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CTG GAS TANK BLAST Probe finds 2 officials guilty

Departmental action recommended

MINHAJ UDDIN, Ctg

A probe committee has held two high officials of DAP fertiliser factory responsible for the ammonia gas tank explosion on August 22 and recommended they be withdrawn.

The Chittagong district administration's probe committee suggested taking punitive departmental action against Deputy Chief Engineer (electricity) Dilip Kumar Barua and General Manager (Technical and Maintenance Service) Md Nokibul Islam and realising compensation for the damage from their gratuity.

The three-member committee also opined that lack of coordination among different sections was one of the main reasons for the accident that sent around 50 people to hospital and damaged the environment.

Led by Additional District Magistrate Md Mominur Rashid, the body submitted the report to Deputy Commissioner Mesbah Uddin yesterday afternoon. The committee was formed a day after the explosion of the 500-tonne ammonia tank at the factory in Rangadia area of Anwara upazila.

"Fortunately, we were saved from a massive disaster as the movement of the wind was towards the river. If the wind movement was in the opposite direction, the damage to lives and properties could have been greater," said Mesbah Uddin at the conference room of his office.

Much of the 340 tonne liquid ammonia went into the base dyke of the tank. As a result, most of it got trapped and fire officials managed to dilute it by

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Bangladesh players run for joy after beating Kyrgyzstan 10-0 -- the biggest victory so far in Group C -- in their AFC Under-16 Women's Championship Qualifiers fixture at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Story on page 14

PHOTO: STAR

NIZAM HAZARI HC adjourns delivery of judgment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday adjourned delivery of the judgment on a writ petition that challenged the legality of Nizam Uddin Hazari's holding Jatiya Sangsad membership.

The court directed the jail authorities to submit a report to it within 30 days stating how many times Nizam, an Awami League lawmaker from Feni, had donated blood voluntarily during imprisonment in a criminal case and how many days he was granted remission.

The HC bench of Justice Md Emdadul Huq and Justice Md Iqbal Kabir fixed November 3 for further hearing on the petition.

The court started SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Lone accused of Risha murder held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

A week after Suraiya Akter Risha was stabbed leading to her death, law enforcers with the help of a local arrested the alleged attacker, Obaidul Kader, in Domar upazila of the district yesterday.

The suspect was having breakfast at a roadside restaurant at Sonaroy Bazar when a local recognised him and informed Domar Police Station, said Officer-in-Charge Ahmed Raziur Rahman.

Notified by Domar police, a team of the Rapid Action Battalion and police, who were on the lookout for the suspect, made the arrest, said Superintendent of Police in Nilphamari Zakir Hossain.

"We are in shock. But the arrest gives us hopes for justice," said Ramzan Hossain, father of Risha, a class-VIII student of Willes Little Flower School in the capital.

A special police team from Dhaka led by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) AHM Azimul Huq was hunting for Obaidul in Thakurgaon, Dinajpur and Nilphamari, said Maruf Hossain Sorder, DC of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.



Obaidul

SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

Plight all the way

Going home for Eid, people suffer at every stage -- from securing tickets to journey itself

PANKAG KARMAKAR

Sanaullah Miah was concerned about getting an advance ticket ahead of Eid.

After waiting for around four hours at a counter in Gabtoli Bus Terminal in the capital on August 23, he had managed to get a ticket to Bogra. But he had to pay Tk 470 even though the normal price is Tk 350.

"This is the beginning of my sufferings. We will have to endure much more to reach our home during the Eid rush," Sanaullah told The Daily Star at the bus counter.

The Eid-ul-Azha is expected to be celebrated in the country on September 12.

Thousands of holidaymakers experience similar sufferings when they go to collect tickets or travel home ahead of Eid every year.

Ticket crises, overcharging by transport operators, traffic gridlock on the highways, operation of unfit vehicles and mismanagement in ferry services have become one of the most common phenomena during the Eid rush.

According to transport operators, around 35 lakh people leave the capital by road to celebrate Eid with their near and dear ones. The huge number of home-going people causes a huge crisis of tickets.

"Most of the people want to travel in last three or four days ahead of Eid. It is not possible to arrange tickets for all at their convenient time," said Samad Mandal, manager of Hanif Paribahan.

Cashing in on the huge demand, almost all the transport operators charge additional fares, passengers allege.

Those who travel in AC buses suffer more as the operators charge much higher than the fares of normal buses. They can charge as per their will as the government has yet to fix a fare for the AC buses.

Talking to The Daily Star, Masud Hasan, a private jobholder, said he had bought a ticket of an AC bus from Dhaka to Satkhira at Tk 1,800. He added ticket for the same bus on the same route normally costs Tk 1,100.

As Eid holidays are the golden time for transport business, many

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3-month bail for Shafik Rehman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday granted bail to journalist Shafik Rehman in a case filed for his alleged attempt to abduct and murder prime minister's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy.

Following the SC order there is no legal bar for Shafik to get released from jail, Shafik's lawyer Advocate M Asaduzzaman told The Daily Star.

The bail order was granted to him for three months or until the charge sheet of the case is submitted. His bail will expire if police submits the charge sheet before three months, the apex court said in its order.

A five-member bench of the Appellate Division of the SC headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha passed the order after hearing Shafik's appeal petition seeking bail in the case.

Earlier on June 7, the

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Executed 'for falling asleep'



AFP, Seoul

North Korea has executed a vice premier for showing disrespect during a meeting presided over by leader Kim Jong-Un, South Korea said yesterday, after reports that he fell asleep.

The regime also banished two other senior officials, Seoul said, the latest in a slew of punishments Kim is believed to have ordered in what analysts say is an attempt to tighten his grip on power.

"Vice premier for education Kim Yong-Jin was executed," Seoul's Unification Ministry spokesman Jeong Joon-Hee said at a regular briefing.

Kim was killed by a firing squad in July as "an anti-party, anti-revolutionary agitator," added an official at the ministry, who declined to be named.

"Kim Yong-Jin was denounced for his bad sitting posture when he was sitting below the rostrum"

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Founding anniv of BNP today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP celebrates its 38th founding anniversary today but in a simple manner.

To mark the occasion, the party, which is apparently in disarray, has no plan to bring out any colourful procession anywhere, BNP sources said.

Party Chairperson Khaleida Zia along with her leaders and activists would place wreaths and offer prayers at Ziaur Rahman's grave in the capital this

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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 31

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JAMAAT 5-05 1-15 5-00 6-26 8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

2005 INDIA TRAIN BLAST Bangladeshi sentenced to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

A Bangladeshi national, having links with banned militant outfit Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (Huji), was sentenced to death yesterday by a trial court in northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh for the blast in a passenger train which killed 12 people and injured scores others 11 years ago.

Ubed-ur-Rehman, alias Babu, is the second accused who was awarded death sentence in the case.

Additional Sessions Judge Buddhram Yadav, who yesterday held Ubed guilty, also slapped a fine of Rs 10.3 lakh on him.

Earlier, another Bangladeshi Huji operative Alamgir, alias Rony, was given death sentence and fined Rs 7 lakh by the court.

Twelve people were killed and scores others

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



After remaining closed for 10 days following a fire incident, Bashundhara City shopping complex reopened yesterday. The presence of shoppers, however, was thin despite the Eid less than two weeks away.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Brutes at it again

Yet another boy critically injured as two co-workers pump air into him

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Yet another boy was critically injured after air was pumped into his body through the rectum at a garage in the capital yesterday.

The victim, Harun alias Aaron, 12, works at Meghla Automobiles in Mohammadpur's Katur area, said Saddam Hossain, owner of the garage.

The suspects -- two other boys working at the same place -- were absconding.

The incident took place around 4:00pm after Saddam went home leaving Harun along with Shariful and Rabbi, aged around 13, at the garage.

On his return, he saw the victim groaning with pain. Harun then said the duo forcibly pumped air into his rectum, Saddam told The Daily Star.

Later, Saddam took Harun to the emergency unit of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. There, reporters overheard the victim describing the incident to the doctors.

He said initially, the three boys were having fun. But at one stage, Rabbi held Harun tightly and pushed him to the ground.

Shariful took a nozzle of an air compressor hose and pumped air into his rectum.

As he started screaming in pain, both Shariful and Rabbi left him and fled.

Harun was in critical condition and his stomach "abnormally swollen", doctors told journalists.

Officer-in-Charge Jamal Uddin Mir of Mohammadpur Police Station said several police teams were trying to find Shariful and Rabbi.

Harun's brother Ripon Mia, who lives in Rayer Bazar

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