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# Plan again to ban rickshaws on two Dhaka roads in Aug

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two major city roads - Kalabagan crossing to Azimpur and Science Laboratory to National Press Club to College Road (next to Bangabazar) - will now be out of bounds to rickshaws from August.

Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) officials said this at a press briefing in Dhaka yesterday. The DTCB earlier failed on several occasions to get rickshaws off the two roads and ply roadside lanes.

Tongi Diversion Road including the stretch from Kakrail, Maghbazar and Mohakhali will become out of bounds to rickshaws soon, Rokeya Sarani to Farmgate, New Eskaton Road, Banglamotor, Moghbazar,

Mouchak, Malibagh and Rajarbagh in May next year and Progoti Sarani to Rampura road in July next, said Md Akhter Hossain, director (admin) of the DTCB.

DTCB Executive Director Quamrul Islam Siddique said main roads are to be free of rickshaws under the Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP), a Tk 834 crore World Bank financed scheme to improve the capital's road infrastructure.

About the ongoing study on Strategic Transport Plan (STP), he said the study conducted by the DTCB will prepare a long-term transport plan for the next 20 years for Dhaka that will include transport policy and institutional issues,

public transport issues, planning and transport issues and others.

Representatives from the WB Traffic Department of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, Roads and Highways Department, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, DUTP project directors were present.

Navaid A Qureshi, senior urban transport specialist of the WB, said time has come to push non-motorised vehicles, in particular rickshaws, to use side lanes of the main roads.

Mohi Uz Zaman Quazi, senior transport engineer of the WB, however said the DUTP will fail to bring about qualitative change unless the traffic management system is improved.



The waterlogged city created a new business opportunity yesterday. Passengers take help of rickshaw-vans to get down from and board buses at Shantinagar to avoid being drenched in rainwater for Tk 1 each.

## Munshiganj jailer fined for court contempt

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fined the superintendent of Munshiganj jail Tk 500 in contempt of court proceedings.

Judge Syed Zahed Monsur of the Artharin Adalat-4 passed the judgment on Jail Super Mohammad Obaidul Haq for repeatedly violating

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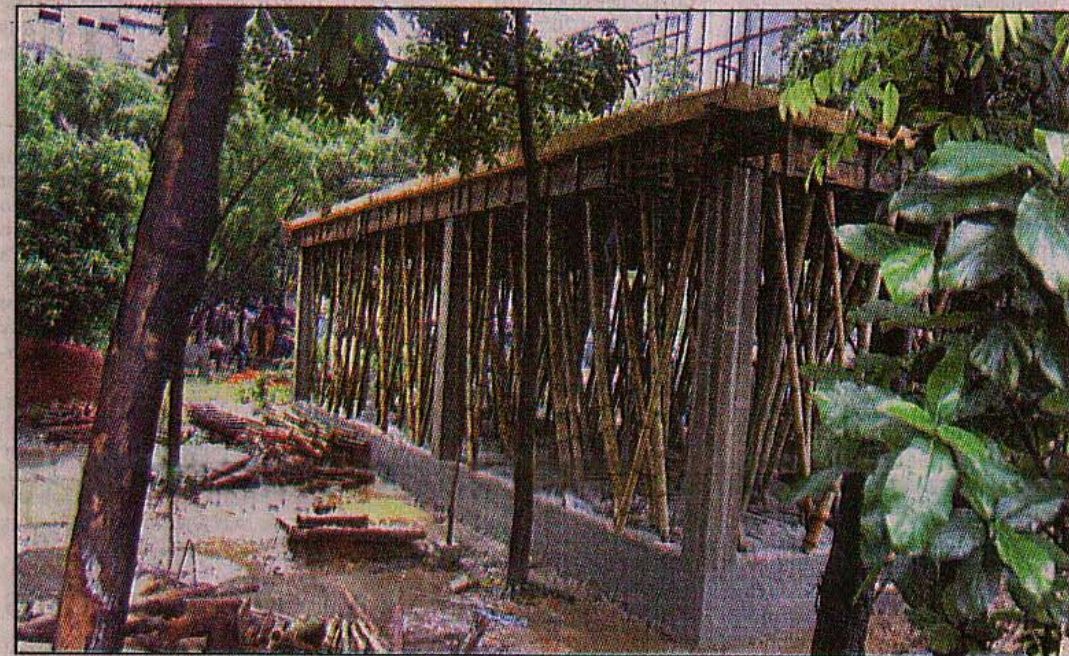
## German FM due July 16

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister of Germany Joschka Fischer arrives in Dhaka on July 16 on a two-day official visit.

He will be leading a delegation comprising members of German National Parliament, senior officials of the foreign ministry, businessmen and media representatives, an

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A public toilet is under construction in front of Bangladesh Shilpa Bank at Dilkusha in Dhaka on an area that gasps for free space.

## Toilet on park

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has devoured yet another public park by taking up construction work of a public toilet in front of Shilpa Bank at Dilkusha, an area densely packed with concrete constructions and alarmingly lacking in green.

City Mayor Mohammad Sadek Hossain Khoka in an attempt to rationalise the project said the site is not a park but a strip of government-owned land. The DCC Health Department is responsible for building the public toilets in the city, he said.

"There is no public toilet in Dilkusha and Motijheel areas and we are building public toilet there as part of the 100 public toilets to be built throughout the city with funds provided by the Asian Development Bank," the mayor told The Daily Star. He said the city faces an acute short-

age of space for developing such civic facilities.

Top Rajuk officials said that of the six public parks in Motijheel and Dilkusha areas, this park between the Shilpa Bank and Adamjee Building is the lone remaining. They said the triangular park, which measures around two bighas, was developed in the early eighties and handed over to DCC for maintenance.

Last week, Rajuk officials visited the spot several times and asked the contractor to stop construction, but to no avail. As the contractor continued the construction work defying Rajuk's repeated requests, the latter yesterday filed a case under protection of wetland and open space laws with the Motijheel Police Station.

A Rajuk engineer said the ongoing construction work in the park area does not only amount to a

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## Saarc FMs meet in Pakistan next week

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan will host the meeting of South Asian foreign ministers next week aimed at boosting economic, commercial and social cooperation in the region, the foreign ministry said yesterday.

Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmud Kasuri will chair the ministerial meeting of the seven-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) from July 20-21, foreign ministry spokesman Masood Khan told a weekly press briefing.

Saarc born in 1985 groups Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The region is home to one-fifth of the world's population.

The ministers will review implementation of the decisions taken by the 12th Saarc summit held in Islamabad in January this year, Khansaid.

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## Ministries differ on Liberation War history

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

Two ministries have published two versions of Bangladesh Swadhinata Juddho Dalilpatra that translates as the Documents of Bangladesh Liberation War within three months of each other, triggering a national outcry.

Former information minister Tariqul Islam on April 13 formally opened the cover of the book in 15 reprinted volumes, popularly known as Dalilpatra published by the information ministry.

The edition of Dalilpatra, published by the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs on July 8, has warped historical facts by adding a chapter

on the proclamation of Bangladesh's independence.

The reprint has taken out the original proclamation of independence through a message by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and contains an inserted text that names the late president Ziaur Rahman as the first proclaimer. LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan was the chief guest at the launch of the book.

The first edition of Dalilpatra, product of a project initiated by Zia himself, does not have 'planted' information. The book first came out in 1982 with poet and journalist Hasan Hafizur Rahman as its editor.

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## Cook again turns spotlight on Blair over Iraq

AFP, London

Former foreign secretary Robin Cook said yesterday that Britain's top intelligence official and Prime Minister Tony Blair had told him before the war that Iraq did not have any usable weapons of mass destruction.

The then-head of the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) John Scarlett informed Cook of Iraq's weapons capabilities in February 2003, a month before the start of the war, the former foreign minister said in an extract of his memoirs published in Britain's Guardian newspaper Monday.

Cook, who was then leader of the House of Commons, talked with Scarlett for nearly an hour about the

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## Three US soldiers killed in Iraq

AP, Baghdad

Insurgents killed three US soldiers and an Iraqi civilian in separate attacks, and a militant group threatening to kill its Filipino hostage extended until today its deadline for Manila to agree to withdraw peacekeepers early.

The Philippine government previously rejected that ultimatum. Also, Iraqi interim President Ghazi al-Yawer said his government will soon offer an amnesty to those who have fought against the US-led coalition, a British newspaper reported Monday.

"We are offering an amnesty

definitely, for people who have not committed too many atrocious acts," al-Yawer was quoted as telling The Financial Times. "Everybody except murderers, rapists and kidnapers."

He said the amnesty would be offered within "a couple of days."

The proposal was first mentioned earlier this month by a spokesman for interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, signaling the new government's desire to distance itself from the 14-month US-led occupation of Iraq.

Also, Iraq's national security adviser, Mouwaffaq al-Rubaie, said Sunday the country would honor

the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and other international agreements banning the use of chemical and biological weapons.

"Iraq officially declares it will be a country free of any weapons of mass destruction," al-Rubaie said. "Iraq will never again resort to threatening its neighbors, as Saddam did."

Saddam Hussein's alleged possession of such weapons was one of President Bush's declared reasons for invading Iraq. The hunt for weapons of mass destruction has proved largely unsuccessful.

On Sunday afternoon, a roadside bomb exploded as US patrol passed

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## CTG ARMS HAUL Charge sheet in arms smuggling case likely next week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The investigation officer (IO) of the CID is likely to submit charge sheet next week in the arms smuggling case after completing re-examination of all seized weapons at Chittagong cantonment.

"I've visited Chittagong cantonment twice to ascertain the country of origin of the arms and from where those were smuggled into the CUFJ jetty," said the IO Kabir Uddin, assistant superintendent of police of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

"We have taken all necessary steps to complete the investigation

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## Karnaphuli dam under threat from downpour, water onrush

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The country's lone hydroelectric dam downstream the Karnaphuli river in Kaptai is under threat as water pressure increased due to downpour and onrush of water from the Lushai Hills until yesterday, Plant Manager Liakat Ullah told reporters.

Water level yesterday reached close to the dam's capacity and is rising alarmingly as onrush of hilly water and incessant rain continued.

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## Malaysia plans new crackdown on illegal workers

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia gave notice Monday that it planned a major new crackdown on illegal immigrants which could see more than a million people detained

Prayer Timing		
July 13		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-10	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-55	7-00
Esha	8-17	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

and deported. Home Minister Azmi Khalid said there were an estimated 1.2 million illegal workers in the country and some 400,000 members of the People's Volunteer Corps would be deployed to help round them up, the official Bernama news agency reported.

The corps is an organisation of uniformed part-timers who have some policing powers.

The authorities were also working on the logistics of where to house the illegal immigrants after their arrest and the number of ships required to send them home, he said.

"We are serious. There are 1.2

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