

## Strike paralyses Chittagong port

Minister's meeting with owners of 24 detained lighter vessels fails

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CG

Lighter vessels. Loading, unloading and transportation of goods from mother vessels in the outer anchorage of Chittagong Port to different parts of the country yesterday remained completely suspended on the first day of the indefinite strike imposed by the owners and workers of

wheat from the 24 lighter vessels that have remained stalled for the last eight months.

Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Norman held a meeting with the agitating owners and workers of lighter vessels at the

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PHOTO: STAR

A badly damaged private car lies on the Airport Road near the Zia Colony in cantonment area, following its head-on collision with a three-wheeler yesterday. Six people were killed in the accident.

MADDHYAPARA MINING PROJECT  
N Korean co looks for legal coverage to finish task

SHARIER KHAN

Petrobangla's North Korean contractor Namnam is now seeking an unsolicited Tk 9 crore "expert service" contract with the government to finish the Tk 1,275 crore Maddhyapara hard rock mine project, which amid repeated contract renewals has failed to finish even seven years behind schedule.

Namnam has been staying illegally at the project site since June 15,

the last deadline for it to complete the project. Now the so-called expert service contract will give it legal coverage to finish the vital 8 percent remaining of the project.

Its proposal to employ 65 'experts' at a cost of Tk 8.93 crore for two years is now awaiting approval from the energy ministry, sources said.

But the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council

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## 5 road accidents kill 14, hurt 20

Agitation in Savar over death of garment workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Operators of passenger launches start taking increased fares from today in the wake of the recent fuel price hike.

The increased fares have been approved at a recent meeting between Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and Bangladesh Inland Waterways (Passenger vessels) Association (BIWA).

Fares have been upped to Tk .90 per kilometre from Tk .85 for distances up to 100km and Tk .75 per kilometre from Tk .72 for distances over 100km, said Shahbuddin Milon, vice-president of the BIWA yesterday.

However, the new fare rates are applicable for launches bound for Chandpur, Barisal, Bhola, Pirojpur,

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Four of the victims were identified as Fazlur Rahman Farid, 28, Ali Noor Rahman Monir, 27, Ashraful alias Shah Alam, 22, and Liton Mollah, 25, but the identity of the woman could not be known immediately. Three of them were co-workers at the Hamim Group's garment factory.

Around 20 other people injured in the accident were admitted to the DMCH and different clinics and hospitals in Savar.

Raju Ahmed, a supervisor of the factory, said, "I, along with Farid

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Our correspondent in Satkhira reports: The CID, which was tasked with investigating the serial blasts in Satkhira, Kushtia and Jessor, has already finalised the charge-sheets and will submit it tomorrow before magistrate courts in Satkhira and Kushtia.

Apart from Rahman, Bangla Bhai and Ataur, 17 other JMB members are also accused in the charge-sheet to be submitted in Satkhira. They are Nasir Uddin, Maniruzzaman Munna, Monwar Hossain Ujjal, Anisur Rahman Khokon, Mahbubur Rahman Liton, Nayeem, Fakaruddin Raji, Abul Khair, Habibur Rahman,

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### REPORT CARD ON MINISTERS

4 years in office

## Stalled plans, unmet pledges riddle Akbar's tenure

RAFIQ HASAN

Despite repeated promises to improve the ailing shipping sector, Shipping Minister Akbar Hossain has implemented hardly any reforms there in the last four years.

He also conveniently forgot to keep his pledge to tender resignation if there were any major launch disaster in the country, even though several disasters killed people in hundreds afterwards.

#### UNMET PROMISES

Stalled plans and broken promises riddle Akbar's ministerial track in the



coalition government.

His ministry undertook construction of a circular waterway around the capital to take some pressure off the city's road traffic. Half of the waterway, from Sadarghat to Ashulia, was inaugurated in March last amid much fanfare, but has remained unused, as the route was closed immediately after the opening due mainly to scarcity of vessels and lack of public interest.

The project appears to have fizzled out, as the construction work of the other half of the waterway, from Ashulia to Kanchpur, is

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