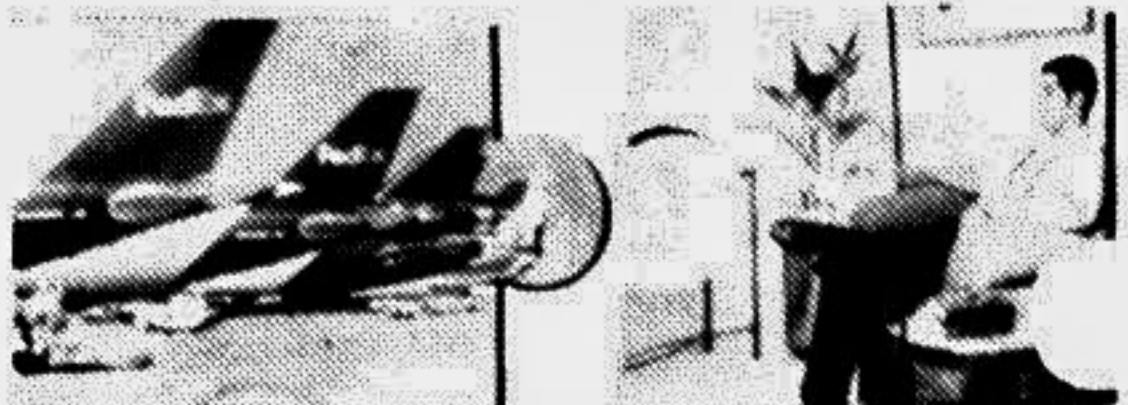
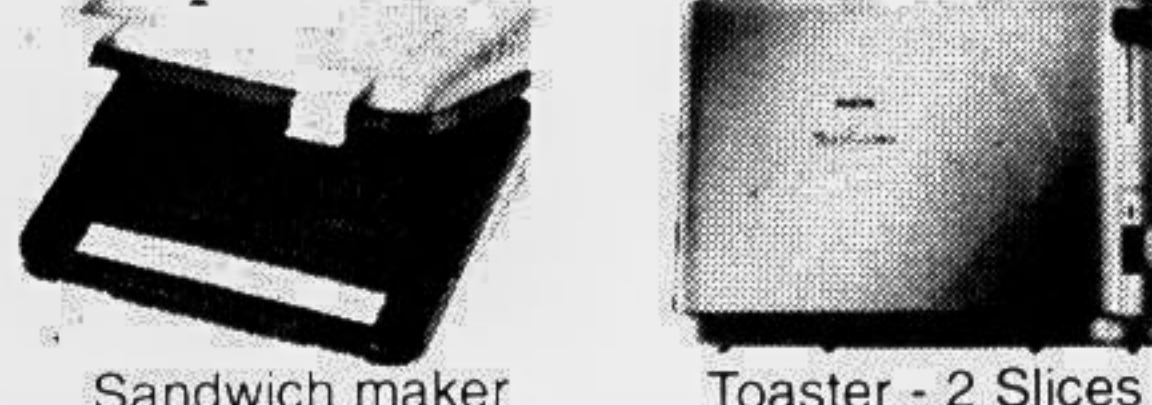


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## Ban on sending women abroad as housemaids, nurses

The government has decided to totally ban sending of women abroad as housemaids and nurses, report agencies.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Employment of Bangladesh Nationals in foreign countries.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad presided over the meeting held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The ban on maid servants was already there, but with some relaxation. The decision not to allow nurses was taken yesterday.

The meeting was informed that the government has set manpower export target of 2.02 lakh workers mainly to the Middle East and far eastern countries during the current year.

The countries include Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Singapore, Malaysia, Libya and South Korea.

The meeting was told that 1,18,986 workers have been sent abroad in six months to June this year.

Remittance from the expatriate wage earners in 1997-98 rose to Tk 6536.58 crore, up 3.61

per cent from the previous year. The meeting decided to open Labour Wing at Bangladesh missions in Dubai, Seoul and Singapore to explore new labour markets and ensure welfare of the Bangladeshi workers there. At present, 10 labour wings are working in different missions abroad.

It decided to impart training to 3,000 people as chef and waiters for employment in Bangladesh restaurants in UK. The Tourism Ministry will undertake a project for this in consultation with the Restaurant Owners' Association in Britain. The training centre will be located in Sylhet.

Briefing newsmen after the meeting, Labour and Manpower Secretary Mohammad Ahsan Ali Sarkar said initiatives would be taken to explore new labour markets in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, and Malawi. He said there is a bright chance for professionals in getting jobs in these countries.

In reply to a question, Sarkar said about 12,000 female workers are employed abroad as nurse, house maids, cleaners and garment workers. Of them, about 5,000 female

workers are working in manufacturing industries in Malaysia. Asked about the low target of exporting manpower this year compared with the previous year, the Labour Secretary said economic recession in some East Asian countries including Malaysia may be the reason behind it.

He said export of manpower may also decline to Kuwait, Oman and UAE. But the export prospect of Bangladeshis in Saudi Arabia appears bright this year.

According to a statistics, 64,583 workers have already been sent to Saudi Arabia in past six months till June while another 80,000 to 90,000 are likely to be exported to this oil rich country in next six months.

The Labour Secretary said one of the weakness of Bangladesh workers is that they can't speak in English. As a result, workers from the Philippines and Sri Lanka are doing better than the Bangladeshi workers in terms of wage rate. He said steps would be taken so that trained and skilled manpower could be exported.



Textile workers staging a sit-in yesterday in front of Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation Bhaban in the city to press their demands for payment of four months' arrear wages, handing over of nine mills to the workers, suspension of disinvestment programme and keeping 19 mills of BTMC running through renovation.

## India, US move 'closer to each other's concerns'

From Pallab Bhattacharya

NEW DELHI, July 21: India and the United States moved 'closer to each other's concerns' as they concluded two days of hard bargaining today covering a wide range of security issues relating to nuclear disarmament and supply of dual technology for furthering New Delhi's nuclear programme.

"Appreciation of each other's position" and "right track" were the phrases used by Indian and American officials as the visiting Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and Indian Prime Minister's special emissary Jaswant Singh rounded off their third round of talks this morning.

India told the United States firmly that there was no question of rolling back its nuclear weaponisation programme and that its demand for building a minimum nuclear deterrence was not negotiable.

The US, on the other hand, asked India to sign Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). But this reiteration of each side's known position was pushed into background by a greater recognition for addressing each other's compulsions and needs in putting India-US relations on the "right track", diplomatic sources here said.

"The discussions were characterized by a spirit of working together to find common ground and narrow gaps as their governments' respective positions," said the sources.

A statement released by the Indian External Affairs Ministry said, "There is now a clearer understanding of each other's concerns and certain steps in the direction of addressing those concerns are contemplated."

Asked about the stand adopted by the two countries on CTBT, a US official said "this is an ongoing process. It's not a one shot thing. There has been steady movement."

Neither India nor United States appears to be in hurry to clinch the negotiations and instead prefer to be patient, analysts say.

The Vajpayee government has to be very cautious and needs time for a consensus on

the reversal of New Delhi's earlier stand of not signing the CTBT, analysts here said, adding it is a "sensitive" issue. Washington, on the other hand, would like India to take measures to help the US administration to content that new entrants into the nuclear club were not being rewarded, they said.

During his two-day stay in New Delhi, Talbott, heading a six-member delegation, called on Vajpayee and handed over to him a letter from President Bill Clinton.

He also held talks with Home Minister LK Advani, former prime minister Inder Kumar Gujral and President of main opposition Congress Sonia Gandhi and discussed nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and an array of other issues of mutual concern.

Jaswant Singh and Talbott, who had held first two rounds of talks in Washington and Frankfurt in June and earlier this month, would resume their parleys in the US capital next month.

Talbott has left India for Pakistan today.

## Raozan power plant unit goes out of order

CHITTAGONG, July 21: Loadshedding again gripped the port city of Chittagong as one unit of Raozan Thermal Power Plant went out of order today, reports UNB.

Officials said they stopped generation of power in one unit of the plant at about 2:30 pm due to mechanical faults.

They said it will take five to six days to remedy the faults. During the last 25 days, the city had experienced a moderate loadshedding as all the power plants of the district — the Kapali Hydraulic Power Plant, Raozan Thermal Power Plant and Shikabaha Barge Mounted Power Plant — were in operation in full swing.

UNB correspondent from Sirajganj says: One Ekramul, 12, died of diarrhoea at Sadar Hospital on Monday.

About one lakh people have become marooned in 65 unions of nine thanas, as Korotoa, Fulzor, Gurni, Boral and Ichhamoti rivers overflowed their banks.

River erosion devoured many houses rendering several hundred people homeless in five thanas. The homeless people have taken shelter on the local WAPDA embankment and high lands.

Crisis of drinking water has become acute in Kazipur, Belkuchi, Chouhali, Shahjapur and Tarash thanas.

In Pabna, the Jamuna was flowing 6 cm above the danger level, but the Padma receded and was flowing below the red mark.

Two lakh people have been affected so far in the flood-hit areas of Sadar, Bera, Sujana-gar, Ishwardi, Bhangura, Chatmohor and Faridpur thanas.

In Habiganj, standing crops on 10,000 hectares of land in 14 unions of five thanas of the district went under flood water following incessant rain and onrush of hill waters. The rivers Khowai, Karangi and Sutang overflowed their banks damaging nearly 1,000 houses and a number of bridges, culverts and educational institutions.

The affected unions are: Bulla, Jagadishpur, Chhatian

## Govt making allout efforts for sports development: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government has been making all-out efforts for the development of sports and games in the country, reports UNB.

"The government wants rapid flourishing of sports and games," she said while talking to the members of Bangladesh Football Under-16 team which won the 8th Asian Youth Football championship in Kathmandu recently.

The team members thanked the Prime Minister for her keen interest for the development of sports and also giving inspiration to the players.

The Prime Minister handed over cheque for Tk 10,000 to each of the team members.

DCC Mayor Mohammad Hanif, State Minister for Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader, Sheikh Helaluddin, MP, and officials of Bangladesh Football Federation were present.

## 185 equipment for container handling to be purchased for Ctg port

The government is planning to set up a container terminal in the New Mooring area near the Chittagong port for its expansion and modernisation, reports UNB.

Initial work on the terminal has already begun. It is being set up at a cost of Taka 1100 crore funded by the port.

This was told at a review meeting of the annual development programme (ADP) of the Shipping Ministry today.

The meeting decided to purchase 185 equipment soon for container handling to make the Chittagong port self-dependent.

It also decided to set up a 10 mw power plant with the port's fund to solve its power crisis.

The meeting expressed satisfaction over achieving 96 per cent target of the ADP in the 1997-98 fiscal.

Shipping Minister A S M Abdur Rob presided over the meeting while secretary of the ministry A H M Mofazzel Karim and other high officials were present.

## Australian senate told Sanctions against Delhi, Islamabad affect Dhaka

CANBERRA, July 21: Economic sanctions against India and Pakistan over nuclear tests have had the unintended result of harming Bangladesh, an Australian Senate committee was told today, reports AP.

Harun Rashid, former Bangladesh high commissioner to Australia and ambassador to the United Nations, said India and Pakistan both imported substantial quantities of goods from their smaller and poorer neighbours.

Rashid, who now lives in Canberra, said the tight fiscal policy in both countries following imposition of sanctions would have disastrous economic consequences for the people of those smaller countries.

"For example, Bangladesh's main importer of tea was Pakistan," he said. "Pakistan has decided not to import tea to save its foreign currency because of the sanctions. Such a decision is sure to affect Bangladesh."

## Downpour

From Page 1  
ery of thousands of people in the low-lying areas in the suburbs. Some were already on rooftops of houses and embankments.

The Met Office forecast that there would be light to moderate rains in the next two days beginning today.

Heavy rains are coming back as the monsoon, which went floating towards the Himalayas, is returning, a senior meteorologist told The Daily Star last night.

He said that heavy showers would start again on Thursday or Friday, triggering another spell of wet weather and aggravating the flood situation.

## Flood grips 29 dists, 64 lakh affected

From Page 1  
A bulletin of Flood Information Centre said the Brahmaputra recorded further rise at Chilmari, Bahadurabad and Sirajganj points. It was flowing 20 cm and 33 cm above danger mark at Bahadurabad and Aricha.

The Ganges rose further at Pankha and Goalundo while it receded at Hardinge Bridge and Bhagyakul, and remained steady at Rajshahi. The river was flowing 30 cm above danger level at Pankha, 57 cm at Goalundo and 36 cm at Bhagyakul.

The old Brahmaputra at Mymensingh was flowing 6 cm above the danger mark while the Sitalakhya at Narayanganj 17cm, the Turag at Mirpur 22cm, the Kaliganga at Taraghat 38 cm, the Surma at Kanchirang (Sunanganj) 116 cm and 52 cm above the danger level.

The Kushiya was flowing 39cm above danger level at Amalshid and 2 cm above at Sheola.

The Centre forecast that the flood situation in the Brahmaputra, Ganges and Meghna basins may aggravate further with rise of water levels in most of the rivers while the situation in the South Eastern Hill basin will improve in the next 48 hours till 6 am tomorrow.

Meanwhile, reports received at the UNB newsroom from various districts says: The flood situation aggravated further in Narsingdi, Faridpur, Mymensingh, Netrokona, Jamalpur and Sirajganj.

Various water-borne diseases like diarrhoea and dysentery have broken out in many districts as acute crisis of drinking water was prevailing

in those areas.

In Faridpur, the Padma and Arial Khan rivers rose further and were flowing above the danger level.

Three more deaths were reported in the district. The victims were identified as Shami, 3, of Kanchirang Dangi, Bithi, 2, of Kanchirang Dangi and Abdur Razzak, 45, of Mojujuddin Hazirkandi village.

In Narsingdi, the heavy rainfall affected five lakh people of 56 unions in six thanas and submerged crops on nearly 3,000 hectares land. Flood water entered into the district jail yesterday.

A UNB report from Mymensingh says: Fresh areas of four unions in Haluaghat thana were inundated yesterday due to breach in Kumaria embankment. At least 20,000 people have been marooned and Aman paddy over some 5,000 hectares submerged by the flood water.

In Jamalpur, the flood situation deteriorated with the rise of Jamuna and Brahmaputra rivers following heavy rainfall and onrush of hill water.

About seven lakh people of 60 unions in seven thanas have been affected. Crisis of power, medicine, food and drinking water became acute in the affected areas.

Diarrhoea and dysentery have broken out. Although the District Health office said that 179 people have been attacked so far by diarrhoea, but the unofficial sources put the figure at 500 people.

In Netrokona, the flood water submerged 35 unions of six thanas following continuous rainfall over the last eight days. The telecommunication between Sadar and other thanas

## Massive plantation in char areas planned

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday stressed the need for massive afforestation across the country and called for about endeavour to protect the environment, reports UNB.

At a review meeting held in the city, the Prime Minister asked the Environment and Forest Ministry to intensify the afforestation programme and take all-out efforts to prevent environmental degradation.

She said a project for creating a green belt in 10 coastal districts is being implemented with financial assistance from ADB and NORAD. It is expected to be completed by the year 1999.

Under the project, the coastal embankments will be made strong. The project aims at involving the coastline's poor people in social forestry.

The Prime Minister said there is a plan for land reclamation through national level afforestation. Land will be reclaimed in the "char areas" through massive plantation

with coordinated efforts of forest and water resources ministries and the Navy.

She called for planting trees of rare species like Baichi (gooseberry) and Betfal (cane plant) and seasonal fruit-bearing trees. She also asked for taking coordinated efforts for evolving pulp from the low grade jute.

Environment and Forest Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury said a 20-year Forestry Master Plan has been taken up for proper development of forest resources. A national forest development policy will be formulated on the basis of this master plan.

She said 11 projects were taken up in the forestry sector in 1996-97. Under these projects, trees were planted on 7,962 hectares of land. Similar projects have been undertaken for the current fiscal.

Environment and Forest Secretary Margub Morshed explained different activities of the ministry.

## Young man hacked to death in city

By Staff Correspondent  
A young man was hacked to death by a gang of assassins on Biswa Road under Gulshan thana in the city yesterday morning.

Police identified the dead as Shah Alam, 23, a resident of West Rampura.

The motive behind the killing could not be ascertained immediately, police said, adding that it is being suspected that Alam was killed due to previous enmity.

Police said an unidentified gang started beating Alam on the road at about 7:30 am. At one stage, the gang attacked Alam with machetes. He died while being shifted to a nearby clinic.

None, however, was arrested or no case was lodged in this connection till filing of this report last night.

## ZIA customs deposit gold worth Tk 1.89 cr with Bangladesh Bank

Customs department at the Zia International Airport deposited gold worth Tk 1.89 crore with the Bangladesh Bank during the month of June, reports UNB.

The deposits include 109 gold bars, weighing 200 grams each, and 35176.3 grams of gold ornaments, said a BB press release yesterday.

## BNP meeting

From Page 1  
hours of discussion on the resignation letters by some BNP MPs, deposited with the party chief earlier.

Party insiders had said earlier that the meeting was adjourned to enable the party high command decide the fate of the "so-called" resignation letters on the basis of the outcome of the by-election in Barisal-5 constituency. The by-polls was held on Monday.

The insider's said yesterday that the adjourned meeting was rescheduled for two reasons: BNP's victory in the by-polls and Begum Zia's visit to Feni on Monday.

Explaining, they said the resignation letters were deposited by some 30 party MPs to "keep the government under pressure ahead of the by-election". After the victory in the by-polls, the ground for the move has weakened to a large extent, they observed. Besides, the party chief needed rest after her visit to the flood-hit areas of Feni, they added.

BNP had also cancelled a scheduled press briefing on the by-polls Monday evening saying that the party failed to collect enough information about the by-polls until then (7.30 pm). But party sources said the press briefing was cancelled after they came to know about their candidate's possible victory.

As the BNP Standing Committee resumes its discussion today, the sources said, the party high command is unlikely to go ahead with the move to collect resignation letters of party lawmakers and launch a tougher anti-government agitation programme right at this moment. Besides, the party's apprehension of rigging in the by-polls by the ruling party has been disproved and flood has engulfed many areas of the country, the sources said.

Addressing a public meeting in Feni on Monday, Khaleda Zia had said that her party would launch a vigorous movement after the flood.

## Dist judges

From Page 1  
sources said.

The issue of providing body guards to district and sessions judges came in view of some incidents of attack on the district judges, the sources said.

The government is providing body guards for the deputy commissioners and superintendents of police at the district level since the early 80s, the sources noted.

## Police SI held for alleged rape attempt

By Staff Correspondent  
A Sub-Inspector (SI) of Uttara thana was suspended after he allegedly attempted to violate a housewife inside her flat at Sector-3 in city's Uttara area Monday.

Quoting the FIR, filed by the housewife yesterday, police said SI Badrul Alam went to the flat at about 11 am.

A top police official said last night that Badrul went to the flat in connection with a case when the housewife was alone in the flat. Badrul was in plain-clothes during the incident.

Getting inside the flat, Badrul started talking to the housewife and at one stage he allegedly tried to violate her at about 2 pm. A brother of the housewife came to the flat at that time and caught Badrul red-handed, according to a relative of the housewife.

The DC of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (North) told The Daily Star last night that the SI was suspended and closed at the Razarbagh Police Line within half-an-hour of the incident.

## PM leaves

From Page 1  
field of tourism, communication, information, environment, poverty alleviation, health, micro credit and sub-regional cooperation.

Other pressing social issues like development of women and children, rights of girl child, women and child trafficking, welfare and care for the disabled will also come up for discussion.

Bangladesh has already proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the Summit the establishment of SAARC Disability Fund (SDF) and formation of an Expert Group on arsenic contamination.

## Security deposits

From Page 1  
posits.

One of the candidates — Manirul Islam Mani, who contested as an independent candidate — gave his support to the Jatiya Party candidate prior to the election.

The five candidates who lost their security deposits are: Sheikh Mahiuddin of Ganatantrik Sarbaha Party with 46 votes, Mahabubul Alam Majumder of JAGPA with 40 votes, Krishak Mohammad Sadek of Krishak Samik Mukti Andolan with 42 votes, Feni, they added.

BNP had also cancelled a scheduled press briefing on the by-polls Monday evening saying that the party failed to collect enough information about the by-polls until then (7.30 pm). But party sources said the press briefing was cancelled after they came to know about their candidate's possible victory.

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Addressing a public meeting in Feni on Monday, Khaleda Zia had said that her party would launch a vigorous movement after the flood.

## WB: Budget

From Page 1  
billion in FY 97 or 12 per cent of GDP to Tk 197 billion in FY 98 or 12.4 per cent of GDP.

"For the deficit to become sustainable, non-inflationary and implying no increase in levels of indebtedness, the government will need to reduce its domestic borrowing requirement," the update said.

"This will necessitate a reduction in the size of the deficit in coming years, which should largely be accomplished by mobilising additional revenues and by rationalising expenditures in order to maximize their development impact," it added.

The Bank said containing the fiscal deficit to 5.3 per cent of GDP is easily attainable. This is more so as the current trend is that a part of development funds remain unutilised providing cushion to absorb the overshooting of non-development expenditure.

But it said, "even though this leads to reasonable macroeconomic outcomes, such an approach in prudent fiscal management is not desirable."

## The Daily Star debate

From Page 1  
communicable diseases, the discussants observed.

A large number of people in the city live in open spaces, parks and slums, which do not have adequate toilet facilities.

An appropriate technology should be adopted while increasing the number of public toilets in the urban areas, stressing on the aspects of user friendliness, accessibility, cost effectiveness and their management. Need for creating awareness among the city dwellers for appropriate use of toilet facilities was also stressed.

An urgent coordinated action by the government, particularly the city corporations, private sector, the NGOs and the community is required immediately, the speakers noted.

Private sector participation can be increased if public toilets were allowed to be set up by the private entrepreneurs charging a reasonable fee from the users so as to provide a small margin of profit for the investors.

The application of human waste in the production of viogas and fertiliser is also needed to be looked into, they pointed out.

A task force should be formed immediately by the city corporation, with representatives from all relevant government departments, prominent NGOs, related research organisations and eminent experts, the participants said.

For the sake of improving public health condition and providing a safer environment for the city dwellers, the authorities need to focus attention on urban toilet facilities immediately, the discussants said.

In the rural areas, some NGOs are involved in developing toilet and sanitation facilities, but such an attempt is lacking in the urban areas particularly in the slums, they noted.

Slow progress was reported out of India where Talbott held two days of talks with Indian officials.

"Both sides are looking for areas of agreement," US Embassy spokesman in India, Kiki Munshi, told reporters Tuesday. "This is a process. It's not a one-shot thing. There is steady movement."

## Carmichael

From Page 1  
Refused by the college authorities, the unruly admission seekers damaged the doors and window panes of some departments.

Later, Academic Council of the college decided to close the college sine die to avert further trouble on the campus.

However, examinations of the college will be held as per the schedule.

## 201 pvt firms

From Page 1  
due to either the failure to make profits or managerial inefficiency or perhaps, diversion of profits for personal gains rather than servicing debts, it added.

The bank authorities have been either unwilling or unable to retrieve the debts from the firms that have borrowed heavily and exceeded the time limit to repay. The failure to recover loans has ruined the reputation of the bank authorities, the document pointed out.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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