganj, constructed in 1942, gave way to the pressure of flush flood on July 12.

At Shaistaganj, Bangladesh Army engineers built a Bailey bridge to restore the communication. But the bridge can handle only light vehicles and it remains open from 6 am to 7 pm. Army engineers said they were asked to build the bridge within the shortest possible time which restricted them from building a heavy duty pontoon.

Immediately after the Magurchhara gas explosion, Bangladesh Railway (BR) and Occidental had confirmed that the railway tracks would be relocated but it took more than three months to start the survey work for the Tk 25 crore diversion project for setting up of a three kilometre rail track. The survey started on August 18 and its report is expected to be completed by October 30.

"It will then take at least six months to complete the construction of the new line," said a See Page 12 Col 1

## 'Unique' funeral for Diana Saturday

LONDON, Sept 1: Princess Diana will be given a 'unique' funeral on Saturday. Buckingham Palace, announced as Britons continued a vigil of mourning with flowers, candles and tears, reports AP.

A palace announcement said the funeral will not be a state funeral — normally reserved for sovereigns. But the palace sidestepped the exact status, delicate because of Diana's divorce from Prince Charles a year ago.

Diana's body, after examination by a coroner at a private mortuary, was taken early today to the Chapel Royal of St. James's Palace, the London home of Charles.

There was no lying in state. But four books of condolence opened at St. James's Palace and official ushered in sympathisers in batches of five to sign the books, open 24 hours a day until the funeral. Within two hours, more than 2,000 people had signed or waited in line.

The 36-year-old Diana's new beau, millionaire Dodi Fayed, 42, who died with her in Paris car crash early Sunday, was buried Sunday night at Brook See Page 12 Col 1



The crowds and the flowers grow in number as mourners make their way to the gates of Buckingham Palace yesterday to pay their respects to Diana, Princess of Wales, who was killed along with her companion Dodi Fayed in a car crash in Paris in the early hours of Sunday. — AFP/UNB photo

## Chauffeur was driving with illegal level of blood-alcohol

PARIS, Sept 1: The driver of the car that crashed, killing Princess Diana and her boyfriend, had an 'illegal' blood-alcohol level, prosecutors said today. Judicial sources said it was three times the legal limit, reports AP.

In another development, a source close to the investigation said today that the car was going 196 kilometers an hour when it went through the tunnel.

"The blood analysis revealed that the alcohol level was illegal," prosecutors said in a statement. They did not give the level. But a judicial source, speaking on condition of anonymity, later said it was 1.75 grams of alcohol per liter of blood — three times the legal limit.

See Page 12 Col 6

## Village Council bill placed Bill renaming President Award passed in JS

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Sangsad yesterday unanimously passed a bill renaming the 'President Award' for successful farmers as 'Bangabandhu Award' with BNP legislators remaining absent from the House for the second consecutive day.

Besides, Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) Minister Zillur Rahman introduced in the House, by voice vote, two bills seeking formation of local governments at the union and village levels.

The first bill — the Gram Parishad Bill, 1997 — that sought formation of local government at the village level — said the Gram Parishad will be a thirteen member body headed by a chairman. The Chairman will be elected directly by the people through adult franchise, while 12 members including three females will be selected by the administrative authorities concerned. Besides, another non-voting member, selected by the authorities concerned will be there in the Gram Parishad.

According to the bill, this member will come from a government or autonomous body operating in a Ward.

The tenure of the Gram Parishad (GP) will be five years from the date of its nomination.

Jatiya Party legislator Abu Lais Mohammad Mobin See Page 12 Col 3

## Speaker invites AL-BNP meet to resolve crisis

By Staff Correspondent

Speaker Humayun Rashid Choudhury has invited the ruling Awami League and the main opposition BNP to a meeting at his Jatiya Sangsad chamber at noon today to resolve the crisis out of BNP's abstention from the House.

"I had telephonic talks with Deputy Leader of the House Zillur Rahman and Chief Whip of the JS Abul Hasnat Abdullah on the Treasury Bench side and Deputy Leader of the Opposition See Page 12 Col 4

## BNP to join meeting

BNP has decided to join the meeting convened by the Speaker today and discuss ways to end the stalemate caused by the abstention of the main opposition from parliament, reports UNB.

"We want to resolve the problem, we want the parliament to work. So, we have decided to join the meeting," Opposition Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain told newsmen after a parliamentary party meeting at the Sangsad Bhaban last night.

He said the BNP still hopes that the ruling party would fulfil their 14-point demand and make the parliament functional. See Page 12 Col 5

## ROK assures steps to cut trade gap

Seoul assured Dhaka of increasing Korean investment in Bangladesh and taking due measures to narrow a yawning trade gap, reports UNB.

South Korea has so far invested 150 million US dollars in various projects in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh exported items worth only 10 million US dollars to South Korea last calendar year. See Page 12 Col 7

## Interpol alerted to track down absconders

By Staff Correspondent

The International Police Organisation (Interpol) is alerted to track down the absconding accused in the Bangabandhu murder case.

According to official sources, it is vigorously trying to establish regular contacts with different governments to locate the absconding accused. There are presently 14 such absconders, all thought to be outside Bangladesh.

Interpol is alerted to have informed the governments concerned about alleged involvement of the absconders in the murder of Bangabandhu and that they are fugitives, escaping the murder trial.

According to the sources, Interpol has accepted the Bangabandhu murder case as a criminal case.

Interpol has already sent See Page 12 Col 8

## PM's visit to Jakarta, Manila Focus on promotion of trade, investment likely

By M Anwarul Haq

Promotion of trade and foreign investment in Bangladesh will figure prominently during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's forthcoming visit to two South East-Asian countries, the Philippines and Indonesia.

Bangladesh is also expected to sign at least three bilateral agreements with each of the two countries for introducing air services linking their capitals, investment protection and avoiding double taxation.

Sheikh Hasina will also address the leading members of business communities in both the countries in an effort to convince them to undertake joint venture projects in Bangladesh and expand trade.

Sheikh Hasina leaves Dhaka on September 4 on a four-day official visit to Indonesia and from there she will proceed to the Philippines for a three-day official visit.

The Prime Minister will lead a 44-member entourage that will comprise seven officials, 17 businessmen, seven members from the government media, three journalists and 10 members of security and personal staff.

The businessmen team will include FBCCI president Yussuf Abdullah Harun, DCCI president M A Quasem and Metropolitan Chamber president Samson Chowdhury.

The officials' team will include State Minister for Foreign Affairs. See Page 12 Col 7

## Asad clinches gold in world long-course swimming

Sports Reporter

Mohammad Asaduzzaman clinched the lone gold for the country on Sunday at the World Long-Course Swimming Championships held in Murshidabad, India.

Asad, a havelier in the Bangladesh Army, took 2 hours 13:20 minutes to touch the finishing rope ahead of 34 participants in the 19-km competition. Illiyas Ali of Bangladesh Navy won the bronze in the same event.

Besides, another Bangladeshi, Sheikh Selim, claimed the fifth place in men's 81-km See Page 12 Col 8

**A Very Warm Welcome**

To  
**His Excellency Mr. Ki Choo Lee**  
Vice Foreign Minister  
Republic of Korea

**HYUNDAI**

Sole Distributor: **Amfico Motors Ltd**  
Hadi Mansion (9th Floor), 2, Dilkusha C/A  
Dhaka-1000, Tel: 9568891, Fax: 9563642