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BLAST AT SCRAP-SHIP YARD 8 burnt, fight for lives

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Chittagong

Eight workers were fighting for their lives in two hospitals of Chittagong following a gas cylinder explosion at a ship-breaking yard in Sitakunda upazila yesterday morning.

The incident has yet again exposed the lack of workers' safety standards in the ship-breaking industry, said an expert.

At least five workers were killed and many others injured in similar accidents at shipyards in the district this year, according to hospital sources.

Saiful Islam, senior assistant superintendent of police at Sitakunda Model Police Station, said yesterday's explosion took place at Shital Enterprise around 7:30am. The flame was doused soon afterwards.

Five of the eight workers were rushed to the burn unit of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) while the rest to Al Amin Hospital in AK Khan Gate area of the city.

Rozina Islam, registrar of the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit of the CMCH, said all the workers admitted there were in a critical condition and all of them sustained over 10 percent burns, including in their respiratory tracts.

This correspondent visited the hospital and saw one of the victims, Mohammad Maksudul, 25, of Raumari upazila of Kurigram, groaning in pain. He had suffered over 30 percent burns.

A witness said the explosion took place when the workers were changing their clothes in a room before starting their work yesterday morning.

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One of the eight workers of a ship-breaking yard of Sitakunda burnt in a gas cylinder explosion. The photo was taken at Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS



Peter Custers A friend of Bangladesh passes away

ANSAR AHMED ULLAH

Dutch journalist and researcher Peter Custers, a lifelong friend of Bangladesh, died on Thursday at his home in Leiden, the Netherlands, due to heart attack. He was 66.

Custers was also a campaigner, author and theoretician. He wrote several books, articles focusing on social change and development. Among many, his famous book "Capital Accumulation and Women's Labour in Asian Economies" gave momentum to the left political

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Cut internet prices

PM urges mobile operators

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the mobile phone operators to bring down internet service fees at the consumer level as the government had reduced its bandwidth fees.

"We've brought down the price of Mbps bandwidth from Tk 78,000 to Tk 625. I'll ask the mobile phone operators to bring down the fees at the consumer level," she said.

The PM said this while

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'Criminal' killed in 'gunfight'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An alleged criminal was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Chittagong city early yesterday.

The dead, Arman Hazari, 35, was a resident of Shamserepara in the port city's Chandgaon area. He was an accused in over 22 criminal cases, including murder, robbery, arms and extortion, police said.

Sairul Islam, officer-in-charge of Chandgaon Police Station, told The Daily Star that police, acting on a tip-off, raided Shamserepara area in the early hours of yesterday.

As the law enforcers reached the Chan Mia residential area, a gang of criminals, numbering 10 to 12, opened fire on them, forcing police to retaliate with gunshots, triggering a "gunfight", said Parithosh Ghosh, deputy commissioner (North) of Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP).

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13kg gold found in seized car

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday recovered 110 gold bars weighing 12.83kg from a seized vehicle, which was kept at their station for three days, at Bagharpara upazila in Jessore.

The white private car, seized in connection with a mugging case filed by its owner, was at the police station compound for last three days, said Foyruddin Ahmad, officer-in-charge of Bagharpara Police Station.

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ELECTRICITY, GAS PRICES

Drop hike plan or get sued

Consumer body tells govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) yesterday threatened to go to court if the authorities do not withdraw their decision of hiking electricity and gas prices.

The power price should rather be re-fixed in proportion to the generation cost that has fallen with the reduced oil prices in the world market, said M Shamsul Alam, energy adviser of CAB, at a press conference at

Dhaka Reporter's Unity.

"We are aggrieved because the issue of equity and justice has not been ensured."

Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) has recently ordered the authorities concerned to charge consumers more for electricity and gas from this month.

The new rate that came into effect from September 1 is forcing people to spend on average 2.93 percent more on electricity and

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SQ Chy's son held, sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Humam Quader Chowdhury, son of war criminal and BNP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, was sent to jail yesterday following his arrest earlier in the day in connection with an attempted murder case filed seven years ago.

Metropolitan Magistrate Meher Nigar Suchana

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IRI survey findings contradictory

Says BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday rejected the US-based International Republican Institute's survey findings that the government's popularity increased, saying the results were "contradictory and devoid of reality."

"They [IRI] are saying the country's majority people want the polls to be held as soon as possible under the caretaker government. On the other hand, they're saying the government's popularity has increased. This has proved that the survey result is contradictory," said BNP spokesperson Asaduzzaman Ripon.

He made the comment

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'FUNDING MILITANTS' Rab arrests businessman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Rapid Action Battalion yesterday arrested an apparel businessman from the capital's Turag area on charges of financing militant outfit Shahid Hamza Brigade, Rab sources claimed.

Tipped off, a team of Rab-7 conducted a drive in Turag area around 3:30pm and arrested Enamul Haque, said Rab-7 Commanding Officer Lt Col Miftaiddin Ahmed.

He said they had evidence that Enamul on August 11, 2014, deposited

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Some of the women with cervical cancer in Chander Char of Aditmari upazila in Lalmonirhat. They were all married before they turned 18.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

Waking up to cervical cancer

S DILIP ROY with ANDREW EAGLE

Mother-of-three Afroza Begum, 23, of Chander Char village on an island in Lalmonirhat's Teesta basin has tested positive for cervical cancer. She doesn't know what to do. "My husband wants to take a second wife," she says.

Her neighbour Sahera Begum, 33, is suffering a similar fate. "Day by day I am losing interest in intimate relations with my husband," says the mother-of-four.

While cervical cancer is often symptom free in its early stages, when symptoms do develop they include

irregular bleeding and pain during sexual intercourse.

"I have cervical cancer," says Nurjahan Begum 24, of Char Narsingh, a village on another island. "I no longer feel able to satisfy my husband and he's threatening me with divorce."

What the three women have in common is they were all child brides, married at age 11 or 12. While the main cause of cervical cancer is exposure to particular strains of the sexually transmitted human papilloma virus (HPV), secondary causes include smoking, multiple pregnancies and having sexual relations at a young age.

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FORMER ENCLAVE RESIDENTS 979 new Indians to get ID cards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As many as 979 residents of 111 former Indian enclaves, who chose Indian nationality, are going to get temporary identity cards/travel passes for travelling across the border.

According to a Land Boundary Agreement, all 979 residents would have to cross over to India through designated check posts between August 1 and

November 30. However, they can now visit India using these passes before the deadline.

The Indian high commission in Dhaka along with its assistant high commission in Rajshahi would distribute the passes at special camps in Panchagarh, Lalmonirhat and Kurigram on Monday and Tuesday.

The first camp at Debiganj upazila rest house in Panchagarh would be inaugurated by Pankaj Saran, Indian high commissioner

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The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited

ONLINE POLL

Do you agree with lawmaker Mayeen Uddin Khan Badal that people don't have the slightest confidence in the country's healthcare system, as they see the VIPs fly abroad for treatment?

Yes (96%)
No (04%)

TOTAL VOTES: 54

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think the authority should reconsider the recent price-hike of gas and power?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net



PHOTO: AFP

War criminal ice cream!

BBC ONLINE

A Chinese ice cream company is marking 70 years since the end of World War Two with a special creation depicting the face of Japan's wartime prime minister, Gen Hideki Tojo.

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PRAYER TIMING

SEPTEMBER 6

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4-35 12-45 4-30 6-20 7-45

JAMAAT 5-10 1-15 4-45 6-25 8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION