

**EXTORTION CASE
2 cops, their
3 informants
get life**

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court sentenced two policemen and their three informants to life imprisonment yesterday in an extortion case.

This is the first time anyone has been given such high sentence in an extortion case, court sources said.

The convicts are Sub-inspector (SI) Imrul Haq, constable Syed Bazul Goni and informers Zakir Hossain alias Zakir, Zahid Hasan alias Jibon and Shahidur Rahman alias Hiru.

Judge Mohammad Rabiul Hassan of the Court of Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge handed down the sentence in presence of Imrul, Jibon and Hiru.

Convict Goni and Zakir were on bail till 4:00pm yesterday but failed

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TENGRATILA

**1 billion cubic feet gas
burned in 2nd blowout**

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The amount of gas burned in the recent blowout was more than in the previous one at Tengratila gas field during relief well digging by Niko.

Though the blowout damaged the structure of the gas field, it will not hamper future production, says a report of the committee formed to determine the amount of gas burned in the blowout.

The report is supposed to be submitted to Energy Advisor Mahmudur Rahman today.

The committee members signed the probe report at a meeting held at the Petrobangla with Chairman of

the Petroleum Engineering Department of Buet (Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology) Prof M Tamim in the chair.

A member of the committee providing the above information told the news agency that the report had been finalised based on scientific analysis and Niko representative Rudi Stalker agreed with the report.

In response to a question, the member said the total amount of gas burnt during the blow out will be revealed on Sunday but the amount surpassed the previous one.

The finding of the account of loss in the first accident showed that

about 1 billion cubic feet of gas had been burnt.

The accident occurred during the relief well digging on June 25 last. On the day of the blow out, a committee was formed headed by Buet Vice-Chancellor Prof Anwarul Azim to investigate the accident.

The committee has already submitted its report holding Niko responsible for the blow out.

Two days into the accident, another committee was formed headed by Prof Tamim to determine the amount of gas burnt in the fire. The committee was requested to

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**JAMAL UDDIN ABDUCTION
CMCH conducts
forensic test on
skeleton today**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The forensic department of Chittagong Medical College and Hospital (CMCH) yesterday received the skeleton suspected to be of abducted magnate Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury, and formed a board to conduct a test on it.

Earlier on Friday, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab)-7 handed the remains over to Chittagong General Hospital morgue.

The morgue authorities sent the skeleton to the forensic department at around 11:00am yesterday. Department head Prof Dr Hasanuzzaman Bhuiyan received it and formed a four-member medical

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**Fake medicine
factory dug out**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some factories routinely mix chalk with boric acid powder to increase its quantity, posing a risk to those treated with boric acid for cut and burn injuries.

A mobile court led by magistrate Md. Rokan Ud Doulah yesterday raided the 'Afro-Asia' Ltd. on Tipu Sultan road, where they found workers had been mixing white chalk powder with boric acid powder. The workers of the factory admitted before the court that their employer directed them to do this to increase the quantity of the boric acid powder, a member present with the court said. The factory was shut down.

Boric acid is often used to treat cut and burn injuries.

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PHOTO: STAR

A hospital staff takes the remains of businessman Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury in a sack to the Forensic Department of Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday.

**JS WOMEN'S SEAT
36 submit
nomination
papers to EC**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-six candidates of ruling BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami and both factions of Jatiya Party yesterday submitted nomination papers to the Election Commission (EC) for election to women's reserved seats in parliament amid boycott by the Awami League.

The process of filing nominations ended yesterday with a last-minute change in the list of BNP nominees as the party replaced a previously nominated candidate.

A number of candidates expressed dissatisfaction over a government order, according to which new MPs will not be able to import duty-free cars.

"We have been deprived of our privilege by the order imposing a bar

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PHOTO: STAR

A man helps a schoolgirl cross a waterlogged road in the capital's Uttara Sector-2. The road was inundated by rain-water yesterday morning.

**Dhaka sees
Beijing as core
of 'Look
East' policy**

Khaleda tells Chinese weekly

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has said Bangladesh and China are now witnessing a golden era in their relations and there has been unprecedented progress in the bilateral ties at every level.

In an interview with the leading Chinese weekly, Beijing Review, prior to her mid-August visit to China, Khaleda said keeping an excellent relationship with China is at the core of her government's 'Look East' policy, which aims to

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**India's river linking
gains momentum**

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

The process of the ambitious inter-linking of major river basins of India seems to have gained pace with the first step taken by the signing of memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh to link up Ken and Betwa rivers.

Hours after chief ministers of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh Mulayam Singh Yadav and Babul Gaur signed the MoU in Delhi on August 25, Gaur flew to Rajasthan capital Jaipur where he and Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje approved of the linking of Parvati,

Kalisindh and Chambal rivers. It aims at providing better irrigation facilities and drinking water for people of the two neighbouring states ruled by BJP that strongly favours the Rs 560,000 crore inter-linking of rivers scheme envisaging construction of 30 link projects.

The meeting between Raje and Gaur resolved several issues relating to sharing of water of common rivers between Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

The two sides decided to iron out differences on Madhya Pradesh's proposal for construction of seven dams upstream of Gandhi Sagar project, keeping in view water avail-

ability and drinking water needs of Banas river basin. But optimism on the inter-linking scheme as a whole is tempered with caution, officials said.

The work for Ken-Betwa link will start following the Detailed Project Report (DPR) that will take two to three years at a cost of Rs 30 crore of which only Rs 6 crore has been earmarked in the current national budget.

Implementation of the link will take about eight years, they said.

Besides, there are concerns about the impact of Ken-Betwa link

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**SERIAL BOMBING
Leaflets circulated
in more districts**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcers have been put on high alert at important places and key installations in Khulna city following circulation of anonymous leaflets on Thursday midnight.

The leaflets stated that the country's major militant organisations developed from Asadullah Galib's Ahle Hadith Jubo Sangha.

Meanwhile, leaflets circulated in Bandarban and Jessore yesterday termed Awami League and some international intelligence agencies responsible for the August 17 attacks.

The home ministry cancelled yesterday's scheduled press briefing on August 17 bomb blasts.

KHULNA
Law enforcers beefed up security in

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**High imports negate
rise in FDI, aid**

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Although foreign aid and foreign direct investment (FDI) have seen rise in the last fiscal year (FY), the huge import has caused a deficit of about half a billion dollar in the current account balance.

According to Bangladesh Bank (BB) sources, foreign aid swelled by 32 percent and stood at \$1.259 billion in the last fiscal against \$953 million of the previous fiscal. On the other hand, the FDI rose by 40 percent and stood at \$540 million in FY04-05, which was \$385 million in the previous fiscal year.

But the huge rise in import resulted in a negative current account balance with a deficit of \$518 million in the last fiscal. In

FY03-04, however, the picture was absolutely different with a surplus of \$176 million.

The current account balances aside, the trade deficit stood at \$3.29 billion in the last fiscal year while it was \$2.31 billion in the previous fiscal.

The sharp rise in import to \$11.87 billion—a 21 percent rise from that of the previous year—was behind this trade deficit. In FY03-04, the import growth was recorded at 13 percent.

The price hike of fuel as well as many other items in the international market is mainly responsible for such a drastic rise in import expenditure.

Banking sources said the government has gone for an expansionary

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**Nat'l convention
on terrorism
Aug 30-31**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A two-day national convention on terrorism titled 'Unity Against Terrorism' will be held on August 30 and 31 in the capital.

Leading politicians, jurists, human rights activists, academicians and victims of different terrorist incidents will take part in the convention.

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina will attend the inaugural session of the convention to be held at the Engineers' Institute auditorium at 10:00am.

Six keynote papers will be presented in the convention.

On the first day, Prof Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir will present a keynote on 'Terrorism: a

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**Janajuddho
denies link to
JMB, Aug 17
bombing**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The Janajuddho faction of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) has denied its connection with Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and the serial bomb explosions in the country on August 17.

In a statement sent to the office of Jessore-based 'Dainik Gramer Kagoj' on Friday night, one Abir Hasan on behalf of PBCP protested the attempt to implicate the party with the bombings.

Hasan said Janajuddho has the courage to claim responsibility for any incident in which it is involved.

He claimed that no secret meeting was at all held among PBCP leader Tapan Malitha and Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) leader Bangla Bhai and JMB leader Abdur Rahman.

Prayer Timing		
August 28		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-33	6-36
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation