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EU loses \$ 1.5B to fraud in '95

BRUSSELS, Belgium, May 9: The European Union lost at least 1.5 billion European currency units (1.5 billion dollars) to fraud last year, amounting to 1.4 per cent of its total budget, the EU Commission reported Wednesday, reports AP.

The figures grew slightly from 1994, but officials cautioned the increase in confirmed cases of fraud was partly due to fuller reporting by Commission investigators.

No one knows the full extent of EU fraud, but officials conceded it could be much higher than the figures in the report.

The study identified 4,758 scams of all sizes in 1995, compared to 4,132 cases involving 1.1 billion euros (1.4 billion dollars) a year earlier.

It catalogued swindles ranging from EU subsidies for fictitious olive oil production in Italy to evaded customs duties on bicycles from Vietnam.

EU Justice Commissioner Anita Gradin pledged to step up the EU executive agency's efforts to crack down on the scams which for years have sparked criticism of the EU for misspending taxpayer money.

"The European taxpayers must know that their money is well taken care of," Gradin told reporters. "They will neither accept that the money goes into the wrong pockets, nor that it is not later recovered."

Gradin said she was most concerned that large-scale organized crime seemed to be replacing petty fraud as the main problem.

She noted that 10 per cent of detected cases accounted for half the money embezzled. For EU agriculture funds, 4 per cent of the cases accounted for 75 per cent of money lost, she said.

"It's not the individual farmer who's causing us the most headaches," Gradin said. "It's organized crime."

She said the evidence pointed to the need to crack down on sophisticated criminals increasingly exploiting a lack of judicial and police cooperation among the 15 EU nations.

The Commission argues its powers to prevent fraud are limited since the EU governments distribute 90 per cent of the common EU budget, worth about 80 billion euros (102 billion dollars).

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Dollar forward market opens up in India

BOMBAY, May 9: India's dollar forward market opened up today amidst fears of pressure on the rupee triggered by uncertainty over the outcome of national elections, dealers said, reports Reuters.

Dealers were quoting a premium of 295/310 paise for November delivery dollars, up from Wednesday's closing rate of 283/295 paise dealers said.

The rupee breached the 35 paise mark in the spot market on Thursday. The latest transactions were at 35.06/11. The pressure on the rupee was expected to be temporary, dealers said.

Financial crisis threatens UN reforms, warns Ghali

NEW YORK, May 9: The United Nations will run out of cash for the second time this year in August, the UN Secretary General said here on Wednesday, warning that the financial crisis threatened reform, reports AFP.

Boutros Boutros-Ghali told an audience of US non-government representatives and business leaders that "as long as the UN has to face one cycle of financial crisis after another, steps towards the most serious reforms will be almost impossible to carry out."

In his speech, he detailed the UN's financial crisis, recalling that the United Nations had been forced to borrow from a separate peacekeeping budget in order to keep afloat.

The world body ran out of cash last month and was forced to dip into the funds set aside to pay member states for troops and equipment. In 1995, the United Nations was

able to continue until September without borrowing from the peacekeeping budget.

Boutros-Ghali said that as a

Tk 14.12 cr loan given to rural people in Faridpur

RAJBARI, May 9: Bangladesh Pali Unnayan Board disbursed Taka 14.12 crore loan among the rural people of five districts of greater Faridpur during the last eight months, officials said, reports UNB.

The loans were disbursed among some 10,219 members of 463 committees of Rajbari, Faridpur, Gopalganj, Madaripur and Shariatpur districts for developing their socio-economic condition under the Rural Development Project-5 of the board.



Vital Kellens, first Secretary-Head of the Development Cooperation Division, Embassy of Belgium, called on Prof M Shahjahan, Vice-Chancellor, BUET, on Tuesday at the latter's office.

Benazir, Swedish PM discuss child labour issue

STOCKHOLM, May 8: Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and her Swedish counterpart Goeran Persson discussed the sensitive issue of child labour in Pakistan in great detail during talks here Wednesday, the foreign ministry said, reports AFP.

Benazir, who arrived here for a three-day visit Tuesday evening, raised the issue herself in her 90-minute meeting with Persson and described how to limit its occurrence, according to the Swedish news agency TT.

However, she stressed that child labour was a common problem in developing countries, TT said.

No other details of the leaders' talks on the subject were disclosed.

The April 1995 killing of Iqbal Masih, the 12-year-old freed carpet worker who fought against child labour, triggered strong emotions and huge protests in Sweden, where children's rights are fiercely protected.

Several demonstrations against child labour are scheduled to take place in Stockholm during the Pakistani leader's visit.

Youth against slavery, a group of ninth graders from the city of Lidköping, will demonstrate outside the Pakistani embassy Thursday morning and demand that Bhutto adopt measures to end child labour in Pakistan, which has signed the UN convention on the rights of the child.

And the Bonded Labour Liberation Front (BLLF) Pakistan on Wednesday demanded that Sweden ban the import of child-made products, such as carpets, textiles, footballs and medical products from Pakistan.

There should be sanctions. And when countries sign agreements with Pakistan, they should make the elimination of child labour and compulsory education for every child a condition," BLLF Pakistan founder and chairman Ehsan Ullah Khan told AFP.

According to a 1993 International Labour Organisation

result of the US budget agreement and the announced intention of Russia to pay 400 million dollars, the cash position had 'improved somewhat.'

"But current cash flow estimates indicate that the UN will run out of regular budget funds by the end of August."

Boutros Ghali attributed the crisis to chronic failure by UN member states to pay their dues.

"For four years, I have carried out far-reaching reforms in the US for four years, I have urged member states to pay their dues," he said.

The total amount owed by member states was more than 2.8 billion dollars, he said.

Roughly half of the amount is owed by Washington, which is the biggest UN contributor. But the Republican-dominated US congress has delayed payment of dues demanding more UN reform.

A political declaration about UNCTAD's future mandate is expected to be released by South African Trade Minister and UNCTAD President Alec Erwin before the conference ends.

A "very technical and bureaucratic" conference document outlining the body's future programmes will accompany the declaration, said William Rossier, a Swiss delegate and Chairman of UNCTAD's "committee of the whole."

Rossier said the working groups could finish a working draft of the document late Wednesday or early Thursday.

A committee comprising all of UNCTAD's member states will discuss and debate the draft document later today, he said.

Carim said the European Union and the United States want UNCTAD to focus on educating developing countries about the rules of globalised trade established in the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

UNCTAD talks at 'critical point': Delegates

MIDRAND, South Africa, May 8: Negotiations over the future of the United Nations Trade and Development Conference (UNCTAD) at its ninth session here have reached a critical stage, delegates told journalists Wednesday, reports AP.

Xavier Carim, South Africa's Deputy Director of bilateral relations, said industrialised and developing countries have been split over how to streamline the functions of the 32-year-old body.

South Africa assumed the four-year presidency of this session of the conference (UNCTAD IX) when it opened here on April 27. The event is expected to last until Saturday.

UNCTAD's stated aims are to promote liberalisation of global trade, to benefit the world's "excluded two billion."

Since last week, delegates representing 188 nations have been backed in three closed-door meetings to decide the organisation's future.

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Hundred projects implemented in Chandpur

CHANDPUR, May 9: About one hundred projects were implemented in Chandpur Paurashava area at a cost of Taka 36 crore under the mid-town infrastructural development programme, reports BSS.

Thirty carpet roads, twenty-five pucca roads, 20 pucca drains, 10 RCC roads, four markets have been constructed under the programme.

Besides, construction and reconstruction of schools, hospitals and sanitary latrines are going in full swing. So far eighty per cent works of the midtown projects have been completed. The rest will be completed soon.

LGED executing Tk 27cr programme

Another report adds: Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Chandpur, has been executing an ambitious programme for the development of roads and bridges of Chandpur at a cost of Tk 27 crore.

According to official sources 100 kilometre pucca roads in seven thanas of the district have been constructed at a cost of Tk 11 crore.

Besides construction and reconstruction of 3267 metre bridges were completed at a cost of Tk 16 crore and ten lakh during the last five years.

US requests WTO ruling EC proposes to relax British beef ban

BRUSSELS, Belgium, May 9: The European Union's executive Commission proposed Wednesday to relax the ban on British beef exports by allowing the sale of the by-products gelatin, tallow and bull semen, reports AP.

The decision came despite continued concern about Britain's struggle to implement plans for fighting mad cow disease.

The Commission decision will have to be approved by a committee of veterinary experts from the 15 EU nations, which is scheduled to meet next week.

The commission's move came after the British submitted proposals which would change its processing practices.

The World Health Organisation ruled last month that after and gelatin — widely used in cosmetics, candy, medicines and other products — are safe as long as they are produced in approved ways.

Britain plunged the European beef market into chaos March 20 when it announced a probable link between a cattle disease found in British herds — bovine spongiform encephalopathy — and a deadly human brain virus, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

The EU banned exports of British beef and beef products to prevent further damage to the market and to assure consumers the problems had been contained.

Since then, Britain has struggled unsuccessfully to get the ban lifted by pledging to destroy 42,000 cattle judged at high risk and by imposing other health safeguards.

Another report from Geneva says a trans-Atlantic trade spat over beef heated up Wednesday as the United States called on the World Trade Organisation to rule whether a ban on the sale of its hormone-treated beef in Europe violates world trade rules.

The United States complains that the import bar

costs the US meat industry 100 million dollars a year in lost sales. It has retaliated by imposing 100 million dollars in trade sanctions on EU pasta, tomato paste and citrus fruit.

US trade envoy Booth Gardner told a meeting of the trade body's Dispute Settlement Body there was "no legitimate basis" for the EU ban.

He said he trusted that the new tougher dispute settlement rules under the WTO would be able to resolve the trade row.

The EU, angry at the US retaliatory measure, told the meeting it had formally requested consultations with the United States over Washington's claimed loss of sales thus triggering a separate WTO dispute settlement procedure.

Training course on selling skills opens

A four-day training course on Selling Skills for 22 Area Managers and Zone Executives of Social Marketing Company (SMC) was inaugurated at the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC), Savar, Dhaka Wednesday, says a press release yesterday.

Sponsored by Rapport Bangladesh Limited, the residential training programme is being conducted by M Mosharraf Hossain, Managing Director, Rapport Bangladesh Limited, as the principal trainer.

The inaugural session was addressed by Ashfaqur Rahman, Marketing Manager and Shahid Ahmed, Sales Manager of SMC.

The training course was organised with a view to making the managers effective by providing adequate skills.

A certificate awarding ceremony will be held tomorrow evening. Waliur Rahman, Managing Director of SMC is likely to be present as the chief guest at the ceremony and distribute certificate to the participants.

Boom era of Chinese textile industry threatened

BEIJING, May 9: Rising raw material prices and backward technology are threatening a sales plunge in China's textile sector over the next five years following a decade of rapid growth, industry experts were quoted as saying yesterday, reports AFP.

The textile industry has been one of China's major success stories in the past five years, during which it has registered sales of 450 billion yuan (54.2 billion dollars) and pre-tax profits of 26.5 billion yuan.

Between now and 2000, however, the sector could find itself in a "lot of trouble" because of rising raw material and labour costs, as well as low efficiency and backward technology, the General Secretary of the Chinese Garment Association (CGA), Dong Binggen, was quoted as saying by the Xinhua news agency.

Dong said the main challenge would come from increased foreign competition as the global garment business transforms into a technical and capital-intensive industry, leaving a shrinking market share for the labour-intensive production model found in China.

There are 47,000 clothing plants in China, where 2.6 million sewing machines turn out 8.7 billion garments annually.

CGA statistics show that growth in garment exports has

dropped sharply since March 1995, and last year saw a 4.4 per cent decline in exports of shuttle-woven garments and accessories, which account for 55 per cent of the sector's total exports.

According to Shen Caigang, Vice-President of the China National Garment Corp, the high growth of the past five years will be hard to keep up, unless the industry upgrades its technology and improves efficiency rapidly, so as to increase the competitiveness of Chinese garments in overseas markets.

TIPS consultant meets BCI chief

Grant Frightree, TIPS consultant for identification of investment project in Bangladesh for Australian investors met AM Subid Ali, President of Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI) at BCI office in the city yesterday, says a press release.

Sharif M Afzal Hossain, Director and Quazi AK Refaul Haq, Secretary BCI were present on the occasion.

During the meeting, Ali told Frightree, that there is a communication gap between Bangladesh and Australia.

He termed Bangladesh "Virgin Land" which has many untapped resources.

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Oil sale from emergency reserve to lower gas prices in US

WASHINGTON, May 9: The Clinton administration said Wednesday the sale of 12 million barrels of oil from the emergency reserve will ease gasoline prices in the United States, reports AP.

Industry analysts called the move misguided and unlikely to have much effect.

Associate Deputy Energy Department Secretary C Kyle Simpson told a House Commerce subcommittee, "It is clear the best business practice is to make the oil available to the markets as quickly as possible."

While the drawdown has been criticized by some Republican lawmakers, Simpson noted that the Republican Congress previously directed that 227 million dollars in oil be sold from the reserve by the end of this fiscal year.

The president decided to speed up the sale to moderate tight petroleum supplies that have been blamed for a 20-cent-a-gallon jump in gasoline prices since February, Simpson said.

Two industry analysts and the head of an oil industry trade group attacked the use of the government reserve to respond to what they called a temporary price spike in gasoline.

"If used improperly, (draining) the reserve can exacerbate a crisis," warned Philip Verleger Jr, and oil industry analyst for Charles River Associates. He said it could discourage oil companies from increasing their private inventories.

Verleger said he expects the sale of 12 million barrels by the government "will have no impact but will give the American public the mistaken view that the government is in the business of managing energy prices."

John Lichtblau, Chairman of the Petroleum Industry Research Foundation, called on Clinton to draw on the 587 million barrels in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve misguidedly. "There is no shortage or disruption" of oil, he said, attributing the price increase to temporary "market factors."

Wednesday's hearing did not focus on a related Republican proposal to lower by 4.3 cents a gallon the federal gasoline tax.

'Global PC sale to grow strongly'

TOKYO, May 9: The head of the world's largest semiconductor maker, Intel Corp, believes the global Personal Computer (PC) market will continue to grow strongly, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun reported today, says AFP.

Intel President and Chief Executive Andrew Grove said in an interview with the Business Daily that PC sales would grow 15-to-20 per cent a year, with world penetration reaching 100 million units by 2000.

"But I don't attach much importance to the growth rate or the sales figure," Grove said.

"It is important to develop new technology and uses to make personal computers popular," he said.

Grove dismissed reports that PC sales in the United States were slowing.

"The reality is different," he said, adding there was only a "short-term adjustment last autumn."

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Rifles
Application & Training Directorate, Training Wing
Pilkhana, Dhaka
Urgent Re-notification
Tender Notice No. 135/5/x/GS(T) Dated: 24 April '96
1. Sealed tenders are reinvited by Bangladesh Rifles from bonafide traders/suppliers for purchase of slide processing/photo developing equipment.

Serial	Description of equipment	Number/quantity
A.	Durst Colour Enlarger M-370 (Italy)	1 No.
B.	Developing Tank	1 No.
C.	Ortho film (100' roll)	2 Nos.
D.	Hilodal Chemical (10 metre mat)	1 No.
E.	Hypo	6 Lbs.
F.	Timer	1 No.
G.	Tray (10"x12")	1 No.
H.	Water Colour Break fings	4 Nos.
J.	Dryer (heater)	1 No.
I.	Lens 50 mm for enlarger	1 No.
K.	Colour slide 100D film	11 Nos.
L.	Eisel (16"x12")	1 No.

2. Schedule of equipment can be purchased on payment of prescribed price from Headquarters BDR Application & Training Directorate, Training Wing between 0800 hours & 1400 hours within the next 07 days (except holiday) after publication of the notice in newspaper. Date & time of opening tender, description of equipment and other terms & conditions are given in the schedule.

3. The authority reserves the right to reduce/increase the number/quantity mentioned against the equipment any time as required by Bangladesh Rifles or purchase through repeat order later on within the current financial year.

4. Intending tenderers should keep the samples of their equipment ready. If required samples shall have to be deposited with the tender.

5. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason.

DFP-9396-27/4
G-580
GSO 2 (Training)
for Director General

Water shortages send world food reserves to lowest level

BANGKOK, May 9: Water-short farmers in Asia and the Pacific have to urgently shift into "second generation" techniques to bridge a food gap that sent worldwide food reserves plummeting to their lowest level in three decades.

"Water shortages have become a critical development constraint, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) says in a study prepared for November's World Food Summit, according to DEPTH-news.

Yet, successful "second generation water development schemes have emerged all over the world," the study points out.

Hydrologists tack the "water deficient" label on parched countries where supplies slip below 1,000 cubic meters per head yearly.

The United Nations Environment Programme reports that over 230 million people today scrounge for water in 26 ecologically-strained countries. "Asia is showing signs of a worsening shortage in fresh-water availability," says FAO Regional Representative A.Z.M. Obaidullah Khan. "In many parts of Asia, overpumping is

causing water of fall beyond the reach of shallow tubewells. Soil fertility in arid regions has dramatically declined. Abandoned handpumps starkly symbolize this problem."

But the lipside of water shortages need not be disaster. It can spur development opportunity — if water is conserved and thereafter wisely managed, the United Nations official stressed to DEPTH-news. Conservation and careful harvesting of rainfall can enable food production to rebound.

Among "second generation" approaches to water that FAO's Khan proposes are: New irrigation techniques that rely on low-volume but high-frequency use of water. Controlled use of brackish water as well as irrigation of steep, sandy or stony lands are new skills too.

"Such advances could hardly have been foreseen in the irrigation literature of prior decades," the FAO World Food Summit study says.

Today, only three per cent of land under irrigation benefit from this new technology. Water is poorly utilized in traditional irrigation schemes. Asia

has potential to increase irrigation by 69 million has.

Water harvesting — collecting runoff into large catchment areas and concentrating water on smaller run-on areas — can increase yields three to four times, as African data shows. It can also help cushion against crop failures.

Inland valley swamps can be tapped, along with "shallow aquifers." This option has become more feasible with cheap dependable pumps.

Peri-urban agriculture is a newcomer on the development stage — an unforeseen response to migrants rushing into cities, drop in real wages, and need for food substitutes. Water use and techniques are emerging here, too.

Three pre-conditions are needed to close a food gap that has been global cereal reserves drop to only 14 per cent of trend use, Khan stressed, are: water development; good government policies; and an educated labour force with high-technical support.

"Water is the essential key to sustainable development, as it unlocks a gateway," Khan said. "But governments can create or ruin the enabling en-

vironment."

(This is an abstract of a technical paper titled "Asian farmers scrounge for 'second generation' water tools" by Juan L Mercado prepared for presentation at the World Food Summit which will be organized by FAO from November 13-17, 1996.)

ADB announces \$ 800,000 grant to Pakistan

MANILA, May 9: The Asian Development Bank today announced a technical assistance grant of 800,000 dollars to Pakistan for a flood control project, says AFP.

The grant will help government formulate ways to mitigate flooding through watershed rehabilitation and other flood control measures, the bank statement said.

The project will draw up flood protection policies from 1997 to 2002 in the most affected areas of Punjab, Sindh, North-West Frontier Province and Balochistan, it said.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Department of Environment
House No. 2, Road No. 16 (New)
Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1209
Memo No. DOE/DEV/ODS/166/96/1095 Dated, Dhaka the 7/5/96
Tender Notice
No. 01(1995-96)
Sealed tenders in prescribed forms are invited from eligible bidders for supply of office equipments (Computer, Plain paper Fax machine and E-mail along with necessary accessories) and furniture under Project No. BGD/94/G61, 'Institutional Strengthening for the Phaseout of Ozone Depleting Substances' being implemented under the Department of Environment.

Tender documents will be available on cash payment (Non-refundable) of Tk 50 (fifty) only in the office of the undersigned House No. 2, Road No. 16 (New), Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1209 on all working days during office hours up to 20.5.96 and all the tenders should be dropped in the tender box to be kept in front of the office chamber of the undersigned on 21.5.96 at 12:00 Noon and opened on the same day at 12:30pm in presence of the bidders (if any). No tender documents will be sold on the opening day.

The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

MD Shahjahan
Project Director
Institutional Strengthening for
the Phaseout of Ozone Depleting
Substances.

DFP-10037-8/5
G-577