

Five die, four missing as bus plunges into river

UNB, Khulna

Five people died and four went missing when a bus plunged into the Kabadak River at Chand Ali ferry ghat, some 100-km off the Khulna city, yesterday.

The dead are forest guard Shamsul Haq Mondal, 40, his wife Fatema Begum, 32, son Saurav, 7, and Jananara Begum, 20, of Antabunia village of Koira and her daughter Nasima, 11.

One of the missing was identified as Sadia, daughter of forest guard Shamsul Haq.

"The accident occurred when the Koira-bound bus from Paikgachha

Dengue strikes back

130 affected in city in a month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dengue viral fever, the mosquito-borne disease, has re-emerged in the capital, sending more than one hundred people to hospitals in less than a month.

According to the health directorate, a total of 130 people have been diagnosed in various private city clinics and public hospitals since the start of this month.

A survey by the health directorate revealed a high density of the Aedes population, the mosquito species that transmits the virus, in several city areas, including Bailey Road, Gulshan, Elephant Road and some areas of Dhanmondi. In view of this, a Dhaka City Corporation (DCC)

high official meeting on August 28 decided to launch a month-long drive to destroy Aedes larvae (eggs). Entomologists, or experts studying insect behaviour, however, said there is no reason to panic as the peak season for Aedes has already passed, meaning the fear for any epidemic has died down.

Still, the number of patients admitted with the disease has gone up recently. The Holy Family Red Crescent Hospital (HFRCH) alone admitted between ten and twenty patients everyday, while Bangladesh Medical College Hospital, another private hospital, also reported having admitted an almost equal number of patients.

An HFRCH official yesterday said they treated a total of 97 patients as

of yesterday since the beginning of this month. A total of 25 patients are now being treated for dengue fever at the hospital.

Other city hospitals like the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), Miford General Hospital and Suhrawardi Hospital also reported having admitted dengue patients, between four and six on average everyday.

Touhiduddin Ahmed, a leading entomologist, said, "The usual peak for Aedes breeding is June and July, which has already passed. But the real fear is that since dengue fever has already been reported in the neighbouring West Bengal capital of

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Jewellers observe strike, looted gold yet to be recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around five thousand jewellers yesterday kept their shutters down in the capital protesting Saturday's 4,000-lola gold ornaments heist at Venus Jewellers at Navana Shopping Complex in Gulshan, which are yet to be recovered.

Bangladesh Jewellers' Association called the strike. The traders gave a seven-day ultimatum to recover the heisted jewellery and to probe the earlier robberies, otherwise they threatened to go for tougher programmes.

Several thousand traders held a demonstration in front of Baitul Mokarram Market yesterday noon and circled the streets of adjacent

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PHOTO: STAR

Jewellers stage a sit-in at Paltan intersection in the capital yesterday to protest the largest-ever gold heist at a jeweller's in Gulshan.

Outlaw killed in 'shootout'

BDNEWS, RAJBARI

A leader of an underground outfit was killed and three policemen were injured in 'crossfire' between police and his accomplices in Undharmanik area under Goalundo Police Station of Rajbari district early yesterday.

He was identified as Lokman Hossain Lal, 35, alias Mithu or Mintu Ripon, chief of Sarbahara Party, Rajbari region.

The injured policemen are Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Goalundo Police Station Abdul Halim, Sub-Inspector (SI) Asad and constable Shahid.

Acting on a tip-off, Goalundo police carried out a special drive and arrested Mintu Ripon on Thursday at Daulatdia ferryghat.

On his confessional statement,

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PHOTO: STAR

Workers of Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakha knock down a risky three-storey building in Uttara near the runway of Zia International Airport yesterday.

Faridpur-1 by-polls today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

By-election in the Faridpur-1 constituency will be held today amid boycott by the opposition parties.

Ruling BNP candidate Shah Mohammad Abu Zafar and independent candidate Mufti Sharafat Hossain backed by Shaikhul Hadith Azizul Haque-led faction of Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ), a component of the ruling alliance, were busy in the last moment vote campaign yesterday.

Authorities deployed Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and army personnel along with other regular law enforcers while 150 magistrates and over forty mobile and summary courts will be on duty to ensure holding the polls peacefully.

The local administration identified 73 of the 146 polling centres as vulnerable regarding law and order.

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KEPZ licensing deferred again

Body formed to take decision in a month

SHARIEF KHAN

The Board of Governors of the Private EPZ (PEPZ) at a meeting yesterday once again deferred for one month awarding licence to the country's biggest and private Korean Export Processing Zone (KEPZ) that is kept in limbo for four years, sources said.

The PEPZ board has again formed a committee on the KEPZ with a one-month deadline to take a final decision.

But meeting sources said policymakers want the KEPZ to

return 500 acres of its land to the government out of 2,500 acres the Koreans acquired in 2001.

The KEPZ had paid for 2,700 acres of land -- mostly khas and some fallow land -- at a hilly location by the Karnaphuli river in Chittagong. But it gave up 200 acres due to various reasons related to the locality.

The KEPZ authorities headed by South Korean company Youngone was verbally asked to give up the 500-acre land last month. The KEPZ however declined the proposition

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Aug 21 suspect held, taken on 7-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Aman was taken on remand yesterday after CID arrested him on Sunday for his alleged involvement in last year's August 21 grenade attacks on an Awami League (AL) meeting.

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) arrested Monzur Hossain, 40, son of late Abdur Rahim from his Dholaiapur High School Road house in the city's Shyampur area.

Monzur is the driver of Mokbul Hossain alias Mukul whose name was disclosed by George Miah.

George Miah, who gave a confessional statement to a magistrate on June 26, said a group of 14 led by

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Oil surges past \$70

AFP, Singapore

Oil prices hit new record highs after crossing \$70 a barrel in Asian trading hours yesterday as powerful Hurricane Katrina threatened the crude-producing Gulf of Mexico region in the United States.

With the psychological barrier now breached, some analysts said prices could now aim for the once unthinkable \$80 a barrel -- a level which economists fear could severely dent consumer demand and curb business activities.

New York's main contract, light

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Harmful cosmetics on sale

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Using certain hair creams and after shave lotions could have harmful effects on your scalp or cause skin ailments, as an illiterate and non-licensed chemist has been making various cosmetics at his house and selling them in the wholesale market.

A mobile court yesterday raided a small cosmetic factory inside a resident house in the Anondo Mohan Bosak lane at Tanti Bazar. Abdul Miah and his wife have been producing Meghna lotion, Jui-Koli after-shave lotion and Lucky hair

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JAMAL UDDIN MURDER

Another arrestee confesses Maruf, Shahid involved

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Another prime suspect in the sensational Jamal Uddin abduction case, arrested on Sunday night, gave a confessional statement yesterday saying Shahid Chairman and Maruf Nizam were involved in the abduction and murder of the business magnate.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab)-7 of Chittagong arrested the suspect, Shafiqul Alam alias Shafi, in Comilla and brought him to Rab-7 headquarters at Patenga in the port city yesterday morning.

Shafi's confession during primary interrogation matched with that of Sobhan and Kala Mahbub, indicating Maruf Nizam and Shahid Chairman's involvement in the

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No plan now to raise oil price

Energy adviser says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government currently has no plans to increase oil prices, adviser to the energy ministry said yesterday, dismissing speculation that an increase in prices of petroleum products is imminent.

"We have not taken any such decision, and neither do we have for the moment any plans to do so," sources quoted Mahmudur Rahman, adviser to the energy and mineral resources ministry, as telling a meeting of a parliamentary body.

The parliamentary standing

committee on power, energy and mineral resources ministry also discussed the recent blowout at Tengratia Gas Field and asked the ministry to initiate steps to realise compensation for the damage.

In reply, Mahmudur Rahman told the committee that the government will form a panel comprising eminent lawyers to fight the legal battle for realising the compensation, Committee Chairman Shahidul Islam told reporters after the meeting held at the Jatiya Sansad Bhaban.

Referring to media reports on a

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AL men march to mourn Bangabandhu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) yesterday brought out a huge mourning procession in the capital as part of their month-long programmes to mark the 30th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Bearing banners, festoons, and placards and chanting slogans, thousands of party leaders and activists joined the procession that started from Suhrawardy Udyan and ended through placing floral wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in Dhanmondi.

Prior to the procession the Dhaka city unit AL also held a rally that the central leaders addressed.

The BNP-led coalition govern

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Saarc information ministers' meet begins in Nepal

BDNEWS, Kathmandu

Nepal's King Gyanendra yesterday inaugurated a two-day meeting of the information ministers of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc).

The heads of delegations from the seven member states--Nepal, India, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Maldives-- as well as heads of diplomatic missions and Saarc officials, including Secretary General Chenkyab Dorji, attended the inaugural session.

After the inauguration, the meeting began discussions on how to implement the 18-point action plan drawn up at the first meeting in Dhaka in 1998 to develop information technology in the region and harness it to economic activities.

The meeting will decide on transnational satellite broadcasting, media exchanges and greater flow of information in the region through sharing of technological developments.

Also on the agenda are a Saarc

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India, Pakistan hold talks on militants, prisoners

Manmohan, Musharraf to meet in NY on Sept 14

AFP, New Delhi

The leaders of nuclear-rivals India and Pakistan will hold talks in New York on September 14 to review their peace process, it was announced yesterday, as officials from the two sides met in Delhi to discuss drug trafficking, terrorism and prisoners.

The meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf will be on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly conference, the Press Trust of India quoted Singh as telling reporters in Kabul.

The talks will be their first since New Delhi in April, when they declared the peace process launched in January 2004 to be irreversible.

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| Prayer Timing | | |
|---------------|-------|--------|
| August 30 | | |
| | 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