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KARNAPHULI PAPER MILLS Production halted for gas crisis

Losses pile up; KPM blames Karnaphuli Gas Distribution Co Ltd for the situation

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, back from Rangamati

Production at Karnaphuli Paper Mills has remained suspended since August 6, causing the country's lone state-owned paper mill a loss of over Tk 5 crore.

KPM authorities alleged Karnaphuli Gas Distribution Company Limited stopped supplying gas to the mill for payment of arrears.

But KGDCL denied the allegation and blamed a technical glitch at the KPM's metering (gas receiving) station for the shutdown.

In such a situation, at least 400 mill workers, paid on weekly basis, have found themselves in deep trouble.

They have been staging demonstration at the mill, situated at Chattogram's Chandraghona, for around a week, demanding that the authorities take steps to resume the production immediately.

According to KGDCL, KPM is supposed to pay it around Tk 75 crore in dues.

Asked about the allegation, KGDCL Managing Director Khajir Ahmed said they did not disconnect the gas

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Sand and stone are being extracted from the bed of the Dholai river in Bhologanj area of Sylhet's Companiganj. Such activities are banned in the area as they exacerbate erosion, inset, of the banks. The photos were taken on Wednesday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Zafrullah, 60 others sued over vandalism, looting

Gonoshasthaya ED terms it a false case

GONOSHASTHAYA ED
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Zafrullah Chowdhury and more than 60 others have been sued for their alleged involvement in vandalising and looting a market in Dhaka's Ashulia.

Nasir Uddin, a local Awami League leader who owns the market, filed a case with Ashulia Police Station on Thursday, accusing 21 named and 40 to 50 unnamed people.

According to the case statement, a group of people vandalised and looted the market following Zafrullah's direction on Thursday, causing a loss worth Tk 60 lakh.

The criminals looted cash money, two air conditioners, three fridges, one LED television and nine ceiling fans among many other assets. They also beat up Sazzad Hossain, owner of a hotel in the market, and threatened him with death, the case statement read.

Saiful Islam Shishir, executive director of Gonoshasthaya Kendra, was also accused in the case.

Talking to The Daily Star, Shishir said, the case was fabricated and false. "I do not know who carried out the attack."

He said, Nasir built the market breaking a portion of Gonoshasthaya Kendra's boundary wall. As a result, the authorities of Gonoshasthaya Kendra filed a case against Nasir.

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Supply shortfall pushes onion prices up

STAR REPORT

Onion prices have increased by Tk 10-20 per kilogram in both retail and wholesale markets across the country in the last one week because of a "supply shortfall".

Importers and sellers said the supply of Indian onions fell significantly during the Eid vacation, when imports remained suspended for about nine days at a stretch.

Another reason is importers are paying extra because of a significant rise in onion prices in India after floods hit several states of the country recently.

The price of imported onions rose from Tk 35-40 a week ago to Tk 50-55 per kg now. Local onion is also selling for almost the same price, but it was Tk 10 cheaper earlier.

Meanwhile, buyers have been

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Indian soldier killed in Pak firing at LoC

Says Delhi; 100 injured in sporadic clashes between stone-throwing protesters and govt forces in Kashmir

AGENCIES

An Indian soldier was killed by Pakistani forces on the Kashmir border, the military said yesterday, as sporadic clashes between stone-throwing protesters and government forces in Srinagar left more than 100 injured.

The nuclear-armed neighbours regularly target each other with mortar shells and gunfire on the de facto border known as the Line of Control (LoC) in the disputed Himalayan territory which is claimed by both India and Pakistan.

But the latest skirmish comes as ties hit a new low after India revoked the autonomy of the part of the region it controls, sparking protests from the local population and outrage from Pakistan.

The Indian soldier was manning a post in mountainous Rajouri district yesterday when he came under "unprovoked fire" from across the border, local media reports said.

A New Delhi-based Indian Army spokesman confirmed the incident to AFP.

The death was the fourth claimed by the Indian side since the August 5 decision to strip the region's special constitutional status.

Pakistan's military has said five people including three soldiers have died in shelling by Indian forces.

The border clashes are happening amid a curfew in the valley, including its main city of Srinagar where fears of large-scale street protests against India's move persist.

COLLECTIVE PUNISHMENT
Posters have sprung up across the region calling for a public march to the local UN office yesterday.

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UPDF man killed in gunfight

The dead was accused of Shaktiman Chakma killing

STAR REPORT

A member of the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) was killed in a gunfight with a patrol team of Bangladesh Army in Rangamati's Baghaihari upazila yesterday, ISPR said.

The victim, Sumon Chakma, was an accused in a case filed over the murder of Naniarchar upazila chairman Shaktiman Chakma.

Acting on a tip-off, a patrol team from Rangamati's Baghaihari army zone launched a drive in Dopata area to arrest criminals, the Inter Services Public Relation Directorate (ISPR) said in a press release.

Sensing the presence of the army personnel, criminals opened fire targeting the army

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Gentleman jailbreak

270 convicts return to Indonesia prison

AFP, Sorong

More than 270 inmates -- including convicted murderers -- who bolted from a prison torched during violent riots in Indonesia's Papua region have returned to finish their sentences, a corrections official said yesterday.

The convicts are even helping build a temporary office for their jailers, he added, after parts of the building in Sorong city went up in flames this week.

About half the prison's 500 inmates fled Monday as protesters outside set the jail and other buildings ablaze.

"But they weren't trying to escape -- they just

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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 24

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33	8-00
JAMAAT 5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Two teens killed as train hits them

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

A teenage boy and a girl were killed after an intercity train hit them at Banasua railway bridge, on the fringe of Cumilla city, yesterday.

The deceased were Setu Rani Roy, 15, daughter of Subol Roy of Dharmapur and Sawpnil Haque Aditta, 13, son of Monirul Haque of Shasongasa. Both the villages are close to the city.

Setu was a ninth grader at Cumilla Railway High School and Sawpnil a seventh grader at Police Lines High School.

Railway construction workers Sukkur and Jewel, who witnessed the accident, said Chattogram-bound Mahanagar Express hit them when they were trying to cross the bridge, around 11:00am.

The boy was already on the other side of the bridge, but the girl was stuck in the gap between two sleepers, they said, adding that the boy came back to rescue her, but they could not make it to the other side in time.

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Protesters hold placards during a demonstration against the deforestation in the Amazon and the government's environmental policies outside the Brazilian embassy in Berlin yesterday. Inset, smoke billows during a fire in an area of the Amazon rainforest near Humaita, Amazonas State, Brazil.

PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS

Amazon fires a global crisis

UN, EU, France raise concern; Brazil's Bolsonaro tells rest of the world not to interfere

AGENCIES

Paris, the United Nations and EU called for the protection of the fire-plagued Amazon rainforest as Brazil's right-wing president accused his French counterpart of having a "colonialist mentality" over the issue.

Official figures show nearly 73,000 forest fires were recorded in Brazil in the first eight months of the year -- the highest number for any year since 2013. Most were in the Amazon.

The extent of the area damaged by fires has yet to be determined, but smoke has choked Sao Paulo and several other Brazilian cities in the past week.

UN chief Antonio Guterres said on Thursday he was "deeply concerned" by the fires.

"In the midst of the global climate crisis, we cannot afford more damage to a major source of oxygen and biodiversity," he said on Twitter.

"The Amazon must be protected."

France's President Emmanuel Macron said the wildfires were "an international crisis" and called on the globe's most industrialized nations to address it at their summit this weekend.

"Our house is on fire. Literally. The Amazon, the lung of our planet which produces 20 percent of our oxygen is burning," Macron said on Twitter on Thursday.

"It is an international crisis. Members of the G7, let's talk in two days about this emergency."

That did not sit well with Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro.

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