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Today's issue  
20 pages

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## Gas pipeline blast: 3 more victims die

**By Staff Correspondent**  
The toll from Saturday's gas pipeline explosion at West Jura in the city rose to seven with the death of three more persons at the Dhaka Medical College, hospital sources said yesterday.

Champa, 20, Rubi, 8 and Rehana, 10, daughters of Abdur Rab died Monday night, the sources said. Rab's wife Hasina, their son Hafiz and Rab's brother-in-law Shyamol had died on the spot. Condition of Rab's niece Amina, 8 is now critical at the DMCH, the sources said.

Explosion of an underground gas pipeline of Titas Gas Saturday night destroyed a residential building killing four persons of two families on the spot and leaving six others injured. The other person who died on the spot was Monir, brother-in-law of Mizanur Rahman.

## Shell-Cairn alliance in Bangladesh, parts of India

The Shell Bangladesh Exploration and Development BV and Cairn Energy Plc yesterday agreed to a 50-50 alliance in Bangladesh and parts of north east India, a press release said yesterday, reports BSS.

Under the agreement, Cairn will assign one-third of its remaining position in Bangladesh to Shell comprising an 18.75 per cent interest in the Sangu Gas Field and associated field development area in Block 16, a 25 per cent interest in the remainder of Block 16, a 17.5 per cent interest in the Semutang Gas Field in Block 15 and a 25 per cent interest in the rest of Block 15.

Following completion of the transfers, Cairn and Shell will each hold a 37.50 per cent interest in the Sangu Gas Field (the remaining 25 per cent being held by HBR Energy Inc), a 35 per cent interest in the Semutang Gas Field and a 50 per cent interest in the remainder of blocks 15 and 16. In the event of the award of further blocks in the second Bangladesh bid round, these will be shared equally by the two companies.

## Undertrial prisoner dies

**By Staff Correspondent**

An undertrial prisoner at Dhaka Central Jail died while being shifted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday.

Jail sources said, the prisoner, Abdul Baten, 50, suddenly became senseless. He was taken to Jail Hospital where doctors detected that he had suffered a myocardial infarction (a heart disease). Baten was then rushed to DMCH where doctors declared him dead.

Baten, a resident of Koratitola under Sutrapur thana in the city, was arrested by Railway Police in March 1994 on charge of stealing, the sources said.

The body was sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy.

The jail authorities lodged an unnatural death case with Lalbagh thana in this connection.

## Inside Today Article

### Flood Control: Opportunities in the Midst of the Crisis

Column: Window on Asia  
by Shahed Latif  
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## Business

Tony Blair at NYSE: Designing a new int'l financial system for a new int'l financial age

'Market-opening reforms in developing world at stake'

Share market improves  
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## Supplement

Today's 20-page issue of The Daily Star contains a six-page supplement on the 'National Day of Saudi Arabia' on Pages 6-11

## Seven-year work to cost Tk 3000 cr save rail expenses

# Multi-purpose 'save-Dhaka project' takes off this week

**By Reaz Ahmad**

Groundwork for the construction of the single biggest infrastructure project of the country so far will start within this week. The project, initiated back in the late 80s as part of the Flood Action Plan (FAP), has now been redesigned as a combination of a ring road around the capital, an embankment, a rail track and a waterway, officials said.

The government has decided to go ahead with the huge project

initially with its own funds while a search for financiers will start immediately.

An updated project concept paper (PCP) for the Eastern Bypass-cum-Embankment project would be ready by mid-October, said an official last night coming out from a three-hour meeting at Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB).

The 60-kilometre embankment under FAP-8B Phase-II, stretching from Demra upto

Joydevpur, will cost Tk. 3,000 crore, according to estimates so far. Costs for construction of the newly planned components -- road pavement and circular train lines -- were yet to be assessed.

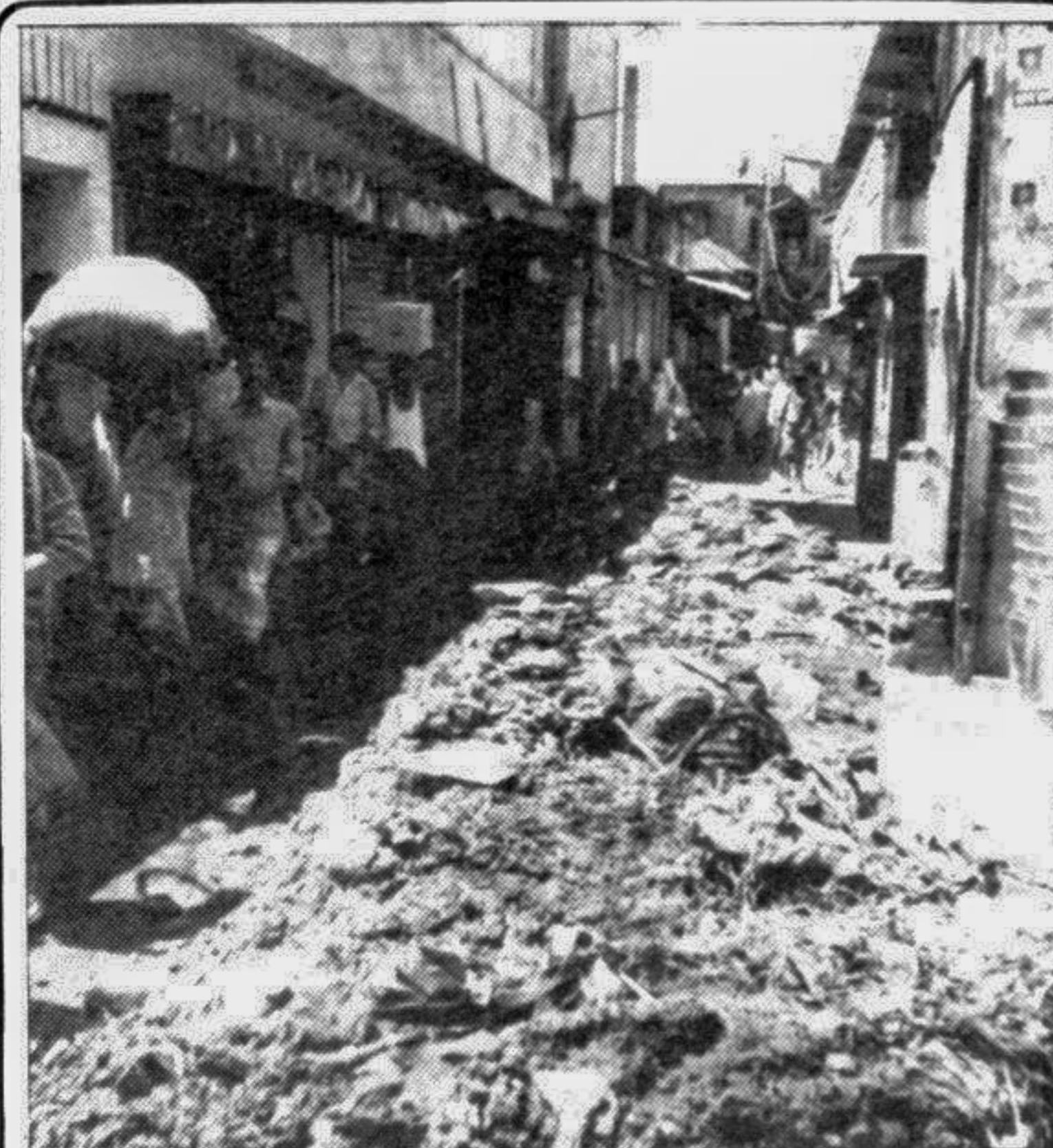
"We'll examine soil of Balu river and assess the load-capacity of the western bank of the river within this week," according to an official, proposed to head a technical committee for preparing the PCP for the

project that could take seven years to complete.

Talking to The Daily Star last night, a top Water Resources Ministry official said the construction of the embankment would start this fiscal and be completed in three years.

In the following two years, the 'Eastern Bypass-cum-Ring Road' will be built. Afforestation and town planning works

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Garbage and sludge collected from drains in the city's Imanganj area under local initiative have been piled up on lanes. DCC is yet to remove those. — Star photo

## Piles of sludge pose health hazard

**By Staff Correspondent**

Layers of sludge that deposited during the prolonged flood still awaits cleaning in most part of the city, posing a serious health hazard.

Places along the Buriganga river from Shyampurbar to Posta, stink of black sludge spread all over the roads, lanes and bylanes blocking the surface drains. At places the normal business of the old town continued in ankle-deep sludge.

At Shayambazar, one of the largest wholesale vegetable markets of the city, traders said after the flood water receded more than seven days ago, every trader cleaned his shopfront and piled up the "polluted soil" at the corner of the streets.

"Nobody came to pick up that pile and with so many people

walking here every day the rubbish again spread on the roads," said Khorsheed Alam, a grocery shop owner of Shyampurbar.

The road in front of Sadarghat was also covered with filth. The on-duty traffic policeman said a clean-up operation would be launched in the afternoon. Loudspeakers were mounted on the Sadarghat building for the occasion.

At Imanganj, Lalbagh a huge pile of sludge was seen piled up on the road. Shopkeepers said they had all contributed to make a fund to clean up the area.

"But for the last four days we have been requesting the DCC people to remove this stinking

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## Rubel murder CID likely to submit charge sheet tomorrow

**By Raziur Rahman**

The CID is likely to submit the charge sheet in Rubel murder case tomorrow, accusing Mukul Begum and 13 other policemen including AC Akram Hossain, a CID official said last night.

Shamim Reza Rubel, 24, a BBA student of Independent University, was killed in DB custody after he was picked up by AC Akram's men from near his Siddheshwar residence on July 23.

Mukul Begum will be the principal accused in the charge sheet, police sources said.

The CID on Monday sought permission from the Home Ministry to name AC Akram as a chargesheeted accused. Permission was also sought from the Inspector General of Police to name the 12 other policemen in the charge sheet.

As per rule, the Investigating Officer (IO) of any case must have permission from the gov-

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## GM, some senior officials of Sonali Bank UK branch to be withdrawn

LONDON, Sept 22: The Sonali Bank authorities have decided to withdraw the general manager and some other senior officials of its London branch, reports UNB.

The bank's new Chairman Farash Uddin, who came here to discuss the fate of Sonali Bank in UK with the Financial Services Authority (FSA), is now hopeful of the bank's operation.

The Bank of England had earlier asked to cease operation of Sonali Bank by the end of this year blaming inefficiency and irregularities.

Farash Uddin described the outcome of his talks with FSA as constructive but harsh.

"We are to bring about a lot of changes. We are to abide by the

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## HC postpones implementation of 5th Wage Board Award

The High Court yesterday postponed the implementation of Fifth Wage Board Award announced by the government on May 23, 1997 for newsmen, employees and press workers of all newspapers and news agencies, said a press release signed by Bangladesh Sangbadpatri Parishad President Kazi Shahed Ahmed, reports BSS.

There are provisions in this Award for gratuity, group insurance, recreation leave and income tax of all newspaper and news agency personnel to be borne by the owners of the newspapers and news agencies.

The High Court also issued showcause notice on five defendants including Information

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## Many open put kitchen like Sanjida's

**By Special Correspondent**

Some 350 'guests' turned up for lunch at the private kitchen of housewife Sanjida Aziz yesterday, raising the average number from 200 a day about a week ago.

The Daily Star published on Friday her story of feeding the helpless flood victims of a nearby shelter at Rajabazar, donations came in cash and kind to feed more 'guests'.

Others wrote letters to The Daily Star and telephoned to know her address and felt inspired to open their own gruel kitchens for the flood victims. The Dhaka office staff of the British Airways contacted San-

jida last night through The Daily Star to offer her the running cost of the kitchen for a week.

Sanjida said last night that a number of city housewives had taken the cue from her. Mrs Choudhury of DOHS started feeding 30 to 40 flood affected people every day. Mrs Meherunnessa of Uttarkhan has started to feed seven people a day. Mrs Maqsooda, Mrs Rokeya and Mrs Rani of Shaymoli have put together their savings to feed at last 25 people a day.

Mrs Mita and Mrs Nag of Dhanmondi have donated Tk 3,000 and Tk 2,000 respectively.

Mr and Mrs Baak, a neighbour, Dr Shamim, also gave Tk 1,000 each. Mrs Nag, Mrs Ahmed and another lady from Dhanmondi also lent their hands in preparing food at the kitchen.

Dr Ehsan Mahmud and his wife gave Tk 5,000 worth of medicines. Dr Nilanjan Sen saw 150 patients yesterday. Oxfam gave her 2,000 oral saline packets.

"I feel very happy to see their response, especially the housewives who pulled their resources to help the most vulnerable and the need," Sanjida said, thanking all who responded to help the poor.

# Diarrhoea spreading fast in flood-hit dists

Diarrhoea is spreading fast in the flood-hit districts and claiming a life every hour, reports UNB.

Officials at the Health Directorate yesterday said diarrhoea attacked at least 14,071 people in the last 24 hours and 24 of them died.

Diarrhoea yesterday claimed 4 lives in Chapainawabganj, 3 each in Sirajganj and Rangpur, 2 each in Dhaka, Kurigram, Kishoreganj and Narayanganj and 1 each in Manikganj, Pabna, Narsingdi, Chandpur, Moulvibazar, Madaripur, Shariatpur and Sherpur.

With this, the official death

toll from diarrhoea since July 15 rose to 306 in the 52 flood-affected districts.

People given treatment at the ICDDR,B in Dhaka or those who died there were not included in the government statistics. An official handout yesterday said 739 people were given treatment at the ICDDR,B in the last 24 hours and two of them died.

According to agencies, outbreak of diarrhoea was taking an alarming turn in many districts.

APB said, 25 people died from diarrhoea yesterday in Sirajganj alone.

The death toll in the district

rose to 42 yesterday. Belkuchi, Ullapara, Tarash, Kazipur, Chouhali and Sadar thanas were the worst affected areas.

At least eight people died from diarrhoea and 3,500 were attacked by the water-borne disease in Kishoreganj yesterday and the day before, according to UNB. This raised the death toll to 39 and the number of attacked to 36,000.

The Civil Surgeon's office, however, reported six deaths so far in the district.

Kadir Mia (3) and his brother Babu (1) of Bhairab thana, and Anwara Khatun (30) and Laila (3) of Karimganj thana were

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## Bid to 'select' office-bearers Back-stage parleys mark FBCCI polls process

**By Toufique Imrose Khalidi and M Shamsur Rahman**

Invoking the concept of consensus, a strong business lobby allegedly backed by a group of defaulting bank borrowers is trying to pick up their favourite candidates through "negotiations" ahead of the October 15 elections to the national chamber.

Amid a lot of wheeling-dealing being orchestrated by some ruling party politicians and a group of business leaders, some disgruntled aspirants are complaining against "selection instead of election".

Some of them are considering legal action to stop the election process, already marred by allegations of manipulations in the voters' list and violations of election rules.

As the deadline for withdrawal for nominations ends at 1:00 pm today, a group of cham-

ber leaders have almost reached a "consensus" on the post of president, sources said.

Abdul Awal Minto, president of Bangladesh Association of Banks, has reportedly emerged as the consensus candidate for presidency of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), an office that has increasingly become important in national life over the years.

For the FBCCI elections, Minto is, however, representing the Bangladesh Textiles Mills Association.

His main challenger, Kazi M Shaiful Islam, the incumbent vice president, is learnt to have given in to Minto, the sources said.

As usual, the biennial FBCCI

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## Dhaka's call at UNGA session Come forward in aid of Bangladesh

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad yesterday called upon the international community to come forward in aid of Bangladesh badly hit by the century's worst flood, report agencies.

The foreign minister drew the attention of international community to a trail of devastation left by floods and the magnitude of problems in carrying out rebuilding task.

"The flood waters have begun to recede. The enormity of damage, however, is yet to be fully assessed. A task of colossal magnitude lies ahead of us, in the form of rehabilitation and reconstruction." Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad told the 53rd session of the United Na-

tions General Assembly yesterday.

Azad also urged for the United Nations' highest priority in tackling the global warming that has cast a devastating effect on Bangladesh and many poor nations.

"Global warming could permanently flood large areas and play havoc with harvest..." he said quoting this year's Human Development Report.

The foreign minister said the report cautioned that the human consequences of global warming can be devastating for many poor countries, like Bangladesh which could see its land area shrunk by as much as 17 per cent with a one-metre

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## 31 dists now flood-free

Most of the rivers across the country continued to fall yesterday improving further the overall flood situation, reports UNB.

Officials said flood water receded completely from 31 out of 52 affected districts while the flood situation in the rest 21 continued to improve with rapid recession of river water.

The flood situation in the capital and adjoining districts including Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Manikganj, Gazipur and Narsingdi improved further in the last 24 hours yesterday but many areas were still under water.

The districts still inundated are, Faridpur, Madaripur, Gopalganj, Shariatpur, Mymensingh, Kishoreganj, Nowabganj, Naogaon, Natore, Comilla, Brahmanbaria, Chandpur, Noakhali, Lakshimpur and Barisal.

Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre said four rivers at five out of 46 points, were

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## Accused snatched from police custody in N'ganj

**From Our Correspondent**

NARAYANGANJ, Sept 22: An identified gang snatched away an accused in handcuff from police custody at the Noarddulpur area of Nabiganj under Bandar thana of the district today.

Two police officials of Bandar thana were injured when the gang attacked them to free their accomplice.

Police arrested one Shahnawaz, son of Fakir Chand, from his residence at Nabiganj. Both Fakir Chand and his son Shahnawaz are wanted in several cases, police said.

The gang attacked police with bricks when they were returning from Nabiganj with Shahnawaz. Shahnawaz managed to escape from police custody during the chaos.

Meanwhile, the family members of Shahnawaz alleged that police assaulted women when they went to arrest him and his father. Police, however, denied any such incident.

## A brave farmer's battle against nature

**By Shehab Ahmed, back from Jamalpur**



With the recession of flood waters, peasants at Kalabahar in Jamalpur are planting Aman seedlings in their lands. — Novartis photo

The rains had just ended and Ahsan Ali, 46, was scanning the horizon for more clouds as his farm hands worked hard on the rice field, planting 'Alai', a local variety of rice.

Ali, a resilient farmer of Kalabahar village of Jamalpur, did not give up his battle against nature, transplanting the rice for the third time this season on Sunday.

When he first planted high-yielding variety of Aman, the Brahmaputra washed it away. But the undaunted farmer returned back to his small plot of 36 decimals when the water receded in the middle of August.

Little did he know that the Brahmaputra would come back later packing more punches that not only washed away his

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