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Ferry service suspended at Daulatdia

Several hundred vehicles stranded at terminals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

BIWTC has asked all to use the Bangabandhu bridge after it suspended ferry service on the Paturia-Daulatdia route following damage to three landing stations (ghat) at Daulatdia terminal in Rajbari.

The ferry service on the route was suspended since 10:00am yesterday to avoid any untoward incident.

Around 500 vehicles, including bus, truck and car, remained stranded on both sides of this important route as of 9:00pm yesterday, causing immense sufferings to passengers.

However, three small ferries started transporting passengers and private cars by using landing station-3, which is partly broken, from 1:30pm, said Sheikh Mohammad Nasim, deputy general manager of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC).

Shafikul Islam, manager (commerce) of BIWTC at Daulatdia office, said three out of four landing stations were washed away while the landing station-3 was also under threat of erosion of the Padma.

The landing station-4 was damaged on July 27 due to strong current of the river. Maximum portion of approach road to the landing station-2 was broken by the erosion, according to BIWTC officials.

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The Padma river devoured Landing Station-2 of Daulatdia ferry terminal in Rajbari on Saturday. It has led to traffic snarl-up on the approach road to the terminal, inset. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

'GUNFIGHT' WITH COPS Unidentified man killed in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

An alleged criminal was killed in a "gunfight" between his accomplices and police during an anti-militancy drive in the district's Bagmara upazila early yesterday.

The identity of the deceased, aged around 34, could not be known immediately, said Moazzem Hossain Bhuiyan, superintendent of police in Rajshahi, while addressing a press briefing yesterday noon.

Moazzem said acting on a tip-off that some criminals gathered in a mango orchard of one Mohammad Sumon in Jhikra Joan Bhatpara village around 3:30am, a joint team of Detective Branch of Rajshahi district police and Bagmara police raided the orchard.

Sensing the law enforcers' presence, the criminals exploded several crude bombs and opened fire.

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British Council to reopen offices soon

Says home minister after meeting UK envoy

UNB, Dhaka

The British Council is going to reopen its offices in Bangladesh very soon, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan has said.

He made the comment while talking to reporters after a meeting with the British High Commissioner in Dhaka Alison Blake at his secretariat office yesterday.

"The High Commissioner has told us that the British Council offices remain temporarily closed for internal refurbishment works, but their examinations and online activities are on. The offices will be reopened very soon," he said.

Asaduzzaman said they have already ensured adequate security measures for the British Council, and it will be beefed up further, if necessary.

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Signs are BNP going farther right

Say party insiders, cite 'undermining of freedom fighters, progressive leaders' in the new committee

RASHIDUL HASAN and PRABIR BARUA CHOWDHURY

Formation of BNP's new committee excluding apparently cornered but dedicated leaders, especially veteran freedom fighters known as progressive-minded, indicates party chief Khaleda Zia's major policy shift from progressive to more rightist, insiders say.

To back up their observations, the party insiders argue that Khaleda and her son Tarique Rahaman have given priority to sons, family members and even personal staff of the two convicted war criminals -- Salauddin Quader Chowdhury and Abdul Alim -- instead of incorporating many tested and grassroots leaders.

More grievances have meanwhile been pouring in following the announcement of the 502-member central executive committee and 17-member standing committee, the highest policymaking body of the BNP.

The insiders say leaders loyal to Tarique or those who could please him staying in London since late 2008 have got berth in the upper position in the party.

Besides, several BNP senior leaders said Khaleda did not consult them during the formation of the new committee that unfolded criticism in and outside the party.

A number of BNP leaders said Khaleda even did not consult with BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir. Some BNP men also alleged that Khaleda's special assistant Shimul Biswas and BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Rizvi Ahmed influenced the chief to form the new committee.

Some even said Fakhrul had no idea about the committee until Khaleda

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Salim Osman also 'victim of rumour'

Says teacher who was humiliated in N'ganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police have found out the public humiliation of Narayanganj school teacher Shyamal Kanti Bhakta in May was an "unexpected situation" resulted from a rumour, according to a probe report submitted to the High Court yesterday.

In the second week of May, a video clip went viral on the social media showing how the headmaster of Piyar Sattar Latif High School was humiliated and forced to squat holding his ears in the presence of local Jatiya Party lawmaker AKM Salim Osman.

The police report quotes Shyamal as saying that both he and the MP were victims of a situation caused by a rumour.

The Daily Star tried to contact Shyamal to verify it. One of his family members received the phone call but declined to comment in this regard.

Following a nationwide outpouring of rage, the HC in a suo moto rule directed police on June 9 to submit a detailed report on the incident.

On August 4, police submitted a report

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Black holes 'doors' to another world



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Black holes are doors to other parts of the universe, according to a new study. But you wouldn't ever get to come back.

Anyone who managed to get through one of the mysterious doors would end up "spaghettified", and stretched out like a long strand of pasta, according to the research. They'd get squished back down to size once they reached the other side, but it's unlikely they'd be alive to see it.

Previously, scientists have held that all matter inside of a black hole is destroyed and so there would be no way of ever actually making it through. But the new research suggests that it could act as a doorway or a tunnel -- as in a sci-fi story.

Black holes are places where matter has been squashed to such a density by gravity that the

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PHENSEDYL CASE Top court stays acquittal of Bhola judge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday stayed a High Court verdict that had acquitted a former senior assistant judge of Bhola Zaved Imam in a case filed for carrying phensedyl.

The apex court also directed Zaved to surrender before the lower court concerned in seven days after receiving the copy of the

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JAMAAT 4-55 1-15 5-15 6-50 8-45

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Leave Dhaka by today

Bangladesh asks North Korea diplomat over his 'illegal activities'

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The government has asked a North Korean diplomat to leave the country for his illegal activities violating diplomatic norms.

The foreign ministry asked the diplomat, Han Son Ik, first secretary of the North Korean mission in Dhaka, to comply with the order by today, a senior official of the ministry confirmed it to The Daily Star yesterday.

Customs officials reportedly seized a consignment of tobacco and electronic products, worth Tk 3.5 crore, from the Inland Container Depot (ICD) in the capital's Kamalapur in July.

Foreign ministry and Customs sources said the North Korean diplomat purportedly brought the items without following due process.

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) wrote to the foreign ministry to take

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Vehicles, coming from Tejgaon and heading towards Gulshan Link Road and Merul Badda, stuck in jam on Hatirjheel roads in the capital around 9:30am yesterday. The point where the roads meet is not spacious enough, which leads to frequent jam during the rush hours.

Distributors seek to double gas prices

Regulator faces criticism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The energy regulator yesterday came under criticism for holding public hearings on proposals aimed at almost doubling retail tariffs on natural gas for different users.

Consumer rights groups, industry experts and the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) opposed the proposals put forwarded to the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) by distributors.

They voiced their opposition at a public hearing on the proposals from state-run Gas Transmission Company Ltd (GTCL) which is seeking to raise the wheeling charge of natural gas to Tk 0.3665 per cubic metre from Tk 0.1565.

Gas distribution companies are seeking to raise the monthly gas tariffs for domestic consumers to Tk 1,200 from Tk 650 for double burners and Tk 1,100 from Tk 600 for single burner.

At the hearing at the BERC in the capital, a technical committee of the commission said the GTCL would need Tk 0.2956 to transmit a cubic metre of gas, which would give the company an annual profit of Tk 200 crore a year.

The GTCL said it needed the profit to invest in implementing its own gas transmission projects. M Shamsul Alam, energy adviser of the Consumer Association of Bangladesh, said the consumers would not allow the GTCL to make profit as the distribution of the profit was creating "anarchy" in the sector.

He urged the commission to allocate funds for implementing the gas pipeline projects, if needed. Abdul Matlub Ahmad, president of the FBCCI, urged the

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