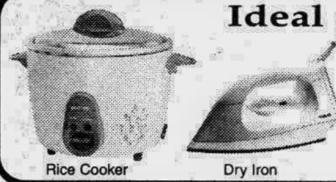


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### Garment worker murdered allegedly by husband

By Staff Correspondent

A teenage garments worker was murdered allegedly by her husband at Ibrahimpur Bazar in the city's Kafraul area yesterday afternoon.

The dead was identified as Jesmin, 18, wife of Badal and a resident of North Ibrahimpur, police and hospital sources said.

The motive behind the murder could not be known immediately. Badal has been absconding since the incident, police said.

Hospital sources quoting the relatives of the victim said that the incident took place while Jesmin was returning to her sister's residence at around 1 pm from her work during lunch hour.

When Jesmin arrived at Ibrahimpur Bazar, adjacent to her sister's residence, Badal appeared and attacked her. He struck on her head with a machete.

Fatally injured Jesmin was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where she died at about 3 pm. The body was sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Jaitun Begum, cousin of the victim, lodged a murder case accusing Badal with Kafraul thana in this connection.

### Khoka

From Page 1

Ahmed, Barrister Moudud Ahmed and others stood for the petitioners.

Deputy Attorney General KM Saifuddin with AAG Syed Kayser and Abul Hossain Azadi strongly opposed the bail.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate had earlier refused bail to the accused and ordered attachment of their property.

### Rubel murder

From Page 1

Rubel and the informant of the murder case. Nine of the ten arrested accused, including AC Akram Hossain, appeared before the court at about 11 am.

But all authorities did not produce Mukuli Begum before the court saying that she was sick. Judge Molla Mustafa Kamal then fixed July 27 and 28 for cross deposition of Abdur Rob.

In its chargesheet submitted on September 24 last year, the CID accused AC Akram, Mukuli Begum and 12 other police men of the murder.

Ten of the chargesheeted accused are detained in Dhaka Central Jail while the rest has been absconding since the incident.

### Mosharrarf

From Page 1

disciplined organization. I am a central leader and a minister. I can't go for childish behaviour as they have gone," he said.

The district leaders he viewed, could have raised their charges in the party forum and demanded action against him. "But what they've done is not in line with the party discipline."

"They could have ask me for clarification or lodge complaints with the party chief if I have done any mistake. But what they have done is not proper," said the state minister who denied having any rivalry with the AL leaders in his district.

Mosharrarf also responded to some of the allegations brought against him. "Am I a person to misbehave with anyone? Can I do so? I'll leave everything to the discretion of the PM and other central leaders of the party."

He said he tried to meet the AL general secretary yesterday but failed, as the latter was not available in the capital. "I will meet Zillur Bhai and the network and tell them everything."

Responding to another allegation that he had let his son to act against the party nominee in the last municipal election, the state minister said, "As a citizen, my son has the right to do anything he deems fit."

Reached by telephone, Rezaur Karim Hira, MP, a veteran AL leader of Jamalpur, defended the decision to suspend, calling it purely democratic and in line with the party discipline.

He blamed the state minister for neglecting other leaders and workers of Jamalpur and undermining all democratic norms in dealing with the party unit in the district he is in charge of. "In fact, he failed to take into confidence the party MPs from the district."

"We (the district committee) are not the final authority. We'll also meet the party chief to formally communicate to her of our decision. We may reconsider our decision in consultation with the party hierarchy," Hira said, hoping the action may help the state minister and others like him to stand correct.

If their move had damaged the party image, Hira replied in the district, "It won't do any harm at all to the party if our allegations against the minister are proved right. Such a practice will further galvanise AL's democratic image... The expulsion move is to pressurise the minister to learn from mistakes."



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited the areas flooded due to breach in Gumti embankment at Ebdarpur under Burichang, Comilla yesterday.

—PID photo

## Industrial accidents on rise

### No official data, poor safety measures

By Mustak Hossain

Industrial and occupational safety remains a low priority for the government even as the numbers of industrial accidents are on the rise, every year.

Shockingly, government agencies like the Bureau of Statistics, Inspector of Factories, Fire Service and Civil Defence do not keep any comprehensive data on industrial accidents.

The only information that was available was from a non-government organisation (NGO) — Social Assistance and Rehabilitation for the Physically Vulnerable (SARPV). The number of industrial accidents rose to 1,268 in 1997 from 544 in the previous year while it was 353 in 1995, according to statistics compiled.

More than 100 workers were killed in various accidents including fire and electric short-circuit alone in different garments' industries of the capital Dhaka since December 1990, informed Mohammad Khurshid Alam, President of Bangladesh Garments Workers' Federation (BGWF).

A section of employees of the government's Chief Inspector of Factories & Establishment's Office (CIFEO) engaged in implementation of industrial safety rules allegedly neglect in performing their duties.

"They never impose the rules in a real sense. They use the rules as a leverage to collect 'bribe' from entrepreneurs," a leading garments' manufacturer in Rampura said on condition of anonymity.

"We have an understanding with the inspector's office for payment on a monthly basis. We have to pay Taka 500 to 5,000 every month according to size and capacity of a mill or industry," he said.

"Whenever we stop paying their monthly tips they send us a notice, accusing us of violating certain safety rules or so called negligence in other matters," he said.

In that case we contact with the concerned area inspector and again reach a consensus for the tips. "Some times we even get some reduction against 'over dues,'" he said.

He said: "It is absolutely impossible to fully follow the industrial safety rules in the mills and factories."

In the capital Dhaka about 90 per cent garments' factories are situated in residential areas. They do not have proper infrastructure and lack even rudimentary facilities like fire escape, the source said.

To establish an industry you

have to submit a layout plan for the proposed establishment and get the approval from the Chief Inspector of Factories and Establishment's Office (CIFEO) under the Ministry of Labour and Manpower.

The Chief Inspector's office has three categories of safety to enforce: occupational safety measures, health and welfare.

Safety is connected with various measures including: Alternative path of exit, alternative stair case in multi-storied establishment, fire extinguisher, fire escape, smoke alarm; first aid facilities; adequate ventilation, fans, sufficient light, canteen and entertainment space. Welfare deals with various facilities of workers like minimum wage, leave and maternity leaves for women workers.

An official of the Chief Inspector's office told The Daily Star that they lacked adequate work force and therefore can only handle matters relating to industrial safety and welfare of workers.

There are only six doctors and six engineers working in the chief inspector's office. "With this tiny staff it is difficult to properly implement the welfare laws," another official of the inspector's office said.

Singapore, July 18: Thirty-five illegal immigrants from around Asia were caught trying to enter Singapore from Malaysia in a small truck, a news report said today, reports AP.

Singapore Immigration Department officials found 11 Myanmar nationals, 11 Bangladeshis, six Thais, six Indians and one Chinese national in a Malaysia-registered truck at a border crossing late Saturday, the Television Corporation of Singapore news said.

The passengers were huddled among boxes of fruit and vegetables in the back of the truck. The illegal immigrants and the driver of the vehicle, a Malaysian, were detained and will be charged in court, the report said.

State Minister

Minister, From Page 1

Talking to this correspondent many officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said they felt that the time and services of the State Minister were not being properly utilised and he was often 'sidelined' in taking important decisions. They also felt that economic diplomacy should be left to the young and energetic state minister.

He was brought to Dhaka in a critical condition and is under treatment.

The BNP leader warned the government that the opposition movement could not be stopped through 'such attacks, false cases and arrests.'

He called upon the government to give up this type of 'barbaric' policy.

Finance Minister SAMS Kibria, Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed, Health Minister Salahuddin Yusuf, Food and Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, Forest and Environment Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Communications Minister Anwar Hossain and State Minister for Planning Dr Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir attended the meeting.

He alleged that Mosleh Uddin, a leader of BNP Darshana unit was tortured by police after they arrested him from his residence. Police tortured him by hanging him down from a tree in broad daylight.

In another incident, he said a group of terrorists severed a tendon from the right hand of Khademul Nasir Alap, convener of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), Bagerhat unit, on July 8.

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## PM warns

From Page 1

with the people living around the embankment area.

The Prime Minister reached the site boarding a speed boat and talked to the flood victims. She also distributed relief goods among the affected people and witnessed the breach of the embankment. Officials said that the breach has affected five lakh people in the district.

Assuring all out help to the flood victims the Prime Minister said "the government will provide you with food till the new harvest starts."

She said the government would build multipurpose flood centers in the country to provide shelter to the people rendered homeless due to floods.

The Prime Minister thanked the civil and military administration, the people from all walks of life and leaders and workers of her party for their services to the affected people.

Earlier, the GOC briefed her about the incident and the various measures taken by the civil and military administration to give succour to the flood affected people.

A total of 62,512 affected people have been shifted to 63 relief centers opened in the district.

Later, she addressed a public meeting on the Mainamati School ground.

## 11 Bangladeshi illegal immigrants arrested in Singapore

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## PSC interview for doctors

### Body to probe a case of alleged irregularity

By Gobinda Bar

A probe body has been formed to investigate a charge of irregularity in issuing interview card to an ineligible doctor by the Public Service Commission (PSC), sources said.

PSC sources, on condition of anonymity, said there are many other incidents of a similar nature at the constitutional body responsible for recruiting public servants.

The sources cited the case of issuing interview cards to non-eligible candidates in 1996. Some of the candidates who had applied for the posts of assistant professor, associate professor and professor, were in violation of recruitment rules and were not in conformity with minimum requirements.

Sources singled out the case of one Dr Hedayet Hossain Khan who had applied for the post of Associate Professor of Orthopedics. The name of the post for which Hedayet had applied was overwritten in his application while it bore the official serial number of assistant professor of Orthopedics (BPSC/SR/2/3/R/ 5/ 96-172) instead of associate professor under the post applied for.

Hedayet is a consultant but he is currently in charge as assistant professor since February 9 1991. As per rules, he was eligible for applying for the post of assistant professor but his application was for associate professor and he was issued an interview card, informed sources said.

The issue came to notice after a fellow applicant under an assumed name lodged a complaint with the PSC chairman Prof Mostafa Chowdhury last year asking how a consultant, now in current charge of assistant professor, can apply for the post of associate professor.

The complainant asked how

Acid thrown on garment worker

By Staff Correspondent

A female garments employee received acid burn injuries at a garments factory in the city's Tejgaon area yesterday afternoon.

The victim was identified as Minara Begum, 30, wife of Abul Majid and a residence of Mohakhali TB Gate area.

The incident took place around 1 pm while Minara was coming down from fourth floor of the factory to take lunch. When she reached the third floor, Shanaz, a former employee of the factory threw acid on her. The reason behind the attack could not be known immediately.

Twelve unions in three thanas — Bheramara, Daulatpur and Mirpur — have been affected.

Crisis of drinking water and spiralling prices of essentials have made life all the more difficult for people. They are also suffering from various water-borne diseases.

Officials at Comilla reached over telephone said the Gumti waters gushing through the breach in its embankment at Ebdarpur continued to inundate fresh areas in Chandina, Daulatpur and Muradnagar thanas. The floods have so far affected nearly 100,000 families, damaged 5,548 houses, crops in 2,985 acres of land, 331 km of roads and 5.5 km of the embankment and, four bridges and culverts. Some 69,500 people are in flood shelters.

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## Haripur plant Extortionists terrorise land developers

By Staff Correspondent

Gun-trotting extortionists are terrorising land developers of the 360 MW Haripur Power Plant at the project site near Sitalakkhya river at Narayanganj, sources said.

They said, the extortionists exchanged gun shots among themselves over 'sharing' of sand supply to Hyundai, the developer of the Haripur Power Plant site Sunday morning.

As a result, Hyundai officials and employees asked the authorities to ensure security at the project site, as they were feeling insecure.

Sources said, a group of local extortionists who are also sand contractors have been terrorising since Hyundai started the land development project there a couple of months ago.

10 hurt as Ctg Port workers clash

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 18: At least 10 people were injured in a clash between coaster hatch workers and merchant labourers belonging to C&F agents on Chittagong Port premises this morning, police and witnesses said.

The clash erupted at 11 am in front of port Jetty No 1 when a procession of coaster hatch workers came under attack by their rivals, port sources said.

Both groups used lethal weapons and chased each other during the clash.

Police rushed to the spot and dispersed the clashing groups by resorting to lathicharge.

Cargo handling at Chittagong Port was disrupted for seven hours till 6 pm.

Luxmipur

From Page 1

The damage was repaired at a cost of Tk 16 lakh under Army supervision after the floods. When the cracks surfaced again, the authorities asked the contractors concerned to take up repair work on June 30. But the work did not start, reports said quoting officials.

The district administration yesterday directed the contractors to start repair work within 24 hours.

Manikganj

A report from Manikganj said the turbulent Padma wiped away Dhulser bazaar at Hari-rampur Saturday night.

Erosion by the Padma is threatening Hari-rampur police station and it might be swept away anytime. The embankment at Dhulser has also developed cracks and might collapse, the reports said quoting local people.

Road links between the district headquarters and three thanas — Hari-rampur, Ghor and Daulatpur — were cut off by flood waters as the Padma went into spate late week.

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## Polarisation in non-BJP camp

### Yadav, Pawar plan common front against Cong, BJP

From Pallab Bhattacharya

NEW DELHI, July 18: The schedule for general elections having been announced, India's political scene is in the throes of major realignment of forces reflecting growing polarisation in the non-BJP camp.

The most significant polarisation which has implications at the national level as well as in a post-polls scenario is the decision of Samajwadi Party headed by Mulayam Singh Yadav and Sharad Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) to put up a common front as an alternative to Congress and BJP.

Yadav and Pawar have held preliminary discussions a few days back on the possibility of formation of the front.

Former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar and Forward Bloc, a constituent of West Bengal's ruling Left Front, had also taken part in the discussions.

Yadav, Pawar and Chandra Shekhar had opposed Sonia Gandhi-led government after the fall of Atal Behari Vajpayee ministry in April while Forward Bloc also refused to back a Congress-led alternative.

The initiatives taken by Yadav and Pawar, according to political observers, are bound to sharpen the divisions in the non-BJP camp.

The CPI and CPI (M) have already abandoned the theory of equi-distance from Congress and BJP and declared that defeating BJP was the main objective.

But Forward Bloc and Revolutionary Socialist Party, both constituents of Left Front, are willing to join the proposed front by Yadav and Pawar.

The Rashtriya Janata Dal, led by Laloo Prasad Yadav, a close ally of Mulayam Singh Yadav, has already announced

that it would enter electoral tie-up with the Congress in the coming elections to Lok Sabha.

Another important development is the clear inclination of a section of centrist Janata Dal, the biggest constituent of the coalition governments which ruled India briefly in 1989 and 1996-97 under the leadership of VP Singh and H D Deve Gowda and I K Gujral, to go for a tie-up with the BJP-led alliance.

Senior Janata Dal leaders like J H Patel, chief minister of the southern Karnataka state, and Ram Bilas Paswan from Bihar state have openly come out in favour of joining the BJP-led