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Today's issue
20 pages

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VOL. VIII NO. 169 REGD. NO. DA 781 INTERNET: <http://www.dailystarnews.com> ASHAR 30, 1405 BS DHAKA TUESDAY JULY 14, 1998 RABIUL AWAL 19, 1419 HIJRI 20 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 6.00

Two muggers beaten to death in city

By Staff Correspondent
Two alleged muggers were beaten to death by a mob while they tried to escape after snatching about Tk five lakh from a man near Nawab Yusuf Market in old part of the city yesterday afternoon.
Another alleged mugger was seriously injured in the beating. Police said the identity of the dead, both aged about 25 and also of the injured person could not be known. The injured unidentified young man was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). A revolver was recovered from his possession, police said.
Police could neither find out the man from whom the money was snatched nor any complaint was filed in this regard till filing of this report late last night.
Witnesses said, a gang of about eight men snatched a bag containing the money from the unidentified person at gun point when he was going in a
See Page 12 Col 5

Security at ZIA to be tightened

The government has decided to further tighten the security at Zia International Airport (ZIA) to curb smuggling and stop harassment of the passengers, reports BSS.
Several decisions were taken in this regard at a high-level meeting yesterday in the city with Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria in the chair, Home Minister Rafiqul Islam Bir Utam and Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Engineer Mosharraf Hossain attended the meeting.
The meeting discussed in details the passengers' service, security and problems in the unloading of goods at ZIA.

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Shahbazpur gasfield Govt finalising PSC with Unocal violating policy

By Sharier Khan

The government is likely to finalise a production sharing contract (PSC) with American company Unocal on Shahbazpur Gasfield, originally discovered by the country's lone exploration unit BAPEX.
The PSC, initiated by the government a couple of months ago, is now in final stage, sources said.
This would be yet another violation of the government's policy regarding leasing out gas structures or blocks to foreign companies, the sources said. The government's current policy allows only 'solicited bidding' to those investors in dif-

ferent blocks or gas structures. This PSC is the result of a one-year Letter of Intent (LOI) given by the government to Unocal to study and submit plans for the Shahbazpur gasfield. The LOI was given in January 1997 violating the same policy guideline, the sources claimed. At that time, the LOI was severely criticised by other foreign companies who were waiting for the Second Round Block Bidding for oil and gas exploration. They had said that it violated the policy and the principle of equal opportunity for them to participate.
On the basis of the LOI Unocal submitted a very ambitious 'Western Region Integrated Project' (WRIP) which aimed at developing Shahbazpur field, making a number of power plants and a regional gas pipeline.
Various components of the project, like the pipeline scheme and the power plant schemes, were severely criticised by government's experts who said that those would be losing concerns for Bangladesh. The World Bank, which earlier supported the WRIP, backed out from its position saying that Unocal's scheme was 'un-

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The French team celebrates with the FIFA trophy at the Stade de France in Saint-Denis, Paris, Monday after France defeated Brazil 3-0 in the 1998 World Cup final. —AFP photo

SAGQ meet in Kathmandu on July 16-17

The progress of South Asia Growth Quadrangle (SAGQ) involving four countries of SAARC will be reviewed when the foreign secretaries of the member states meet in Kathmandu on July 16 and 17, reports BSS.
This will be the second meeting of SAGQ — the sub-regional grouping — after a gap of 15 months. The first meeting of the sub-regional economic co-operation comprising Bangladesh, Bhutan, India (seven north-eastern states) and Nepal was also held in Kathmandu on April 2 last year.
About 25 crore people live in this area having a great potential in natural resources — especially water, hydrocarbon and forestry — waiting to be exploited in a coordinated manner for mutual benefit.
Foreign Secretary Mustafizur Rahman leaves Dhaka tomorrow leading a two-member delegation to attend
See Page 12 Col 2

Road barricade programme ends in Khagrachhari

From Our Correspondent
KHAGRACHHARI, July 13: A two-day road barricade programme called by the BNP-led Sarbadalio Oikya Parishad (SOP), ended here today.
Vehicles stayed off the roads, paralysing normal life.
The barricade was called protesting police harassment on SOP activists and demanding release of 33 arrested leaders and activists of the organisation.
Meanwhile, the indefinite strike at the Ramgarh thana headquarters, which began on July 9, has crippled normal life as it passed the fifth day today.
General Secretary of BNP in Khagrachhari, Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan told this correspondent over telephone that the strike would continue until the 33 arrested leaders and activists of SOP are released.
See Page 12 Col 7

5 drown : Road links snapped Fresh areas flooded in 10 districts

By Staff Correspondent

The flood situation in different parts of the country worsened further yesterday with almost all the rivers flowing above the danger marks.
Five persons drowned in Jamalpur and Gaibandha while thousands of people were either marooned or displaced in 10 districts.
Fresh areas were submerged in Kushtia, Naogaon, Sherpur, Jamalpur, Sirajganj Feni, Lalmonirhat, Pabna, Gaibandha, and Kurigram districts.
Road communications between Dhaka and Naogaon, and Sherpur and Jamalpur have been snapped.
Our correspondents report: Road link between Sherpur and Jamalpur snapped as flood water inundated Pureram and Shimoltoli of Charpukkhimari
See Page 12 Col 3

union of sadar thana.
Md Siddique Hossain, district relief officer, informed that four unions of sadar thana and three unions of Nalitabari thana have already been hit by the flood.
Flood water has inundated four more thanas of the greater Pabna district — Sujanagar, Sirajganj Sadar, Belkuchi and Kazipur.
The flood control embankment near the Sirajganj railway ghat was under severe threat due to four breaches in the embankment.
Erosion took a more serious turn in Kazipur and Chouhali thanas covering 25 villages.
Hundreds of residents of these areas have taken shelter in different embank-
See Page 12 Col 3

PM urges VCs to ensure congenial atmosphere on campus

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the teachers' community to ensure congenial atmosphere on campus for greater interest of the nation, reports UNB.
"If congenial academic atmosphere prevails on the campus, then terrorism will not exist there anymore," she said while talking to a delegation of the standing committee of the vice chancellors of Bangladesh University Council.
The 11-member delegation was led by Chairman of the Council and Vice Chancellor of Chittagong University Prof Abdul Mannan.
The Prime Minister said when she was in the opposition, she called for a moratorium on student politics, but the then government did not respond.
Vice Chancellor of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology Prof M Habibur Rahman said terrorism has totally been eliminated from his university.
Vice Chancellor of the Dhaka University (DU) prof AK Azad Chowdhury said he has
See Page 12 Col 4

Activist of BCP shot dead in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent
JHENIDAH, July 13: An activist of the outlawed Biplabi Communist Party (BCP) was shot dead at Jhenidah under Kaliganj thana here last night. The dead was identified as Khalilur Rahman, a regional leader of the party.
Some unknown armed men numbering 7 to 8 took Khallil from his house of about 8 pm and shot him to death in a nearby field, police said.
A case was filed with Kaliganj thana. The body was sent to morgue for autopsy.
Internal conflict might be the cause of the killing, police said.
Two BCP activists were shot dead on July 11.

Hashimoto resigns as Japanese PM

TOKYO, July 13: Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto resigned today for his ruling Liberal Democratic Party's stunning defeat in elections dominated by voter anger over his failure to pull Japan out of its worst recession in decades, reports AP.
Hashimoto grimly conceded defeat and said he would resign to take responsibility for the party's winning just 44 seats out of the 126 contested — half of Parliament's upper house — in Sunday's elections.
"The defeat was my fault," he said after a meeting of party leaders approved his decision to resign.
Party leaders have already begun discussing who would replace Hashimoto. Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi and former Chief Cabinet Secretary
See Page 12 Col 7



Ryutaro Hashimoto

Housewife murder: No arrests yet

By Staff Correspondent
Police could not arrest till last night any of the killers of housewife Shireen Akhter, who was slaughtered by three unidentified young men at her residence at Khilgaur Chowdhurypara in the city on Sunday.
Hasan 12, domestic help at the victim's flat and Monwar, gatekeeper of the building were being interrogated by police. The killers tied Hasan's hands and legs and left him in another room before killing Shireen.
A close relative of Shireen might be involved in the killing, police suspected. Even the victim's husband Abdul Qudus, who is a jute mill official, was not out of suspicion, a police official said.
Hasan told police that the three killers showed Shireen, mother of two, a photograph of one of her relatives and said that he sent them to her.
Police Sub-Inspector Faruk,
See Page 12 Col 3

Shinepukur loans Sonali Bank plans to be guarantor

By Staff Correspondent

Sonali Bank (SB) is planning to provide an 'inland guarantee' to Shinepukur Holdings Ltd to help it secure loans from local banks.
The move came following Bangladesh Bank's (BB) cancellation of a guarantee by SB to Shinepukur to secure 17 million US dollars in short term loans from ANZ Investment Bank in London.
According to sources, SB is preparing necessary papers and is likely to present the new proposal at its board meeting today. The guarantee is likely to be made in favour of a foreign bank in Dhaka, the sources said.
Sonali Bank's latest move has already created a ripple in the banking circle. Banking experts point out that this is going to be an 'unnecessary and unwise risk' taken by the bank. They point out that the Beximes Group, of which Shinepukur is a sister concern, already has Tk 158 crore liabilities with SB and that some of its loans were defaulted in the past and rescheduled many times.
"This is taking too much of exposure on a single group which has bad records with banks," said a banker of a private commercial bank. They not only have defaulted loans
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SSA official tells The Daily Star New terminal no threat to Chittagong Port

By Shehab Ahmed

Machinations by a section of trade union leaders operating from outside Chittagong Port have threatened the country's first container terminal port, proposed to be set up at Patenga by an American company in joint-venture with a Bangladeshi affiliate, sources concerned said.
Ultimatum by TUs
From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, July 13: Chittagong Port workers today threatened to launch a movement unless the government cancels its decision to allow a US company to build a con-
See Page 12 Col 3

10 killed, 40 injured in road accidents

By Staff Correspondent

At least 10 people were killed and about 40 injured in three road accidents in Pabna, Narsingdi and Feni yesterday, according to reports received here.
Our Correspondent from Pabna adds: Seven people were killed and 12 injured in a road accident yesterday near Madhurpur in Santhia thana on Pabna-Nagarbari highway.
According to the injured passengers, the accident occurred at around 7:30 am when a Sirajganj-bound passenger bus from Pabna collided with a loaded truck coming from the opposite direction. The collision occurred when the speeding truck was overtaking a microbus near Madhurpur bazar.
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