15TH AMENDMENT Blockade in hills today

OUR CORRRESPONDENTS, Rangamati and Khagrachhari

8 percent.

prices of rice edged up along

with onion, potato, vegeta-

bles, and cooking oil. Prices

of sugar rose by Tk 8.5 a

kilogram in the same period,

according to Trading

supply due to closure of four

out of six sugar refining

Speculations of supply

crunch also gave rise to the

hoarding tendency ahead of

the month of Ramadan

when sugar consumption

rises 28 percent to 4,000-

5,000 tonnes a day to pre-

pare sweet drinks and sweet-

High demand pushes up

the prices as there is a huge

shortfall in supply, said Abul

Hashem, vice-president of

Bangladesh Sugar

According to Hashem,

daily supply from refiners

and importers is at 1,500-

2,000 tonnes against the

demand for 4,000-5,000

level gradually as stocks in

the hands of traders dwin-

dle," he said, "Prices will not

cool down unless there is

substantial supply to the

Despite traders' insis-

Prices have reached this

Merchants Association.

ened food stuff.

Traders blamed tightened

Corporation of Bangladesh.

United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) yesterday called a two-day road, waterways blockade programme across the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region from today.

The anti-CHT peace treaty organisation called the programme to press its demand for repealing the 15th amendment of the Constitution and giving constitutional recognition to the ethnic minorities.

Earlier, UPDF staged demonstrations, organised human chains and protest rallies at different upazila headquarters in the three hill districts.

UPDF Khagrachhari unit Press Secretary Niran Chakma, in a press release, sought cooperation from all to make the blockade a

Birthday in tears FROM PAGE 1 only hours away from his 19th birthday.

"We didn't tell him anything, as we wanted to surprise him," said his sister Anar Koli, a Dhaka University student.

"What am I going to do with these T-shirts?" she said, sobbing.

Tipu's mother Kazi Nazma Sultana has become speechless. She did not say a single word to the journalists who went to their Shyamoli residence vesterday. "Since Tipu was the youn-

gest [among two brothers and a sister], my mother often fed him with her own hands," said Sheikh Farid, Tipu's elder brother.

Teachers and several hundred students of Tejgaon College formed a human chain in front of the college protesting the killing of Tipu, a first year student of management department of the college. They called for punishment of his killers.

College Principal Prof Abdur Rashid told The Daily Star that Tipu was an innocent boy.

Tipu's friends from Government Bangla College also formed a human chain and held a rally in front of the

"On his birthday, we demand punishment of his killers," said Sumon Mahmud, his friend from the college.

department, Towhidur

dent Kamruzzaman Kanto --

were victims of brutality of

robbers. They never got

involved in any kind of crim-

that the actual fact is

unearthed paving the way

Meanwhile, Bangladesh

University of Business and

Technology (BUBT) student

Shitab Zabib Munib was

buried at his ancestral vil-

lage Moklespur under Biral

upazila of Dinajpur yester-

day morning, reports ou

their tears seeing his

son go for his Shab-e-Barat

prayers, had I known he

would return dead," his

mother said. "My son was

innocent; he has never done

Meanwhile, villagers of

Shanila under Bera upazila

of Pabna were thunder-

struck after the body of

Shams Rahim Shamam, 17,

an A level student of Maple

Leaf International School,

reached on Monday, reports

He was buried on

our Pabna correspondent.

"I wouldn't have let my

thrashed body.

anything wrong."

Monday night.

Dinajpur correspondent.

"None of my boys were

the society.

for justice.

Tipu had a good singing voice and aspired to release an album, he added.

Bangla College Principal Prof SM Mokfur Hossain said three of his students --Ibrahim Khalil of accounting Rahman Palash of physics weapons. department and HSC stu-

inal activities," he said. "We Monday. want proper investigation so

bery.

On Monday, many villagers claimed that a group of around 14 came to the village on an engine boat.

But yesterday, there were differences of opinion as to where they saw the boat anchor. They named three

Al Amin said he and his Hundreds of people, who friends went to Keblarchar on came to take part in his foot from Aminbazar Bridge. burial, could not hold back He added they just wanted to

Keblarchar is a hot spot for drug trade and Bardeshi village also falls on drug

have labelled the youths as dacoits following an altercation with them, some villag-

"The recent rise in robbery made us so crazy that as

FROM PAGE 1

However, the injured Faruque denied having any involvement with criminals.

"Why was my son killed in

Sugar prices hit

tence that there is a supply-In the fiscal year 2010-11, demand gap, the governaverage inflation rose to 8.8 ment says the private sector percent soaring past the has more than 2 lakh tonnes government revised target of of sugar in hand, and there will be no shortfall during In the past one month, the Ramadan.

There is no reason for a supply-demand gap, said Md Mozibur Rahman, chairman of Bangladesh Tariff Commission, which recommends price structure for sugar and cooking oil to the government.

The spiral in prices is going on at a time when sugar prices remain upbeat on the international market after world's key exporter Brazil slashed its output forecast.

"We are passing a very difficult time for sugar in particular. World market situation is very volatile and prices are going up," said Mohiuddin Monem of AM Sugar Refinery Ltd.

Bangladesh consumes 14 lakh tonnes of sugar a year and more than 90 percent of | said. the demand is met through imports from Latin America, mainly Brazil.

Monem said the sugar market will cool down automatically after two of the four closed refineries resume production.

Of the four refiners, Deshbandhu is likely to resume production soon While Meghna Group Industries says it will restart its refinery at the beginning of next month.

soon we heard 'dacoit', we

rushed in hundreds to the

spot and started beating

them," said a villager, seeking

In the last 18 days, report-

However, during a visit to

edly five robberies took place

the village yesterday after-

noon, The Daily Star corre-

spondents noticed an uneasy

calm as almost all male vil-

lagers went into hiding fear-

the World and the extent of

what senior executives knew

- was the "most humble day

he was not aware of the extent

of phone hacking at the com-

pany until earlier this year

when it handed over new

information to the police

shocked, appalled and

ashamed when I heard

about the Milly Dowler case

two weeks ago," he told MPs.

Arguing that he ran a

global business of 53,000

people and the paper was

just 1%" of this, he said he

was not ultimately responsi-

Asked who was responsi-

Murdoch said he was

focused on his US newspa-

per interests and that he had

'perhaps lost sight" of what

was going on at the paper,

saying he spoke to the editor

Asked by MPs about the

closure of the News of the

World, he said this was nec-

essary since it had "lost the

trust" of the people after

recent allegations and was

not done for commercial

On his relationships with

senior British politicians, he

said he had been asked to No

10 "for a cup of tea" by David

Cameron shortly after he

entered Downing Street as a

recognition of his support

for the Conservatives before

asked to enter Downing

both by Cameron and for-

mer prime minister Gordon

Tory MP Louise Mensch

asked whether - as "captain

of the ship" - Rupert

me and it's for them to pay,'

best person to clear this up."

he replied.

attract less attention.

Murdoch would resign.

Street by the back door

He said he had been

the election.

"very seldom".

ble, he said: "The people l

the people they trusted".

News of the World.

"I was absolutely

triggering a new inquiry.

The News Corp boss said

'Humbled'

anonymity.

ing arrest.

FROM PAGE 20

of my life".

Lone survivor

FROM PAGE 1

tonnes.

market.''

Home Minister Sahara Khatun, after attending a conference yesterday, said steps will be taken against the people involved in the killing.

Terming the incident regretful and unexpected, Inspector General of Police Hassan Mahmood Khandker, who also attended the programme, said it would be clear after probe whether the dead were robbers or not.

Many villagers still insist that the victims were robbers. But their statements contradict.

According to villagers, moments before the incident people were alerted about invasion of robbers over loudspeakers of three mosques.

Some locals said azan can be heard from the spot where the students were bludgeoned, suggesting that the youths must have heard the announcement. If they were robbers, they would have left the scene at once.

They were not carrying any firearm, something unusual for a robber gang.

Although police claimed they found four machetes by the bodies, Al Amin, who was injured in the attack, said locals might have planted the

A local graveyard, less than half a kilometre off the spot, was frequently visited by several hundred people from 22 surrounding villages on Shab-e-Barat, from Sunday night to early

No gang is supposed to choose such a time for rob-

separate places.

smoke cannabis there.

smuggling route.

Some drug dealers might ers said.

Mob beat

He said he was standing in front of his rickshaw garage at Chandnaish when Mofiz asked him to climb into the three-wheeler saying he was going to visit his sister at the hospital.

BNP talks

FROM PAGE 1 Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir invited the KSJL chief to have a meeting

with Khaleda. BNP has initiated a move to bring like-minded political parties on an anti-government platform.

"I accepted their invitation, and I will meet her [Khaleda Zia] on waging a movement against the present government on the caretaker government system and other issues," Siddiqui told journalists following the meeting with the BNP team.

Siddiqui said the country is now passing through a very critical period.

"At this moment, the opposition leader [Khaleda Zia] has called upon all democratic forces to be united for launching a movement for reinstating the caretaker government system. As a democratic force, my party also responded to her call," he

BNP Vice Chairman Abdullah Al Noman and city unit Convener Sadeque Hossain Khoka were on the BNP team headed by Fakhrul.

Meanwhile, Fakhrul will also meet Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) President Oli Ahmad at his Mohakhali residence today.

"A BNP delegation will meet our party president tomorrow (Wednesday) to discuss the latest political situation," Shahadat Hossain Selim, senior joint secretary general of LDP told this correspondent last night.

Earlier on July 12, the BNP acting secretary general met Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) President Prof AOM Badruddoza Chowdhury and sought his support for the ongoing antigovernment movement.

In a statement later, Badruddoza supported BNP's hunger strike on July 13. An LDP delegation also attended the programme to express solidarity, and party leaders promised to be with BNP in the coming days.

The 15th amendment to the constitution scrapped the caretaker system recently. This means the next parliamentary election will be held under the present Awami League government.

But Khaleda Zia said her party will not participate in the election if it is not held under a non-party caretaker government. And it will not allow holding election under a political government.

Schoolgirl

ble for what went on at the **FROM PAGE 20** scarf," he said.

Her parents were not home at that time.

trusted to run it and maybe On coming home around 8:00pm, her parents found her hanging and sent her to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared her dead.

More mobile

FROM PAGE 1

and their operation. The commerce and the food secretaries, and the

deputy commissioners of Dhaka and Chittagong were made respondents to the rule.

The HRPB filed the petition following news reports that corrupt traders are raising the prices of essentials ahead of Ramadan.

Moving the petition, HRPB President Manzill Murshid told the court that a section of dishonest businessmen have created a crisis of foods and other commodities by forming a Brown - because it would syndicate. He prayed for the court to order setting up mobile courts to contain the prices of essentials, and punishing the "No, because I feel that dishonest traders.

the people I trusted, I don't Deputy Attorney know at what level, let me General ABM Altaf Hossain down and I think they opposed the petition, saybehaved disgracefully ing there is a shortage of betrayed the company and magistrates and manpower to run adequate number of mobile courts to monitor "I think that frankly I'm the markets and control prices.

Heart of Coal

FROM PAGE 1

power plant of Barapukuria coal mine belch a slow stream of black fume.

When the rich reserve of coal was first located here, excitement sparked through the villages around. This backwater will now prosper, they thought. Money will flow in. Our boys will find Money came but not to

the farmers. It went right into digging up the earth to bore shafts, to bring out coals. One million tonnes a year, to be exact, which is worth 100 million dollars. For the farmers came a

different thing. This water. The villagers discovered that their land is subsiding. One day the rain came. The land that was their main crop giver suddenly became useless as water stagnated. Then it was just a sea. Trees died, one by one. Some thought at least fish

would come. They did not. Because the mine started pumping out black coalmixed water and throwing it onto the fields. Very few fish can survive at such ph level. So even if they drag their nets through out the day, only some irrelevant fish would comeout

First the villagers were puzzled. Then they got together and started agitating for compensation. Strangely, the mine project authorities did not foresee this land subsidence that was going to affect at least over four square kilometres of prime land, although this is the common thing that happens wherever shaft mining is done. And so they did not keep provision for compensation.

"So, we formed our own group, Jibon O Sampad Rakkha Committee (committee to save life and property)," says Ibrahim Khalil, the convener. "We started agitating. We held meetings. We said: 'down with mining'."

It was all spontaneous. They found a small shop in the local market where they could meet. They collected some chairs. Put up a banner. And soon people started coming to it. Losing their livelihoods, they had plenty of time to spend away.

Finally the mining authorities saw the logic of the movement and arranged to make up for the crop loss.

"I got thirty five thousand taka for the first crop. And then twenty five thousand taka for the second crop. After that the compensation stopped," says Abdul Gani.

Abdul lost 2 acres of land in the subsidence. From that

one maund of paddy, and there you get how much he lost even after the compensa-As the money stopped, the

land he could get 120

maunds of aman paddy and

80 maunds of boro. Multiply

them with Tk 800, the price of

people got desperate. Their lifestyles slipped. And they scrambled for every possible way to meet their needs. Abu Musa of Baddyanathpur village found

himself in a tough struggle as

his one acre of land went

under water. That meant he

lost one third of his income. "I desperately needed money to repair my house. I had some bills to settle with the seed stores. So I mortgaged my remaining two acres and borrowed thirty thousand taka from Krishi Bank," says Musa. "And I spent most of it to meet these needs, not for agriculture."

He is now unsure how he will repay the loans.

livelihood. Future plans go haywire. And dreams are shattered.

Ibrahim Khalil, the convener of the movement committee, had a plan to set up a brick kiln. He even applied for a loan of Tk 50 lakh with the local Sonali Bank. "I made all the plans.

Where I would build the structure. Where to stack bricks. How to sell. Everything," says Khalil. "But then the letter came. The bank wanted me to get a certificate from the local administration that my land is not inside the coal mine Unfortunately, Khalil's

land is. But it has not yet been flooded. The bank thought otherwise. It did not want to take a risk. And so Khalil's dream was shattered. Like Khalil many others are stuck in one way or

their lands even if those are not flooded. "I want to move out of this cursed land," says Rizwanul Haque who already lost 12 acres to the cruel water. "But nobody offers any price for the land which is still dry. I am

another. They cannot sell

stuck. Stuck forever." After all the agitation and commotion, the government finally woke up to the distress of the people and allocated Tk 190 crore as compensation for the land lost -- about 464 acres which the government will acquire. But this has created another kind of tension and flurry of activi-

When the government acquires land, these people

will have to move out to other places. And so land prices are going through the ceiling.

"We don't know how much land we can buy with the compensation money. Land prices are going up rapidly," says Abdul Gani who is now left with one and a half acres of land after his six bigha was inundated.

In the village market square, sale notices of land are posted all around. People from Fultali and other nearby places are coming here and posting adverts. And all this trouble for

what? This Barapukuria mine has a reserve of 390 million tonnes. But because of shaft mining, which means boring holes in the ground and then making tunnels around to cut the coal away, only 30 million tonnes of the reserve will be extracted over 30 years. A huge 360 million will remain unused, buried under the earth when the mine will be abandoned. When the land is gone, so Meanwhile, the country's are gone other options of coal requirement is around 4 million tonnes a year.

> Not only that. The mine poses high risks as the slicing of the first layer of coal will end within the next four months and then slicing of the second layer will begin. This second layer will be sliced from under the coal block. This is a risky operation that poses the threat of mine collapse. In China, the country which is doing the Barapukuria mining, about 5,000 miners officially and 20,000 unofficially perish every year due to such accidents. "This makes no economic

sense," says Mainul Haq, local consultant for hydrocarbon unit. "If we opted for open pit mining, all the coal could have been extracted. There are some people who argue that open pit mining is bad because of environment problem. But shaft mining is even worse as Barapukuria and other similar coal mines around the world prove."

If Barapukuria was mined through open pit method which means opening up the mine area in patches, extracting coal, filling it up to restore land and then moving on to another patch a very small area would have been turned into a permanent lake instead of villages after villages as the situation is now.

And as the government mulls mining another coal area in Fulbari, the Barapukuria case is a pointer. The plights of Osman Gani and Ibrahim Khalil and thousand others count when deciding which option we go

Risky construction

look into the matter," he added.

Inspector General of Police Hasan Mahmud Khandaker said they also conduct investigations into the accidents. But the force doesn't have adequate personnel to ensure security measures at the construction sites, the police chief added.

Such an undesired situation prevails as the Bangladesh National Building Code, 2006 still

awaits enforcement. Earlier on October 13 2010, the High Court asked the government to establish the National Building Code Enforcement Authority in accordance with the code. The HC also asked the government to implement the order within one year into receiving the copy of the judgement.

However, the copy of the order has yet to reach the authorities concerned.

Until the launch of National Building Code Enforcement Authority, respondents have been directed to designate Rajuk, Chittagong Development Authority, Khulna Development Authority, Barisal City Corporation, Rajshahi City Corporation and Sylhet City Corporation as the code enforcement agency within three months of receiving the judgment.

The order was issued after three rights organisations including Safety and Rights Society and Bangladesh Legal Aid Services Trust filed check the situation to a great a writ following the Rangs

Bhaban tragedy in 2007.

Rajuk sources confirm they have not yet received the copy of the HC order.

Programme Director Sekender Ali Mina of Safety and Rights Society said 59 people died in different construction sites from in the first four months of this year.

In most cases safety measures were not taken at the scenes of accidents, he observed.

On Saturday, Munna died on the spot as a brick fell on his head from the 10th floor of Sagupta De Khan, a construction site of Sagupta Group, on Panthapath.

Munna fell victim to the

neglect of the construction

authorities, who took no safety measures although the site is situated in a busy Officer-in-Charge of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar police Syed Ziauzzaman said they visited the scene and found

no proper safety measures in place at the underconstruction building. Police and rights activists say if the authorities concerned took safety measures as per the BNBC to check

falling objects, Munna would not die. The OC added they recorded a case under section 304 (A) which brought charges of killing someone

by an act of negligence by the authorities concerned. Sekender Ali of Safety and Rights Society said though the BNBC has yet to be enforced, existing laws can

extent by enforcing the Penal Code sections -- 336,

337, 338 and 304 (A). These sections of the Penal Code can take measures against the persons who cause death by negligence, endanger life or cause injury by acts endangering life or personal safety of others.

World's 'largest'

FROM PAGE 20 The uranium found in the mine is low-grade.

only augment the indigenous supply of uranium. There would still be a significant gap. We would still have to import," Banerjee was quoted as saying by The Hindu newspaper. Major exporter Australia

has so far rebuffed Indian requests for supplies of the heavy metal, which is refined into nuclear fuel, because the country has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. India's fast-growing

economy is heavily dependent on coal, getting less than three percent of its energy from atomic power. It hopes to raise the figure to 25 percent by 2050. The government has

been seeking new supplies of uranium worldwide and has concluded supply deals with France, Kazakhstan and Russia among others.

India currently has 20 nuclear reactors generating 4,780 megawatts of power, plus seven reactors with a capacity of 5,300 megawatts under construction.

Girl kills

physics department at the same college, according to relatives of the victim.

Hailing from Ashashuni upazila in Satkhira, the couple got married in 2004 and came here to continue higher stud-They were residing at a

rented house on College Avenue in the city. They used to give private tuition to bear their educational expenses. After watching those

obscene shots recently, her husband on Monday cautioned her not to damage their social prestige in their village. Her classmate Nayon had been stalking her since admission, even knowing her mari-

tal status, the victim told her husband explaining the incident. Suparna once agreed to meet Nayon at Planet World Children Park in the city to convince him not to disturb. But the accused took her

obscene video footage there

threatening her with arms.

Nayon used the video shots to blackmail the victim and when she denied continuing the immoral relationship, he started circulating the clips for the last two weeks, Kamanashish told The Daily The couple informed the

assured to assist the victim only after filing a case. As Suparna was about to appear in an examination yesterday morning, they decided to lodge the case in

police and an Awami League

lawmaker for help and they

giving private tuition, the victim's husband found the door closed around 11:20pm on Monday. He broke the door open

Returning home after

the afternoon.

with the help of neighbours and found the body of her wife hanging from a ceiling fan. Detained at Barisal Kotwali Police Station, Nayon claimed he had a friendly relationship

with Suparna since admission

in the college and confessed to recording obscene video with her consent. He, however, denied the allegation of blackmailing her by circulating the video clips. He suspected Shahidul Islam, another classmate of them,

might have transferred the video files from his mobile phone. Law enforcers detained Nayon from the gate of Govt Barisal College and recovered his mobile phone handset, but failed to collect the memory card used in recording the

video clips, Zahangir Hossain, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station told The Daily Star. An autopsy of the victim was done at the morgue of

College Hospital, added the The victim's husband filed a case last night accusing

Sher-e-Bangla Medical

Nayon for her death. Meanwhile, classmates of the victim broke into tears at the examination hall vester-

day after hearing about the tragic death of their friend.

Last chance FROM PAGE 20 because we need to write a report on the outcome of the dialogue," the CEC said.

He was talking to reporters after talks with Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP-Matin) at the EC secretariat in the capital.

About talks with the ruling

Awami League, Huda said it is "The new findings would likely to be in the first week of August. AL in a letter yesterday morning said it could not join

> the talks yesterday due to the cabinet meeting. Its Office Secretary Abdul Mannan Khan and Deputy Office Secretary Mrinal Kanti

Das handed over the letter to

the EC, requesting a new date.

Earlier, Election

AL too got three dates for the talks so far. The party could not sit on June 9, as the finance minister placed the budget proposal on that day. The dialogue was first rescheduled for June 18 and then for yesterday.

Commissioner Sakhawat Hussain said the commission plans to introduce electronic voting machine in the Narayanganj City Corporation polls. He also said the demarca-

tion of the newly announced Narayanganj and Comilla city corporations is already underway. Elections to the two city

corporations should be held by November this year and January next year respectively, he added.

this way? He was one of the brilliant students in his school and he was not involved in any crimes. I want justice," his father Aminur Rahim said.

city

FROM PAGE 1 master's final year student of