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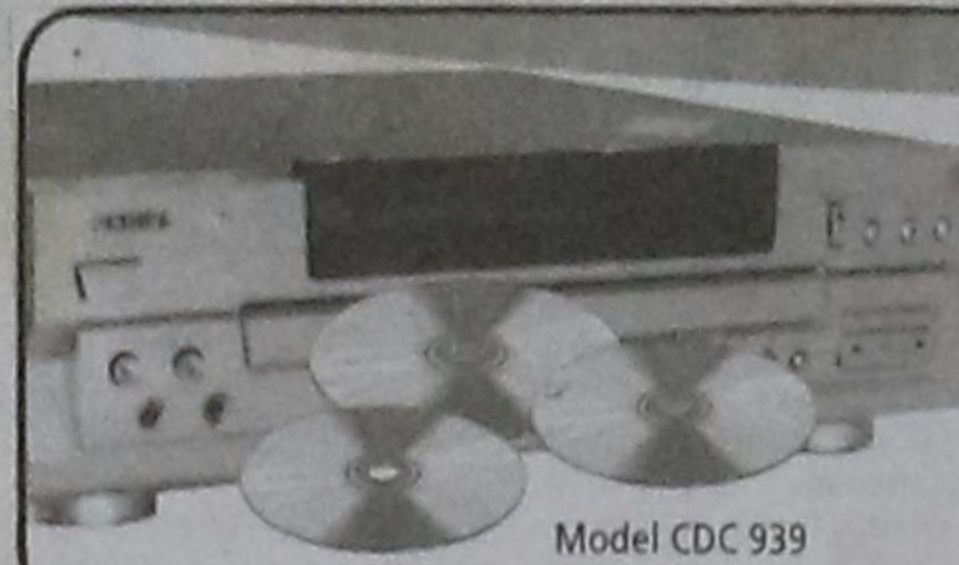
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Rail link with India from tomorrow

BENAROL, Sept 26: Rail communication between Bangladesh and India on Benarol-Petrapole route begins Thursday, reports UNB.

Officials said the train service between the two countries would be opened with a goods train entering Bangladesh on the inaugural day.

Senior railway officials of Bangladesh and India will attend the inaugural function at no man's land.

With commissioning of train service, transportation of more than 7 lakh metric tons of goods and commodities both ways will ease.

An agreement for operating goods train on the route was signed between Additional Director General of Bangladesh Railway SM Khurshid Anwar and Member of Indian Railway Board Arup Kumar Dutta in Dhaka on July 4 this year.

Meanwhile, another commuter train between Benarol and Khulna route under private management, will begin on October 1.

India to give technical support for construction of Ganges Barrage

India will provide technical support to Bangladesh for construction of the proposed Ganges Barrage, reports UNB.

Visiting Indian State Minister for Water Resources Bijoy Chakraborty said this at a meeting with Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak at the latter's office yesterday.

She supported the contention of Razzak who said construction of the Ganges Barrage is a must for Bangladesh to ensure optimum utilization of Ganges Water.

She mentioned that the next meeting of Bangladesh-India Joint River Commission would be held later this year.

The two ministers agreed to conduct a joint survey to overcome the arsenic problem of the two countries, said an official

handout. They also discussed sharing of water of the river Teesta and six other common rivers - Monu, Khoai, Muhuri, Gumi, Dharala and Dudhkumar.

Razzak apprised the Indian State Minister of various steps taken by the government for the development and proper management of water resources.

Water Resources Secretary Azad Rulul Amin, WDB Director General Golam Rabbani, member of the Joint River Commission Tuhidul Anwar Khan, Chairman of the Indian Central Groundwater Board Dr D K Chadda, member of Joint River Commission and commissioner of Indian water resources ministry MK Sharma were present.

The Indian state minister Bijoy Chakraborty called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday. While talking to her, the Prime Minister sought Indian cooperation for construction of the proposed Ganges Barrage in Bangladesh.

The Prime Minister also called for regional cooperation in harnessing water resources for their optimum use.

The Prime Minister said the regional cooperation is important for proper utilization of water resources. If India agrees, such cooperation would be possible, she pointed out.

Possible cooperation in combating arsenic contamination of ground water and development of information technology also came up for discussion during

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Rubel Murder Case 23rd prosecution witness cross-examined

 By Court Correspondent
AKM Abdus Salam, a magistrate of the CMM's court, Dhaka and the 23rd prosecution witness in the Shamim Reza Rubel Murder Case was cross-examined in the Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court Dhaka yesterday.

Judge Mollah Mostafa Kamal adjourned the proceedings of the case till October 15.

Salam in his statement said, he prepared the report of the victim Rubel in front of the Dhaka Medical College morgue on July 24, 1998. Victim's brothers Abu Reza Iftikhar adding and Mohammad Shahed Reza alias Rashed were present during preparation of the report, he added.

He also told the court that he put his signature on the inquest report paper.

All the accused including AC Akram Hussain, the main accused in the case, were present.

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Nikunja murder Proceedings adjourned till Oct 9

 By Court Correspondent
Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Shamsur Rahman, the 14th prosecution witness in the Nikunja Murder Case was cross-examined in the Fourth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court Dhaka yesterday.

Judge Syed Aminul Islam adjourned the proceedings of the case till October 9.

Shamsur Rahman in his statement said, he recorded judicial statement of Shukur Ali, the main accused in the case under Section 164 of the criminal procedure code (CrPC) on January 15, this year. It took three hours, he added.

He also told the court that Shukur Ali put his signature on the paper on which his statement was recorded.

The seven accused - Shukur Ali, Shahinor, Rana, Deen

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Deposition in Chhatak bomb blast case begins today

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Sept 26: Deposition in the case of bomb blast incident that took place in the residence of a ruling party MP will begin tomorrow in the Court of District & Sessions Judge, Sunanganj. The trial began on April 11 this year.

The incident took place when bombs were allegedly being made on the first floor of the residence of Awami League MP Muhibur Rahman Manik at Chhatak thana headquarters in Sunanganj district. Two persons were killed while six others sustained critical wounds.

The MP lodged a case with Chhatak police station alleging that the incidence was part of a plan to kill him in the bedroom.

Later, the police filed another case. A team of army experts recovered huge materials required for making bomb and said that the incident took place while bombs were being made. Both the cases were transferred to the CID, which later formally charged six persons including the ruling party lawmaker with making bombs.

The charge was framed. See page 11 col 5

9 killed as bus, truck collide in Savar

By JU Correspondent

Nine people were killed and 20 injured, two of them critically, when a passenger bus and a truck collided at Twenty Miles Gate of Jahangirnagar University in Savar yesterday morning.

Of the dead, Savar police identified three as Shamsher Ali, Motin of Kushtia and Zakir Hossain of Rajshahi.

The accident occurred when Jatiseba, an Aricha-bound passenger bus, collided with a truck.

Witnesses said the truck loaded with rice was carrying empty drums on its top. The incident took place when a drum fell on the road.

A bus coming from the opposite direction collided with the truck when drivers of both the vehicles tried to save themselves from hitting the drum, said witnesses.

Five people died on the spot and two died on way to the hospital. The driver of the bus died at the Savar CMH while a



A demonstrator offers a candy to a Czech policeman as they try to block the entrance of Prague's Marriott hotel in the center of Prague yesterday. Hundreds of demonstrators laid siege to several hotels where delegates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group are staying. -AFP photo

5000 march on Prague summit

Protesters call IMF, WB 'economic terrorists'

PARAGUE, Sept 26: Some 5,000 anti-capitalist activists marched on the IMF and World Bank summit today, throwing firebombs at riot police who responded with tear gas, water cannons and concussion grenades, reports AP.

"Stop the economic terror now," chanted the activists who want to abolish the two giant lending institutions they call a menace to humanity.

At least 15 people were injured, including 12 police and three protesters, one of them left unconscious in a hospital after being hit in the head with a rock, officials said.

The fight began down a hill from the communist-era convention center where the finance leaders were meeting. The activists, most of them Europeans, also staged a standoff at a bridge leading to the center.

Police in riot gear ordered the protesters to halt their unauthorized demonstration, but some pushed forward, throwing rocks they had made by breaking up a sidewalk, and police fought back.

"This is a battle for equal justice worldwide," said a naked

Swiss man near the bridge, identifying himself only as Rafael.

In a throwback to anti-war demonstrations of the 1960s, some activists waved banners saying "make love not trade" as they paraded outside the annual meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund - prime targets of critics who see economic globalisation as a menace to humanity.

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McDonald's is always a favorite target for the antiglobalisation protesters - and 15 of them broke into an outlet that had been closed ahead of the rally, damaging the door and trashing the furniture.

The McDonald's company condemns this expression of vandalism," spokeswoman Drahomira Jindrakova said.

South Africa's finance minister, Trevor Manuel, who is chairman of the summit, said it was "a pity that it has descended into violence" but added it was unclear what the activists were seeking as they

fight economic globalisation. "I know what they're against but have no sense of what they're for," Manuel said.

Student Hans Jurgen from Bergen, Norway, turned out wearing a green hat festooned with dollar signs - a walking talking caricature of globalisation's fat cats.

"I have children for lunch and I kill people in many countries of the world," Jurgen said.

The demonstrators who converged on Tuesday's opening of the annual bank meetings said they were carrying out a repeat of mass protests that disrupted similar summits last year in Seattle and this spring in Washington.

The Czech authorities had mobilised 11,000 police to maintain control. Police said some 5,000 people had turned out for the protest, which if correct meant that the police more than a 2-1 numerical advantage over the activists.

As the protesters got near the summit site, police put up signs in English and German saying the demonstration was not authorised so they should leave. It didn't work.

Extradition of Bangabandhu's killers discussed with US envoy

Newly appointed US Ambassador Mary Ann Peters called on Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad at his office yesterday, reports UNB.

They discussed matters of mutual interest, particularly extradition of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and ratification of CTBT, said an official handout.

Besides, they exchanged views on the schedule and agenda of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's forthcoming visit to the United States.

Ambassador Peters said the two countries could exchange their experiences in different sectors, including environment and export development.

She hoped US investment in Bangladesh would increase in near future and ties between the two countries would be strengthened further.

Attempt was made to kill Shamsur Rahman earlier also: CID

By Staff Correspondent

The killers of Shamsur Rahman, Special Correspondent of Daily Janakantha at Jessore, had attempted to kill him earlier, the investigation officer of the murder case said yesterday.

Shamsur Rahman was gunned down on July 16 at his office.

The CID investigation officer said Rahman was killed for his serialised report - 'Atankito Khulna' - published in the daily. The reports were published from July 3 to July 12.

Police so far arrested 12 people in connection with the murder. Four of them have given confessional statements in the court of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka.

The arrested are Jahangir Alam, Sukkur Ali, Benazir Khan, Monir Hossain Minu, Zahir Badsha, Ali Hossain, Rafiqul Islam, Shahidul Islam, Mizanur Rahman Tota, Ashrafur Islam Russel, Mizanur Rahman and Anarul Islam.

Of them, six were involved in the murder, according to judicial statements of the four.

Mizanur Rahman in his confessional statement on Monday said

that he knew Pagla Selim, Khochor Selim, Russel, Sukkur Ali and Anwarul.

He said they used to come to a medical center near Shamsur Rahman's office at Jessore. Hirok, Pagla Selim, Khochor Selim, Sukkur and four others met at the Prime Diagnostic Center near Rahman's office at about 4 pm on July 16, prior to the killing took place.

Rahman was gunned down at about 8:20 pm, a few minutes after the gang left the diagnostic center, Mizanur said.

The IO said that the gang had earlier made an attempt to kill Shamsur Rahman. Hirok

went to Rahman's office few days before the killing and threatened to eliminate him.

The IO also said, as per the confessional statements, Hasan Svidicate, a smugglers gang in Khulna and the Syndicate Bank at Kotchandpur were involved in the conspiracy to kill Rahman. The killers utilised the rivalry among some local journalists, he said.

The investigators said that the cheque for Tk. 26.5 lakh which was recovered from Russel earlier this month might have been given for the murder. The check of Kotchandpur Son-

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Bid to snatch accused from Khulna court

KHULNA, Sept 26: Some miscreants entered the CMM's Court here today and made an abortive attempt to take away an accused, reports UNB.

The proceedings of the court were suspended for about 10 minutes amid a chaotic scene.

Witnesses said Monirul Islam Piyal told the magistrate Rabiul Reza at about 11:30 pm that some terrorists were trying to kidnap him from the courtroom.

Piyal, a former member of this group, was waiting in the courtroom seeking bail in a case.

However, some lawyers and public caught three terrorists and handed over them to police. They were identified as Imam Hasan Imon, M Kabir and Sirajul Islam Chumnu. Police also took Piyal into custody.

Security was tightened in the court with the deployment of additional police.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Published by the Editor from Transcraut Ltd, 229, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208 on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C.A. Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: 19 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215. Telephone Numbers: 8124944, 8124955, 8124966, 8125155, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Internet edition address: http://www.dailystarnews.com and Email address: dstar@bangla.net

Another arrested in Mondal Murder Case

By Staff Correspondent

Another person was arrested in connection with the Advocate Habibur Rahman Mondal Murder Case yesterday.

Jewel Hossain, 24, was produced in the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate and the court granted him a two-day police remand.

The Sutrapur police arrested Jewel as a suspect in Mondal murder case.

Police told the court that Jewel was also a suspect in many other cases.

When contacted Sutrapur police refused to give details about Jewel.

Mondal, joint secretary of the city BNP, was gunned down on way to the court on August 20.

Police, however, could not trace Asad, clerk of the lawyer. Asad was driving the motorcycle on which Mondal was going to the court. They also could not trace Mondal's mobile phone that he was carrying during the

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Ctg customs employees' grand rally today

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 26: Officials and employees of Chittagong Customs House will begin fresh agitation against government's move for inter-departmental transfer, sources said.

The Customs Officials and Employees Coordination Council decided to hold a grand rally on the Chittagong Customs House premises at 5 pm tomorrow.

Programmes of greater momentum will be announced from the rally to force the government to stop the move for inter-departmental transfer, Council sources said.

The agitating customs officials might go for strike at Chittagong Customs House.

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Shajahan murder: Verdict today

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Sept 26: Verdict in Shajahan Murder Case will be delivered tomorrow by the Judge of the Special Court trying all murder cases against Ershad Shikder and some of his armed cadres.

This will be the sixth murder case tried so far since arrest of Shikder on August 11 last year.

Victim's wife Lalmoti filed a case with Khulna thana on September 3 last year. Ershad Shikder is one of the 14 charge-sheeted accused in the case.

Thirty-five prosecution witnesses deposed in the court during cross examination. Six out of 14 accused are still absconding.

Acid thrown on teenage girl

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Sept 26: A teenage girl received serious burn injuries when miscreants threw acid on her at Hathkhola area in the district town today.

Local people said the miscreants, who could not be identified, threw acid on Jesmin Akhter, 15, a student of class ten of Mamta Majidunnesa Girls' High School of the town, while she was sleeping at her house at about 3:30 am.

Jesmin, daughter of local businessman Abdul Karim, was admitted to Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital today with burn injuries in her face and eyes. In the afternoon, she was shifted to Dhaka as her condition deteriorated, hospital sources said.



Voters queue up to cast their ballots at Ashraf Jute Mill High School centre during Tongi municipality election. Election was held in 12 municipalities yesterday. -Star photo

Frequent clashes over bus fare, no monitoring yet

By Reaz Ahmad

An anarchic situation is prevailing in the road transport sector in absence of government monitoring following enhancement of bus and minibus fares, sources concerned said.

Almost every day, there are reports of incidents of violence between passengers and transport workers over fare rates and of transport strike.

The government, in a meeting with leaders of a pro-government transport owners associations on September 10, raised bus and minibus fares by 46 per cent.

Emerging from the meeting, Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Manju had said that the fare was raised on the basis of recommendation of an Expert Committee.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, some members of the Expert Committee acknowledged that people were suffering due to 'indiscriminate' increase in fare by transport owners in different routes in the country.

"An unhealthy situation is prevailing in the road transport sector. Almost every day, there are reports of unwanted incidents between passengers and transport workers and of transport strike in one route or the other," said a member of the committee seeking anonymity.

Transport owners and workers are well organized in enforcing their self-determined rates and disorganised passengers fall easy prey to it, creating incidents of violence, sources said. The Consumers' Association of Bangladesh (CAB) has urged transport users to be united to protest indiscriminate enhancement of transport fares.

Some officials of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), a government agency to regulate the road transport sector, also acknowledged that there was no monitoring whether transport owners increased fares beyond the government rate.

Against a 46 per cent enhancement, many transport owners are charging 65 to 80 per cent more than the previous fares, they admitted.

BRTA Chairman Azizul Haque Bhuiyan told this correspondent that a nominal increase in transport fare would suffice, considering the rate of increase in fuel price. But transport owners had long been demanding increase in fare on the plea of increased transport

costs, he added. When contacted, a BRTA director and head of the Expert Committee SK Chowdhury told The Daily Star that he would not comment on the issue.

Sources said, there are regional transport committees (RTCs) in districts to monitor and enforce government-fixed rates but those remain inactive, giving transport owners freedom to fix rates at their will.

In her last television appearance, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed annoyance at the illogical rise in transport fare. She said that a 'relatively less increase' in fuel price did not justify the 'huge enhancement' in transport fare.

In the city's Uttara-Motijheel route, air-conditioned Premium buses have raised the fare to Tk 25 from Tk 20.

The Communications Minister had said that Premium buses and Maxis were out of the purview of the government decision.

Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Samity General Secretary Khondakar Enayet Ullah said fare of air-conditioned buses is beyond government control since long but that of Maxis

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The damaged bus being removed by crane from the road in front of Jahangirnagar University yesterday. The bus collided with a truck, killing nine. -Star photo