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## Salda gas wells PM asks BAPEX to submit project proposal

**By Staff Correspondent**  
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has directed BAPEX, the only Bangladeshi oil and gas exploration unit, to submit a project proposal for drilling two new gas wells at Salda.  
The Prime Minister gave the directive while visiting the Energy Ministry yesterday evening, sources said. This is the first such instruction given by the Prime Minister in favour of the national exploration company which discovered 10 gasfields since independence.  
BAPEX had struck and small gasfield near Salda River area under Kosba thana of Brahmanbaria district, near the Indian border in early 1996. It started supplying around 15 million cubic feet of gas per day since March last through a single well. The single well project was implemented at a cost of Tk 25 crore.  
The sources said that BAPEX had long been requesting the authorities to allow it to drill

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## 50 BNP lawmakers deposit resignation letters so far

**By Staff Correspondent**  
An unspecified number of BNP MPs were learnt to have deposited their resignation letters at the office of Chief Whip of the Opposition yesterday, the second day of a five-day special drive for collecting the letters from party lawmakers.  
On the first day of the drive, none turned up to deposit resignation letter at the Chief Whip's office.  
Under the five-day drive which began on Sunday, BNP whips are assigned to sit at the Chief Whip's office by rotation and receive the resignation letters. Whip Amanullah Aman was on duty yesterday. Aman told newsmen he received some letters but he could not give the number of those.  
The special drive was initiated in the wake of slow progress in the process of depositing resignation letters.  
According to party sources, some 50 of the 110 BNP MPs have so far deposited their resignation letters. The move is unlikely to go faster unless a meeting of the BNP parliamentary party is held before the next session of parliament begins on September 7, some MPs willing to debate the issue in that meeting said.

## Tania rape case Police introduced me to Mora and also asked to be a witness: Shipon

**By Court Correspondent**  
The 7-year-old witness who had earlier identified the man who raped minor girl Tania at the CMM's court building, said during cross-examination yesterday that police had introduced him to the alleged rapist.  
The case is being tried in the Naris-Shishu Nirjatan Bishes Adalat, Dhaka.  
During over six hours of cross-examination by the defence lawyer of the accused, Obaydur Rahman Mora Shipon, a playmate of the victim, said he did not see Mora do 'bad things' to Tania.  
He added that after five days of the incident, police introduced him to Mora and asked him to say that Mora did 'bad

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Efforts are underway to save DND embankment threatened by flood waters.

— Star photo

## Flood situation may worsen further DND dam threatened, leaks at many points

**By Staff Correspondent**  
Thousands of people living in a vast area protected by the Dhaka-Narayanganj-Demra (DND) embankment are passing their days in fear as swelling flood waters threatened the dam over the last couple of days.  
According to sources in the Water Development Board, water level was just two inches below the dam-height at DND Pump House point yesterday evening.  
A small leak developed in the dam at Konapara, in Dhaka-Demra part of the embankment, on Saturday night. WDB engineers promptly de-

scribed and sealed it with a makeshift bamboo structure, supported by sand bags.  
Talking to The Daily Star on the spot yesterday, AT Khandakar, an executive engineer of the WDB, said that for the time being, danger was over. But, if water level rises further, the embankment itself and the people living in the protected area would be in trouble.  
Our Narayanganj Correspondent reports: Leaks developed on Sunday night at Ali-ganj, Pagla and Munshikkhola points of the DND embankment, in its Dhaka-Narayanganj stretch. As an immediate

step, sand bags were piled up to stop seeping of flood water. Water also seeped through the dam at Majhdair, Fatullah and Chashara near Narayanganj town.  
However, local MP Shamim Osman told newsmen yesterday that people should refrain from spreading rumours about damage to the dam.  
It may be mentioned that the 1988 floods had also threatened DND embankment and at that time also cracks developed at Konapara point.  
Asked about the latest situation last night, an official at the

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## Flood waters may recede slowly

**By Staff Correspondent**  
Duration of the floods this year may prolong further as the swelling flood waters might take more time to recede because of the imminent spring tide, according to a flood control expert.  
"If the levels of water in the Padma and Jamuna reach their peak simultaneously then the damage of flood this year will be more than any other year," said Prof Jahir Uddin Chowdhury of the Institute of Flood Control and Drainage Research at BUET.  
"The water level of Brahmaputra-Jamuna reaches its annual peak in late August from heavy monsoon rainfall. The water level of the Ganges starts rising in June/July and attains its peak in late August or early September," Dr Chowdhury said.

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## Cabinet decision to seek flood aid

By Nurul Kabir

The government has decided to seek international assistance to implement its post-flood rehabilitation programmes, although it was initially reluctant to ask for any foreign help in this regard.  
The decision was taken at the weekly cabinet meeting yesterday. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had expressed her reluctance in the first week of this month.  
"The flood has now proved to be really devastating. It has already damaged lot of property, destroyed crops and infrastructure across the country. In the changed circumstances, the government has decided to seek foreign assistance to cope with the flood situation," Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Abdul Mattin Khashru told The Daily Star last night.  
However, the cabinet decided the priorities of the rehabilitation programmes and felt that the government should clearly communicate to the international organisations concerned

as to what kinds of relief materials the government expects from them.  
The question of informing the donors the specific needs arose out of past experience. "After the devastating 1988 floods, the foreigners had sent, along with other materials, items like suits, pants, sleeping gowns and so on which were of no use to the flood victims," said a minister seeking anonymity. "In 1988, the government received helicopters for relief operation, while it had to spend lot of money for fuel and food (procured from five star hotels) for the helicopter crew."  
The cabinet observed that foreign assistance would be needed for procurement of food and medicine, repair and reconstruction of houses, educational institutions, roads and railway tracks, collection of seeds and so on.  
In this regard, the Prime Minister asked the ministries

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## HANA team identifies 11 assistance projects

The US military team of experts on Humanitarian Assistance Needs Assessment (HANA) has identified 11 projects for enhancing the government's ability to respond to natural disasters, report agencies.  
The three-member team submitted the recommendations to Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad in the city yesterday while briefing him on the findings of the just-concluded HANA in Bangladesh.  
The recommendations came after the military experts had visited Dhaka, Rangpur, Bogra, Chittagong and Cox's Bazar and talked to individuals and groups in different governmental and non-governmental organisations.  
The briefing was to give the minister an overview of their mission and also their activities, methods and recommenda-

tions, said an official handout.  
The team said the objective of their mission is to help the government boost its ability to respond to natural disasters and how the US government, if asked, could effectively provide assistance to Bangladesh in the event of any natural disasters.  
The US experts said they had assessed how the government organisations and NGOs respond to various types of disasters like cyclones, floods, earthquakes.  
They found that the government is responsive to the needs of people during disasters, saying early warning systems have helped prevent loss of lives. However, there was scope for the further improving the systems and procedures, the experts said.  
The team made a set of recommendations to further im-

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## No classes held at JU: Teachers give ultimatum

**By Staff Correspondent**  
Students of Jahangirnagar University yesterday staged sit-in demonstrations and brought out processions on the campus protesting the alleged rape of three students and Sunday's attack on a female teacher of the university.  
No classes could be held in the university as the ruling Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League continued its indefinite strike for the second day yesterday demanding a probe into the

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## Sanjay murder 5 Shibir activists arrested in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Aug 24: Police arrested five Chhatra Shibir activists from a mess at the city's Ice Factory road early this morning in connection with the Sanjay Talapatra killing, reports UNB.  
The arrested were identified as Abdullah Al Mannan and Iqbal Hossain of Chittagong College, Mohammad Yusuf and Jastimuddin of Mohsin College and Abu Raihan M Delwar Hossain of Law College.  
They were taken to a three-day police remand after producing before the court.  
Sanjay Talapatra, an activist of Chhatra Union, along with nine other students were seriously injured in an attack allegedly by Islami Chhatra

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## New site to shift Sayedabad Bus Terminal selected

NARAYANGANJ, Aug 24: The authorities have selected a new site near Kanchpur Bridge for shifting the Sayedabad Bus Terminal in the capital, reports UNB.  
Three separate bus terminals will be constructed at the selected site, said the officials.  
Specific proposals on the shifting of the terminal will be sent to the Prime Minister's Office very soon, said an official of the district administration.

## AC Akram's admission to PG Showcause notices on Investigating Officer

By Staff Correspondent

The Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court yesterday issued two showcause notices on the CID Investigating Officer of the Rubel murder case and asked him to reply within seven days.  
In one of the showcause notices, the court asked Munshi Atikur Rahman, the IO, to explain why AC Akram Hussain, the principal accused in the case, was sent to PG Hospital during his remand period without securing permission from the court.  
Another showcause notice sought explanation on how division was awarded to Akram in jail.  
Additional CMM Habibur Rahman issued the showcause notices when the lawyers of Rubel's father challenged the matters in court.  
Earlier, the court had fixed August 24 for producing the seven accused. The case in connection with the murder of Rubel at the DB custody was lodged by Abdur Rab, father of the victim, on July 24, the day after the killing. Seven DB men including AC Akram were accused of the murder.  
Of the seven accused, six were produced in the court yesterday.  
AC Akram was not produced in the court on grounds that he was undergoing treatment at PG Hospital.  
Separate bail petitions were submitted for six of the accused — Inspector Aminul Islam, SI Hayatul Islam Thakur, ASI Abdul Karim, Havilder Nuruzzaman and constables Parvez and Faruk. The petitions were, however, rejected.

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## Govt has failed to stand by flood victims: Khaleda

HARIRAMPUR, Manikganj, Aug 24: BNP chairperson and Leader of Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday accused the government of failing to assist the flood victims, reports UNB.  
"This government has no right to stay in power. It has failed to stand by the people struck by flood," she told spontaneous crowds in the affected areas.  
The BNP chief boarded a motor launch from Aricha ferry ghat at mid-day and visited as many as nine flood-stricken areas including Kanchanpur, Paturia Ghat, Nayakandi, Ramkrishnapur and Gopinath.

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## Sramik League factions clash at Khulna: 30 hurt

**From Staff Correspondent**  
KHULNA, Aug 24: At least 30 people including 11 policemen were injured in a fierce clash between rival factions of Sramik League at Khalishpur this evening.  
The injured policemen who received bullet injuries have been admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital. The others injured were admitted to different

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## Bangabandhu Murder Case If Zia was not a conspirator, he was an inspiration : SPP

"If General Ziaur Rahman was not a conspirator, he can be said to have inspired the killers of Bangabandhu," Special Public Prosecutor in the Bangabandhu Murder Case told the court yesterday, reports UNB.  
SPP Serajul Haq quoted a witness saying that Gen Zia, coming out with a half-shaven face, told Col Shafa't Jamil: "President is dead, so what? Vice President is there. Uphold the Constitution."  
Zia was quoted to have made the statement when Col Shafa't Jamil went to his residence on August 15 morning and informed him about the killing.  
The SPP, quoting Zia's remarks, questioned: "Can it be the attitude of the man who was in charge of defence and the Constitution. This comment proves if Zia was not a conspirator, he was an inspiration. Now we can easily guess who was the boss."

Zia did not even want to know who had killed the president or how he was killed, Haq said. "We can presume he was aware of it. I read a lot in this language... it was a contemptuous utterance."  
Relating another incident that Major Dalim and Major Noor, both being dismissed from the Army, were found at the tennis ground for the senior officers on August 14. Haq said when Col Hamid, also a witness in the case, after being instructed by Army Chief General Shafiqullah, asked them with whose permission they were playing there, they reportedly told him that it was Ziaur Rahman.  
Continuing his argument on the fifth day over the depositions of witnesses who had narrated the post-killing scenario, the SPP said the killers did not have the conviction. "They lied about the killings."

During cross-examination PW-8 Major Shahadat Hossain Khan said that after going to Bangabandhu's residence on August 15 morning at the instruction of the Army chief, he found the residence was under the control of Major Noor and Captain Bazul Huda.  
Capt Huda took Major Shahadat around Bangabandhu's house and seeing the body of Sheikh Kamal, he asked why Kamal was killed? Shahadat in his deposition quoted Huda as saying, "Kamal was killed as he tried to make a phone call."  
About the killing of police sub-inspector Siddiq, it was said that he was killed as he picked up quarrel after he was asked to leave, but Huda did not reply when he was asked why Sheikh Nasser was killed.  
When Shahadat asked why the President was killed in such a manner, Huda replied: "As we

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