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Capital's direct rail link with Ctg to be restored tomorrow

Direct rail communications between the capital and Chittagong via Arikhola station will resume tomorrow. Additional Director General (Operation) of Bangladesh Railway (BR) N M Kurshed Anwar told BSS yesterday. The BR official said rail tracks were raised in different flood-hit areas and trial run of goods train over the Pubail-Arikhola section have been conducted. Kamalapur railway station sources said train services to Chittagong, Sylhet, Comilla or Noakhali are being operated through the alternative Mymensingh route. They said the BR authorities suspended train services in a number of routes across the country due to worst ever flood.

Govt to import another 10 lakh MT foodgrains

The government is determined to maintain steady supply of food to the people in any circumstance as it has adequate foodgrains to meet the post-flood demand in the country, an official handout said in the city yesterday, reports BSS. The government has also decided to import 10 lakh tonnes of additional food on commercial basis to increase its food reserves, the handout said adding that arrangements for importing three lakh tonnes of rice and three lakh tonnes of wheat had already been finalised. Arrangements for importing the rest three lakh tonnes of

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India sending 20,000 MT of foodgrains

India is immediately sending 20,000 metric tons of foodgrains to help Bangladesh cope up with the situation created by the devastating floods, official sources said, reports BSS.

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US relief arrives

By Special Correspondent A chartered Boeing 707 carrying United States relief materials for Bangladeshi flood victims, worth 172,000 dollars, arrived in Dhaka yesterday, which raises the US assistance so far to 64,982,500 dollars. "I am satisfied with the way the US responded... A friend in need is a friend indeed," Finance Minister A.S.M. Kibria told reporters after receiving the consignment. The relief materials include 250 rolls of plastic sheets, 1000 woolen blankets, 10,000 five-gallon water jugs and two water

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Business Floods take their toll on production, manufacturing: Export target looks too tall to reach Ministers visit flood-hit industrial belt of Narayanganj: Donors promise financial support for reconstruction plan Both DSE and CSE indices rise Pages 6, 7, 8



ALTERNATIVES: Man has always found ways in his perennial fight against cruel nature. (Left) A bulldozer levels the approach road to the newly-installed ferry terminal near the Kanchpur Bridge to facilitate movement of export cargo to Chittagong bypassing the flooded portion of the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway. (Right) Giant trawlers now ferry travellers between Kanchpur and Daudkandi from the same point. —Star photos by Amran Hossain

Major rivers mark fall, fury of flood weakens

The fury of flood seems to have weakened with the water levels declining in all major rivers, raising the hope among millions of victims that their ordeal may end shortly, report agencies. Improving trend was observed in 18 districts while the situation remained static in nine others. The flood situation in 11 central and southern districts, however, continued to deteriorate. Weather experts predict the situation in the central districts of the country will continue to improve. It will show slight improvement in and around Dhaka city in the next 24 hours, they said.

The situation will also improve along Brahmaputra-Jamuna, Padma and Meghna rivers. But from Munshiganj to Chandpur may continue to worsen due to existing abnormalities. Board officials said. The Dhaka City Protection Embankment, and the Rajshahi and Faridpur town protection embankments are also safe, officials said.

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maintained its service with Sylhet and port city Chittagong through Mymensingh route. The Flood Forecasting Centre yesterday said the situation in 11 districts slightly deteriorated during the high tide. Those are Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur, Faridpur, Madaripur, Gopalganj, Shariatpur, Mymensingh, Narsingdi, Brahmanbaria and Laxmipur. The situation remained static in Chapainawabganj, Kishoreganj, Tangail, Gaibandha, Bogra, Noakhali, Bagerhat, Chuadanga and Natore. Improvement was observed in Munshiganj, Manikganj, Ra- See Page 12 Col 8

PM opens power plant in Khulna All power sector operations to be privatised

KHULNA, Sept 12: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said all power sector operations, including billing and distribution, will be gradually privatised, report agencies. Work for separating production, transmission and distribution for better power management has already begun, the prime minister said while inaugurating the 110-megawatt barge-mounted power plant, the first ever private sector power plant of the country at Khalishpur today.

She added that the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh has been formed for this purpose. "The Khulna barge-mounted power plant will play an important role in solving the electricity crisis in south-western region of the country," she said. The prime minister laid special emphasis on generation of electricity with participation of the private sector which has been given a lucrative incentives. See page 11

An appeal by Prof Yunus

I feel that a grave disaster of catastrophic proportions is in the making. I don't expect everybody to agree with me. But I appeal to every body, particularly the government, to work on the basis of the worst case scenario drawn up by themselves. Let us not take chances. One life is too many. (See his article on page 4).

PM postpones visit to SE Asia

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has postponed her scheduled visits to three South East Asian countries in early next month in view of the devastating floods, Foreign Secretary Mustafizur Rahman told BSS yesterday. The prime minister was stated to embark on a tour of Malaysia, Brunei and Vietnam from October 1. Rahman said the prime minister would rather stay home to direct the massive relief operations in the affected areas. The decision to postpone the visit has been communicated to all the countries concerned, Rahman added.

Name of Labour Ministry may be changed

By Staff Correspondent The name of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower may be changed. Two proposed names — Ministry of Labour and Human Resources Development and Ministry of Labour and Employment — will be placed before the Cabinet meeting tomorrow in this regard, sources in the ministry said yesterday. See Page 12 Col 7

Rivers ease pressure on DND dam

By Shehab Ahmed The retreating Buriganga and Shitalakhya rivers, besieging Dhaka and its suburbs and threatening the defence line of concrete walls and earthen embankments, rekindled hopes among its defenders yesterday that the battle may have been finally won. "If the Shitalakhya slid down today by 4 cm," Abdur Razzak, a policeman at the railway level crossing gate at the Chashara station on the road to Narayanganj, said quoting an official. He had been guarding the closed level crossing behind piles of sandbags protecting the railway lines and the Dhaka-Narayanganj-Demra (DND) embankment. The policeman not only maintained vigil watching the river threatening the embankment for the past two weeks but also lent a hand in reinforcing the sandbags along with sol-

diers and local people. Abu Taher Khandaker, an engineer supervising the epic battle to protect the city from being overrun by the two rivers, said it had taken at least 400,000 sandbags to keep the rivers at bay. "I am a bit relaxed, hoping and praying to Allah that the water levels in the rivers keep on falling," the engineer added. He had virtually been on his toes, making his temporary headquarters on the station, where the embankment became most vulnerable. At least 600 workers worked day and night, aided by thousands of volunteers and arms soldiers to protect the embankment. But the battle is not over for Abdul Huq, 36, a vendor who sold savoury snacks of jhal murti (puffed rice) at the nearby Narayanganj town, which still See Page 12 Col 4

Apparels for export to be flown to Ctg from today

Star Report In a unique emergency operation, two chartered cargo planes will start flying stockpiled readymade garments for export from Dhaka to Chittagong from today. The aircraft, Y-8 and AN-12, chartered by BGMEA will each carry 22 metric tonnes of export cargo from Dhaka and will bring in similar quantity of raw material for the garments industries. Each plane will make five to six round trips every day. "This is the biggest operation ever done in Bangladesh to salvage the business sector," said Mostafa Golam Quddus, president of BGMEA. The aim is to save the garment industry from a possible backlash in case of failure to supply apparels in time. In the last 15 days, garment factories in Dhaka could not send their products to Chittagong for export as flood

snapped the road link. As a result, apparels worth some 300 million US dollars have become stockpiled. This is the peak season for supplying winter clothings. On the other hand, as supply of raw materials dried up, production at hundreds of factories has come to a halt. However, garments exporters are facing a different kind of problem at Chittagong Port. They reported that there is now an acute shortage of containers to ship their apparels. According to sources, different private parties in collusion with some shipping agencies have hoarded containers, creating an artificial crisis. As a result, exporters have to pay much higher prices for each container. According to the sources, exporters have to pay 500 dollars in excess for a 20-foot container and 1000 dollar See Page 12 Col 7

Justice Khan to submit report today 'Death of Rubel was not accidental'

By Staff Correspondent The death of university student Shamim Reza Rubel in DB custody was not an "accidental incident", Justice Habibur Rahman Khan, chairman of the judicial enquiry commission said yesterday. The one-man commission probing the murder of Rubel is scheduled to submit its report to the Home Ministry today, Justice Khan told newsmen at his Circuit House Road chamber yesterday evening. "About 10 persons are involved as per the findings of the commission," he said adding, "The motive behind the killing could not be specifically ascertained." Justice Khan also hoped that the commission report would not be disclosed before submission of the charge sheet by the CID. In his report he has also

suggested the home ministry not to disclose the report to the CID before it frames the charge sheet, Justice Khan said. The commission formed on July 27, four days after the killing of Rubel in DB custody, submits its report after investigation for about 47 days. Justice Khan also said that statements of 56 people were recorded by the commission. They include the accused, witnesses, victim's family members and some distinguished persons who were called by the commission for giving their opinion regarding measures for improving the policing system. The 80-page report is divided in two parts — one on Rubel killing and the other on recommendations on how to avoid such incidents in future. See Page 12 Col 3

Days and nights of people on rooftops Receding water washes away their houses, robbers loot last means

By Morshed Ali Khan The marooned people in their thousands in the capital's periphery are now under a new threat — powerful current of flood water. People living on platforms or rooftops of their kutcha houses at Jhauchar, Balurchar, Nawabcher, Rayerchar, Kholamura and Khagalil under Keraniganj thana on the northern side of the river Buriganga, said the earthen floors of their houses were being washed away by the current. At night, families kept vigil in the dark as the authorities

have snapped power supply to all the villages, fearing electrocution and robbery. At Khagalil village, a woman and her three children were calling for help from the roof of their tin-shed house when this correspondent was passing by in a boat at about 11 am yesterday. One of the bamboo pillars of their house has given in as the earthen floor has been washed away, they said. Momina Begum, the mother, said her husband had left about two hours back to buy food. "We were thinking of moving out to

platforms. More than 100 cattle were kept on the second floor. Mohammad Suja Mia, owner of a re-cycling factory, was frying pizzas over a kerosene stove on the first floor of the building. He said he had no other alternative. His factory was submerged two months ago and he had run out of all savings. This place was famous for so many types of factories including aluminium, rickshaw spare parts and re-cycling factories. Now you only hear splatters. See Page 12 Col 1.

day but can not find a suitable transport," she said. This correspondent took them to a two-storied building about half a kilometre downstream. Some other families from Khagalil had also taken shelter on the building's roof, Mometa said. At Kholamura, once a busy bazaar, life came to a standstill. The rows of shops were under water. A few boatmen were gossipping. Barbers had set up their shops on the first floor of a four-storied under-construction cinema hall. Two vegetable vendors were sitting on

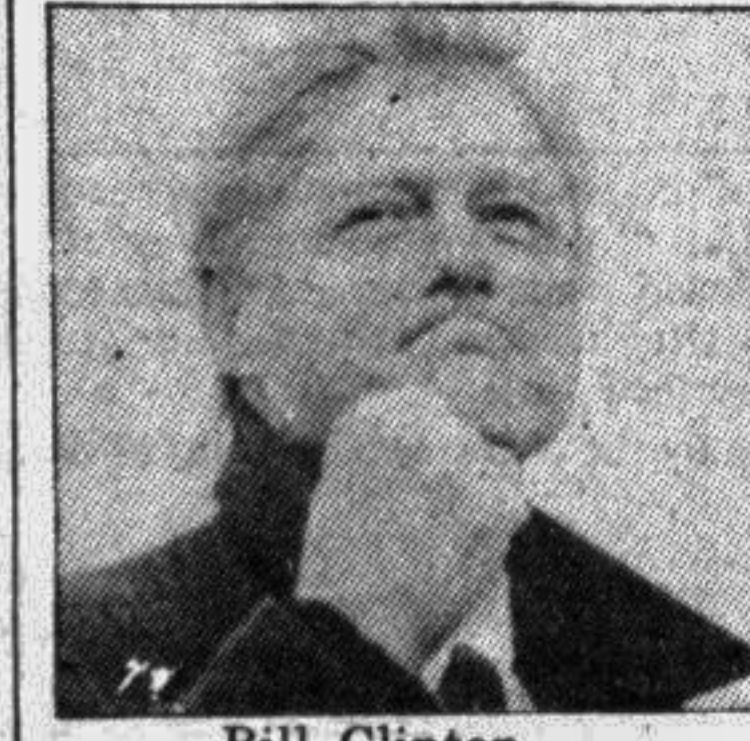
Trawler capsizes in Buriganga: One drown, 25 missing

By Staff Correspondent One person drowned and more than 25 are feared missing as a passenger trawler capsized in the Buriganga near Badamtali ghat in the city yesterday morning, witnesses and BIWTC sources said. Police, however, said that not more than six persons were missing. The Dhaka-bound trawler carrying about 60 people from Kushiabagh, due to strong current in the river, hit a pontoon at the ghat at about 10:15 am, police said. "As soon as the boat hit the pontoon, it broke into pieces and capsized," said a witness. Passengers of other boats, See Page 12 Col 3

Announcement

The Daily Star, in collaboration with Centre for Alternatives, Dhaka University, will organise a day long roundtable on Coping with Floods: Relief, Rehabilitation and Rebuilding the Economy Date : Tuesday, 15th September Morning : 10am - 1pm — Relief and Rehabilitation Afternoon : 2pm - 5pm — Rebuilding the Economy. Venue : IBA Auditorium, Dhaka University Speakers : Business Leaders, Development Experts, Economists, Flood Control Experts, Civil and Environmental Engineers, Civic Leaders, NGO Leaders, etc. Recommendations of the Roundtable will be published in the "Alternatives" sections of The Daily Star to help policy makers plan future actions. ALL ARE INVITED If you have ideas, share it with us

'Clinton's conduct was wrong but not impeachable'



Bill Clinton

WASHINGTON, Sept 12: Lawyers for President Bill Clinton have rejected the charges of impeachable offenses contained in a report on his affair with a White House intern, report agencies. In a 73-page rebuttal based on leaks of Kenneth Starr's report, the White House counsel's statement acknowledged Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinsky was a "serious mistake" but said it "does not constitute an impeachable action." The principle purpose of this investigation is to embar-

ass the president and titillate the public by producing a document that is little more than an unreliable, one-sided account of sexual behavior," said the statement. The White House had refused a copy of the report before it was distributed on the Internet Friday, but Clinton's lawyers said leaks from the document showed no grounds for ousting the president. The House of Representatives voted Friday to release the report which Starr says contains substantial evidence of

impeachable offenses. It was later released on the world-wide web. Kenneth Starr laid before Congress and the United States Friday a breathtakingly lurid description of Clinton's affair with Lewinsky and declared he had gathered substantial evidence that may constitute grounds for an impeachment. The 445-page report accused Clinton of 11 possible impeachable offenses ranging from lying under oath to ob-



Monica Lewinsky