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## President's appeal to face flood unitedly

RAJSHAHI, Sept 5: President Shahabuddin Ahmed today appealed to all, irrespective of party affiliation, to face the devastating flood unitedly, reports UNB.

After a day-long visit to flood affected areas in Bhuapur, Chapalnabaganj and Rajshahi, the President was speaking at a briefing session at the Rajshahi Circuit House. The meeting was attended by the elite and political leaders of Rajshahi, including City Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu and Nadim Mostafa, MP.

Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner briefed the President on the flood situation and distribution of relief materials in the division and the district.

President Shahabuddin first visited the Bhuapur-Tarakandi embankment. He saw the damaged spots of the embankment at Palsha, about five kilometres from Bhuapur thana.

The embankment was threatened by the flood waters of the river Jamuna. The president was told that army took appropriate action to save the embankment and now it is under control.

He saw a number of places of See Page 12 Col 3

## PM's directive Open more shelters for marooned people

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina ordered more flood shelters for marooned people and asked officials to ensure food and medicine for them, reports UNB.

"If needed, the hajj camp at Tongi and community centres in the city will be used as flood centres, she said, presiding over an emergency meeting at Ganobhaban last night.

She also directed to shift the marooned people, particularly women and children, to the flood shelters and take all possible measures for their care.

Cabinet ministers, Dhaka City Mayor, the Chief Whip, MPs of the city area, and central Awami League leaders attended the meeting to discuss the overall flood situation, relief activities and preparations for the post-flood rehabilitation.

Expressing her concern about the health of flood-affected children, the Prime Minister asked the officials to See Page 12 Col 2

## Record trade at CSE

Star Business Report

Trading at the Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE) reached an all time high yesterday.

A total of 52.66 lakh shares and debentures were traded on the day, surpassing the previous trade records in the country.

The CSE turnover has been rising since it switched over to online trading on June 2 this year from three major cities — Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet — that falls under the CSE network, a CSE press release said.

"Due to transparency of CSE trading system, investors started to regain confidence in the capital market of the country," it noted.

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## Business

ADB expresses solidarity with govt in facing flood effect

US-Japan talks on global financial crisis end without agreement

CSE experiences unprecedented trading Pages 6, 7, 8

## Aman is gone, support to Rabi crop will be crucial: Economists

By Inam Ahmed

As the ongoing flood is making a big dent in the country's poverty alleviation prospect, economists view that the challenge before the government will be to ensure a large-scale credit intervention in the agriculture sector.

They also say that to stop the asset liquidation process by the

poor to sustain the impact of the flood, the government should make a careful sequencing of food import and safety net programmes. The main strategy should be to make food and jobs available in the right time.

"The country's prospect for graduation from poverty is cer-

tainly going to be affected by the flood and this will be a major setback for Bangladesh. A major portion of the poor will again slide back below the poverty line because of income erosion," says Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS).

"It will now be important to provide adequate agriculture credit for Rabi crops as prospect for Aman has been greatly reduced," says Dr KAS Murshid of BIDS. Programmes like food for work will be important for the marginal and landless farmers because even if food See Page 12 Col 7

## Indian co proposes to set up 1000mw power plant

From Pallab Bhattacharya

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: India's state-owned National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) has proposed to set up a 500 to 1000 MW power plant in Bangladesh in a joint venture with Power Development Board (PDB) and a private fuel supplier, NTPC chairman Rajendra Singh has

said.

The Rs 12,741 crore proposal, put forward by the NTPC is under consideration of the Bangladesh government, he told a news conference here yesterday.

Under the proposal worked out by the Indian power com-

pany, Bangladesh would have the first right of refusal — that is the proposed plant, which would generate electricity by using gas in Bangladesh, would first meet the demand in that country and only then the power can be transferred to In-

See Page 12 Col 6

## All rivers rise 29 more die Renewed onslaught on 24 dists

By Shehab Ahmed



BURDEN OF LIFE: Two street children returning home carrying their day's earnings, through mud and slit of flood water in the city yesterday. — Star photo by Anisur Rahman

The Brahmaputra, coming back from a retreat, has continued to unleash its fury in tango with the Ganges and threatened to worsen the country's flood situation further in the next few days, experts said.

Officials reported 29 more deaths from 24 districts that saw flooding take a more serious turn yesterday. The death toll now stood at 522.

In all, 47 districts have so far been affected. At least 13 of them had their situation worsened by Friday night due to the Brahmaputra surge.

The rise in the Brahmaputra synchronising with the Ganges, both already above the red mark, pushed water levels up in other rivers, including the Buriganga and the Shitalakhya, worsening the situation in and around the Dhaka city.

The Faridpur district administration called in the Army to help save the town protection embankment, threatened by flood waters yesterday.

In Chandpur, the situation deteriorated for the third time in two months as the town went under three to four feet of water.

Rushing water from a swollen Ganges down the Gorai, its distributary, riddled through the flood protection embankment at Talbaria in Mirpur thana of Kushtia, inundating homes of at least 3,000 families.

The Ganges looked menacing for the town protection embankment at Rajshahi, reports from our correspondents and other sources said.

"The Brahmaputra, rising by a metre during the past three days, is going to worsen the situation in central Bangladesh, including the Dhaka city and its adjoining areas, further to today," an official at Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) said last night.

The official said the situation in the capital and its suburbs, already reeling under the worst floods in decades, is going to decline further, adding to the miseries of the people trapped since the middle of July.

Reports received by FFWC from India said the Brahmaputra continued its rising trend at Dhubri and Goalpara. At Farakka, the Ganges remained steady, suggesting the worsening trend downstream, the FFWC official said.

See Page 12 Col 3

## Huge firearms, ammunition stolen from KMP malkhana

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Sept 5: A large number of firearms, ammunition and Tk 92,220, kept in the malkhana (store room) of Khulna Metropolitan Police as alamats (evidences) of cases, were stolen early this morning.

KMP Commissioner Nazrul Islam said the theft may have been committed by a gang of criminals in connivance with the court inspector and some policemen.

The articles were kept in the malkhana after their seizure and submission in the CMM's court as alamats of different cases filed with five police stations of the city since 1980. The articles also included some recovered by police.

As per initial counting, the firearms included five 303 rifles, eight foreign-made guns, two home-made guns, eleven revolvers, five home-made pistols, 480 rounds of rifle ammu-

nition, 51 rounds of gun cartridges, 39 rounds of revolver bullets and one round of SLR bullet.

The number of stolen firearms and other articles may increase after the counting is complete, expected by tonight, AC (Court) Abdul Halim said.

A four-member enquiry team headed by the Additional Commissioner of KMP has been formed to probe the incident. Additional police personnel have been deployed to guard the store room.

The thieves reportedly entered the malkhana by breaking the ventilator.

The store room was beside the court room of the CMM in the Collectorate building. The lock of the store room was found broken.

Three constables assigned to guard the store room have been See Page 12 Col 7

## ADB considers spl fund for post-flood rehabilitation

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is considering a special fund for the post-flood rehabilitation programme in Bangladesh in addition to its annual funding of US dollar 300 million, reports UNB.

"We will try to find additional fund and concentrate our help for the rehabilitation of infrastructure damaged by flood," Francesco Pittore, the leader of a delegation of ADB Board of Directors, told a press conference at the ADB office in the city yesterday.

Pittore said a technical mission will be in Dhaka next week to assess the extent of damage and identify the priority projects where ADB can extend its help.

See Page 12 Col 6

## Anyakoju urges C' wealth states to help Bangladesh

Commonwealth Secretary General Emeke Anyakoju has appealed to the member countries of the Commonwealth to extend support for rehabilitation and reconstruction of Bangladesh affected by the worst flood in recent history, reports BSS.

"I am confident that all Commonwealth countries in a position to assist Bangladesh in the process of reconstruction and rehabilitation will do so," Anyakoju said in a message to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Thursday.

The Commonwealth chief executive, who was saddened at the loss of life and large-scale damage caused by the flood, told the Prime Minister that he was making appeals to other member states to come forward to assist Bangladesh to cope with the disaster.

## CID yet to produce 2 DB men before judicial probe body

By Staff Correspondent

The CID could not yet produce the two "missing" DB personnel before the judicial inquiry commission, probing the Rubel murder, according to sources close to the commission.

The Commission had earlier asked the CID to produce the two DB personnel before it and on September one, sent summons to produce them "immediately."

When asked the CID personnel investigating the case told The Daily Star last night that they were yet to reach a decision in that regard.

"There is a lot of difference between arresting any one from the street and arresting an official of the government," an investigator said replying to a question. The two DB personnel — SI Nurul Alam and SI Tarek — are "missing" since the murder of Shamim Reza Rubel See Page 12 Col 4

## Constable caught for allegedly snatching gold chain

By Staff Correspondent

A police constable was caught by local people for allegedly snatching a gold chain from a female passenger of an auto-rickshaw at the Nabisco Crossing in Tejgaon yesterday afternoon.

Police said, the alleged snatcher was identified as Rokon Uddin, a constable of Razarbagh Police Line.

The incident took place when the passenger, Anwara Begum, was going to Nakhla-para from Tongi on the auto-rickshaw at about 5:30 pm.

The constable in plain-clothes snatched the gold chain when the auto-rickshaw was stuck in a traffic jam.

Local people chased Rokon when Anwara screamed for help. At one stage, they caught Rokon and beat him up.

Police rescued Rokon from the mob and arrested him but failed to recover the gold chain. Anwara Begum fled a case with Tejgaon thana in this regard yesterday.

## Seminar on Investment in South Asia Dhaka proposes setting up of Asian energy grid

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday proposed setting up of an 'Asian energy grid' for full realisation of the opportunities in the South Asian energy sector, reports UNB.

The opportunities in the energy sector should be fully realised. An Asian energy grid could be of immense benefit to all of our countries. Such a grid could eventually extend all the way from Turkmenistan to Singapore," she said.

The Prime Minister was speaking at a seminar on "Investment in South Asia" organised by the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) at Sonargaon Hotel yesterday

morning.

Inaugurating the seminar, Hasina said that in the course of economic liberalisation, all the South Asian countries should enact substantive and meaningful changes in their investment and import-export trade laws.

This initiative, she hoped, would lead to a 'uniform economic regime supported by a common regulatory framework.'

To promote intra-regional trade, she called for harmonisation of customs procedures, improvement of shipping and port facilities, and simplification of visa procedure for businessmen and investors.

The Prime Minister said: "Task Forces may be constituted with senior government officials of the cooperating countries and representatives of the private sector to look into the infrastructural facilities."

Emphasising on strengthening the SAARC, she said within SAARC itself, all the member countries should increasingly cooperate on specific projects.

"We need to improve the environment of business and investment. Our infrastructure must match with that of the more advanced countries if we want to compete in the global market."

She said South Asia, the See page 11

## Train services at Ctg disrupted as Shibir workers kidnap driver

CHITTAGONG, Sept 5: Train services to and from the port city were disrupted for four and a half hours today as drivers went on a wildcat strike following abduction of a driver and attack on his assistant, reports UNB.

Railway sources said activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir kidnaped driver Ahmed Kabir of a train shuttling between the city and Chittagong University and stabbed his assistant Delwar Hossain in the morning.

Drivers went on the strike immediately after the incident. However, train services resumed at about 12:30 pm with the intervention of higher authorities. The shuttle service between the city and the university was suspended for security reason.

Dr Kamal Hossain, former ministers Dr Khandaker Mosharrif Hossain and Rabia Bhuiyan, former Advisor to the See Page 12 Col 6

## UZ Parishad Bill to be placed in JS Sept 8

By Reaz Ahmad and Mizan Ali

The Upazila Parishad Bill will be placed in the Jatiya Sangsad in the coming session scheduled to begin tomorrow, according to official sources.

If the bill is passed, it will pave the way for revival of the Upazila system, introduced in 1982-83. But this time, there is no proposal for Upazila Court in the proposed structure, the sources pointed out.

The bill is likely to be placed before the House on September 8, a source in the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat told The Daily Star yesterday.

The draft bill on Upazila Parishad was approved by the Cabinet on May 13.

According to the proposed bill, affairs of different departments of the government

except police administration and judiciary will be independently handled by the Upazila Parishads, said sources in the Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Ministry.

"If passed by parliament, election to upazila parishads may be held by the first quarter of next year," said one source.

Immediately after coming to power, the Awami League government had set up a commission with Rahmat Ali, MP, as its chairman to recommend establishment of local government bodies. The commission suggested a four-tier local government system — Gram Parishad, Union Parishad, Upazila Parishad and Zila See Page 12 Col 8

## Keep blocks 9, 10, 11 out of on-going bidding process

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a roundtable discussion on Gas and Oil Resources in Bangladesh yesterday urged the government to keep blocks 9, 10 and 11 out of the Second Round Block Bidding and to try to reach a national consensus on the use and utilisation of the country's energy resources.

The speakers included a number of former ministers, advisers, secretaries, ambassadors, defence officials, executives of BISS, vice-chancellors

## Strengthen BAPEX, don't plan gas export now, seminar told

of universities and political scientists, educationists, technical experts, chamber representatives, economists, lawyers and journalists.

The discussion, organised by the Centre for Human Rights, was held at Hotel Sheraton in the city.

The speakers expressed their concern at the way the government opened up all the blocks for exploration by foreign oil

companies and observed that the whole process was being undertaken in an "opaque manner."

"It's our constitutional right to know what's going on (in the second round oil and gas bidding)," said Dr Kamal Hossain, a former minister and a legal expert on energy resources. "We shall go to the supreme court if the government signs Production Sharing Contract (PSC) in

secretly. We want to be ensured that the national interest is protected in these contracts."

They also stressed the need for revitalising oil and gas exploration activities by BAPEX to build enough technically trained manpower.

The government should not plan gas exports right now, they said.

The roundtable, moderated by Barrister Abdur Razzak, also

proposed formation of a national commission on oil and gas, to be headed by Dr Kamal Hossain, to look into the pros and cons of the current Production Sharing Contracts (PSC) utilisation of gas and oil and to help build a national consensus on such issues.

Dr Kamal Hossain, former ministers Dr Khandaker Mosharrif Hossain and Rabia Bhuiyan, former Advisor to the

Caretaker Government, Dr AH Wahiduddin Mahmud, Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, former bureaucrats Tabarak Hossain, Barrister AKH Morshed, Hedayet Ahmed, MR Osmany, Dr Mohammad Ahsan, former defence officials Air Vice Marshal (retd) Mumtaz Uddin Ahmed, Maj Gen SM Ibrahim, BP AWC, former BUIS executives Maj Gen (retd) Ghulam Quader, See Page 12 Col 1