

## Stuck-up drilling string freed at Shahbazpur

STAR REPORT

The trouble-ridden Shahbazpur gas field development project yesterday got over yet another fright when operators finally managed to free its stuck-up drilling string after over 45 days.

"Today (Saturday) BAPEX (Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration) operators made a headway in the work over drilling of Shahbazpur," said a Petrobangla official. "Now we believe the project will get a fresh lease of life."

US oil company Chevron however chipped in with suggestions to deal with this problem.

In a *deja vu* in May, the drilling string got stuck inside the gas well while trying to perforate a seal that was fixed eight years back.

Petrobangla's oil and gas exploration subsidiary, BAPEX sealed the well in 1995, as the government did not want to immediately develop the field.

Gas production in Shahbazpur was to begin from July as per original schedule. But that project seems to be many months behind schedule now, sources said.

BAPEX initiated a \$3 million

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

## Govt to bear tuition of child prodigy

AGENCIES, Dhaka

Computer whizz Shohag, a poor but talented 12-year-old boy, was speechless with joy and surprise when Prime Minister Khaleda Zia told him that the government would pay for his education so that he could realise his dream of becoming a computer engineer.

The motherless child, working at a computer shop at Panchagarh came to the prime minister's Bangladesh Secretariat office at her invitation. A newspaper report on the poor boy's extraordinary computer skills drew the PM's attention.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## 3 of a family killed as cab rams train at Pubail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three of a family were killed and two injured when the taxicab they were travelling in rammied into a running train at Pubail in Gazipur in the early hours of yesterday.

The dead are Rashid, 60, his son Rubel, 15 and brother Nasir, 40. The injured are Rashid's another son Shyamol, daughter Asima and driver of the taxicab.

The family was returning to their residence at Pubail from Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), where Shyamol got treatment for heart ailments. They left the DMCH in the taxicab at

about 12:15am, Rashid's nephew Mamun said.

The cab reached Pubail College Gate rail crossing, about one kilometre from Pubail station, at around 2:00am.

"I saw the signal but failed to stop due to brake failure. As the cab was about to hit the train, I jumped out and heard the sound of a collision. I do not remember anything more," driver Jasim told journalists at the DMCH, where he is being treated.

Local people rushed to the spot and dragged all the six out of the mutilated cab.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina inaugurates the council of the Mohila Awami League yesterday at the IEB.

## 'Anti-graft body to be used to protect corrupt alliance men'

Hasina tells Mahila AL council

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina has said under pressure from donors, the government is going to form a 'subsidiary' anti-corruption commission to protect the 'corrupt' ruling coalition men.

"The proposed commission is to save the head of government, ministers and ruling party men

from allegations of corruption. It can never function independently if it remained under the influence of the cabinet," she said while addressing the inaugural session of the council of Bangladesh Mahila Awami League, women's front of the AL, in the city yesterday.

The government on Thursday introduced a bill in the Jatiya Sangsad seeking to form an independent anti-corruption commis-

SEE PAGE 11 CO 7



PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia with child prodigy Shohag, 12, of Panchagarh who earned a free tuition on his way to becoming a computer engineer.

## 'Delhi makes no formal request for Dhaka's gas'

JEC meet likely to focus on signing FTA

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Free trading, tariff reduction, duty-free access of Bangladeshi goods to India, chronic trade imbalance and the transit and transshipment issues are on the agenda, as Dhaka

and Delhi meet after six years to discuss some of the thorniest economic issues.

Brushing aside speculations that Delhi would propose Dhaka to help redress the yawning trade deficit by

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## 5yr jail term proposed for truant launch owners

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A launch owner may face up to five years in prison if found responsible for a mishap, according to a proposal to amend Section 90 under the Inland Shipping Ordinance, 1976.

The highest compensation for each victim of a launch mishap may be Tk 20 lakh and the lowest Tk 5 lakh.

The marine court would take the final decision regarding fine and punishment depending on the nature of the accident, the proposal said.

The proposal would be placed before the cabinet soon, a source said.

"We are trying to place it within the next month," said a high official in the shipping ministry.

According to the existing rule, the highest punishment to a l a u n c h

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

## Tk 1.25cr cell phones seized at ZIA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs officials at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) seized mobile phone sets worth about Tk 1.25 crore from four incoming passengers of Gulf Airways yesterday.

In the biggest recent raid, law enforcers at ZIA also arrested the four passengers Mahimudul Hasan, Alam, Monsur Ali and Abdur Rab Bhuiyan for smuggling the phone sets into the country.

The four passengers, coming from Abu Dhabi in Gulf Airways flight GF-458 that landed at the ZIA at 6:13am, gave confusing replies when customs officials inquired about their papers. They said they were transit passengers for Chittagong but their passports showed otherwise.

However, as law enforcers quizzed them, the four confessed at last that they were not transit passengers and were carrying mobile phones in their hand trolleys.

Members of different law enforcing agencies later opened the hand trolleys and found 1481 mobile phone sets of different brands. These have been kept at ZIA's store of valuables.

Customs officials believe the four passengers were bringing in the phone sets illegally to evade tax.

Five departmental cases have been filed.

## Mystery of cancer begins unfolding

REUTERS, Washington

Researchers said on Friday they were starting to find clues left by cancer when it begins to spread, and hoped to develop them into tests that may save the lives of future patients.

They found several of the genetic and protein markers in the blood and tissue of patients whose cancer had killed them.

Some of those markers should

serve as early tests for the spread, or metastasis, of cancer, they told a meeting of the American Association of Cancer Research.

If caught early enough, cancer is highly curable.

"People don't die because they got cancer. People die because they got cancer and we didn't detect it at a point where we could do something about it," Dr. Andrew von Eschenbach, head of the National Cancer Institute, told a news conference.

Metastasis is responsible for 90 percent of cancer deaths, according to the American Cancer Society.

Joan Massague, a Howard Hughes Medical Institute researcher at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, and colleagues have been making a painstaking search for the products used by cancer cells to spread.

The tumor cells must first travel

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

## One arrested in AL leader murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An accused in Awami League (AL) leader Abdus Samad Khan murder case was arrested from Pallabi yesterday.

Raiding his house, Pallabi police arrested AKM Faruq at 2:15am from road No 13, block C, Mirpur section-6.

Faruq was sent to the court with a seven-day remand prayer yesterday. Decisions of the court could not be known till writing of this report last evening.

A gang of five including Dilu, Anisur Rahman and Faruq sprayed bullets on Samad Khan, Mirpur and Pallabi AL president and former general secretary of City Jubo League, on Friday morning, Pallabi police said. He was supervising sewerage pipeline work at his residence when he was killed.

The murder was a sequel to previous dispute over land, police added.

Abdul M Haiul Khan, the victim's younger brother, filed a case with the Pallabi Police Station on Friday.

The other accused in the murder case are still absconding. "We raided their residences several times, but could not trace them," duty officer of the Pallabi Police Station said yesterday.

## Four alleged cousins of Saddam arrested, says US

AFP, Baghdad

Four men described as cousins of toppled Iraqi president Saddam Hussein were arrested yesterday with other members of the former regime, a senior advisor to the US-led coalition occupying Iraq said.

Bernard Kerrick said the coalition "received confidential information... that gave us the whereabouts and location of several members of the former regime who were involved in human rights violations."

"Four of the men arrested in the last 12 hours were cousins of Saddam," said Kerrick.

"They were members of Saddam's personal security force," he added, later describing the four as "alleged cousins" of Saddam.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

## Woman raped, killed in Satkhira, husband held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police recovered the body of a 20-year-old woman, a suspected rape and murder victim, from a jute field behind Sunderban Textile Mills under Satkhira Sadar thana Friday afternoon and arrested the victim's husband in connection with the murder.

The victim, Amena Khatoon Khuku, daughter of Ruhul Kuddus of Labsha union under Satkhira Sadar thana, lived with her parents, Shahidur Rahman Palash, her husband for two years and an accounting student at Satkhira Government College, was a resident at the college hostel for the last three years. Khuku's relations with her husband had been strained in recent times, family sources said.

Khuku went missing on Thursday after she had left the house for Palash's hostel to bring him to the house for their second marriage anniversary function.

On the following day, police recovered her body from the jute field. There was enough evidence

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
July 13		6-49 pm
July 14	5-20 am	

  

Prayer Timings		
July 13		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-55	7-00
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation