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3 more Sectt employees arrested

By Special Correspondent
Three more government employees were arrested from the Secretariat yesterday, raising the total to nine so far. Sarwar, Motaleb and Farooq were arrested on charge of rioting, arson, destruction of public property and attempted murder, police said.

The charges were made in a case filed by their rival organization of employees, led by Ataur Rahman and Habibur Rahman.

The situation at the Secretariat was peaceful yesterday as there was no demonstration by the employees. But attendance was poor due to the Opposition-called hartal.

The Secretariat employees are agitating for change in office hours and 30 per cent dearness allowance.

Three leaders of a coalition of government employees' associations, Shah Alam, Khalilur Rahman and Abdul Matin, arrested on Sunday from the Secretariat, were produced before court yesterday. The court placed them on a day's remand, Kamna police said.

Two other leaders, Alauddin and Mizanur Rahman, arrested on Saturday, were also produced before court, which sent them to jail.

All the arrested persons are among the 35 people named in the case.

On Thursday, police lobbed tear gas shells and charged batons to disperse a rally by a
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23 killed as truck skids off road at Ghatail

TANGAIL, Aug 2: At least 23 people, including three children and nine women, were killed when a truck plunged into a roadside ditch today at Kali-daspura under Ghatail thana after it skidded off the Tangail-Mymensingh Highway, report agencies.

A police official told BSS that seven people narrowly escaped death. Thirty people were travelling on the Sharishabari bound truck laden with cement and potato. It fell into the ditch at around 3:35 am, he said.

Police sources said the truck driver, however, managed to escape.

Most of the women and children were smashed under the heavy cement and potato bags, a local official said.

Eyewitnesses said the rescuers pulled up the bodies from the ditch. They also shifted the bodies to Ghatail Thana Health Complex.

Additional SP of Tangail Mozammel Hossain, who visited the spot told newsmen that 12 bodies were handed over to the relatives and the rest sent to the Sadar hospital morgue here for autopsy.

He further said the deceased mainly hailed from Sharishabari in Jamalpur district. They were identified as: Noni, 30, of Kalabaddha, Jamalpur; Shah Alam, 50; Farhad, 35, of Charhatua of Sharishabari; wife and son of Farhad, Mazeda, 26, and Masud, 4, Kalam, 30, of Kenduabehur of Madhupur; Ayatunnesa, 45, of Kenduabehur of Madhupur; Zulekha, daughter of one Julhash of Chowdhuripara in Madhupur; Azhar Ali, 32, of Boira, Sharishabari; Jamila, 50; Faroque, 22; Ershad Mollah of Chandina, Comilla and Solai of Charpara in Sharishabari.

A case was lodged with Ghatail police in connection with the accident.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed her profound shock at the "tragic loss of lives" in the road mishap at Ghatail.

In a condolence message, Hasina prayed for salvation of the departed souls and early recovery of the injured.

She also conveyed her sympathies to the members of the bereaved families.

500 feared killed in West Bengal train collision

210 bodies recovered, 1000 hurt

GAISAL, India, Aug 2: Two crowded trains collided head-on at a railway station in eastern India a few hours before dawn today, killing at least 210 people and injuring about 1000, report agencies.

United News of India said at least 400 people including 90 army personnel, were killed, and PTI said the toll might reach 500.

"Some of our men who returned from the site said the death toll could be as high as 500," said an officer with the Border Security Force helping with relief operations.

As many as 1,000 people were injured, of which more than 100 were said to be in a critical condition.

Officials said they expected the death toll to rise sharply as more bodies were cut out of the mangled wreckage of the train engines and 13 of their carriages.

Earlier, reports had suggested that there was a bomb blast at Gaisal station, 500 km north of the West Bengal state capital Calcutta. BBC reported that one of the trains may have been carrying explosives that caught fire and exploded.

But local District Magistrate Prashant told Reuters that signal failure was now being blamed for India's most deadly train disaster in four years.

The worst rail disaster of all time also occurred in India, in 1981, when a cyclone blew a train off the tracks into a river in the northern state of Bihar, killing more than 800 people. Officials say some 400 accidents occur every year. Sixty per cent are blamed on human error.

The collision between the Awadh-Assam Express, bound for Guwahati in the northeastern state of Assam, and the Delhi-bound Brahmaputra Mail occurred at 1:55 am (2025 GMT on Sunday).

Six carriages of one train tore into seven of the other, leaving a trail of passengers, metal, glass, suitcases, shoes and bedrolls. More than 100 bodies, covered in white sheets, were seen.

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The wreckage of two express trains which collided head-on at Gaisal station, some 500 km north of Calcutta before dawn yesterday. — AFP photo

Manzoor murder case: Statement of PW recorded

The trial of Major General Abul Manzoor Murder Case began at the First Additional District and Sessions Judge Court of Sheikh Rownakul Islam in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

The judge recorded the part statement of prosecution witness Mohammad Sadaruddin, who was the driver of accused Brigadier Azizul Islam (now dead) in Chittagong Cantonment at the time of the murder in 1981. Gen Manzoor was killed on June 1, 1981 at a solitary hill adjacent to the Chittagong Cantonment.

Brother of Gen Manzoor Barister Abul Mansur Ahmed filed a case on February 28, 1995 at Panchlaish police station against former President and Jatiya Party Chairman H M Ershad, Major (ret'd) Kazi Emdadul Haque, Lt Col (ret'd) Mostafa Kamaluddin Bhuiyan, Maj Gen (ret'd) Abdul Latif, Lt Col (ret'd) Shamsur Rahman Shams, Brigadier Aziz, and Lance Naik Malek.

Police submitted charge sheet on June 27, 1995 after investigation against five accused. By a special order, the case has been transferred to Dhaka Judge Court.

The Court yesterday fixed the time of 2 pm tomorrow for further statement and cross-examination.

Accused Lt Gen (ret'd) Ershad remained absent by petition and other accused appeared before the court yesterday.

Angry JU students raid three halls to oust armed goons

Three rooms ransacked, memo to VC

By Staff Correspondent

Over 200 militant male and female students under the banner of General Students' Unity (GSU) yesterday raided three halls of Jahangirnagar University (JU) and searched for the 'killers and rapists' involved in attack and counter-attack for 'capturing' the campus over the last few days.

The students carrying sticks stormed into Salam-Barkat, Bhasani and Kamaluddin halls at around 10 am and looked for armed men of the rival groups—rapists and killers—belonging

to the ruling Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL).

Finding none of them, the GSU activists ransacked three rooms at Salam-Barkat Hall where some of those punished for rape used to stay. The authorities of Bhasani Hall had kept the hall gate locked to prevent the raid but in the face of pressure from the activists opened it.

The agitated students then gheraoed the Administrative Building and went to the VC's

office for submitting a memorandum. As the VC was not available, they damaged some windowpanes at the building.

Later, the students handed over a memorandum, addressed to the VC, to Pro Vice Chancellor Prof Abdul Bayes, demanding immediate arrest and filing of criminal cases against the rapists and killers. They also demanded deployment of adequate police personnel on the campus and an end to harassment of students in the name of

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Grapes of wrath
Militant students march off after raiding the Maulana Bhasani Hall yesterday in search of criminals (top), Kamaluddin Hall is thoroughly searched, room by room for rapists (middle), and students demonstrate in front of the VC's office demanding arrest of killers and rapists within 24 hours (bottom). — Star photos

301 plots Re-allocation process 'frozen' for 6 months

By Staff Correspondent

The re-allocation process of the 301 plots in Gulshan, Baridhara and Uttara following recent controversy and consequent cancellation of allotment, has been 'frozen' for at least six months, according to Rajuk sources.

Rajuk sources said the process would not be reactivated until they received 'instructions' from the ministry. Rajuk's allocation of 301 plots on July 10 triggered an instant outcry as most plots were allotted to leaders, activists and supporters of the ruling party.

On her return from the UK on July 15, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced cancellation of all the allotments, saying, "I do not think there has been any irregularity in the allotment process. But since there has been press criticism and dispute on the issue, I have decided to cancel the allotments."

Rajuk officials are now busy reviving the third phase of Uttara land filling project and creating more plots. The matter is now awaiting final approval by the Planning Commission that may be forthcoming very 'shortly'. Rajuk sources said when the fresh plots at Uttara are created, the re-allocation process will begin.

The government is planning to add more names to the controversial allotment of July 10 to mollify the critics," said a Rajuk source, adding the old list may not be changed at all since it contains the names of many hardcore Awami League activists.

At present there are 174 sex workers in addition to the centre's 290 other inmates.

"Pimps roam around to be guardian of any sex worker, contact some of the vagrants acting as brokers in exchange for money," said one source.

The authorities are giving Tk 7,000 for self-employment of each of the social outcasts, but half the money is going to pimps and some unscrupulous members of the vagrant centre.

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Four hurt as sex workers clash at Kashimpur

The confined sex workers clashed with residents of Kashimpur vagrant home yesterday, leaving four wounded, reports UNB.

No more sex workers got release due to hartal as the concerned officer did not go to the vagrant centre from Dhaka, a local official said.

The girls engaged in fistfights with the vagrants for share of water this (Monday) morning.

They also shouted complaints about low quality and quantity of breakfast. "Muktis pregnant, she needs much food, but the authorities did not give her special diets," alleged her associates.

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Goods train derails

By Staff Correspondent
Five railway containers bound for Chittagong from Kamalpur Inland Container Depot (ICD) derailed at Maghbar intersection in the city at about 8:30 pm yesterday.

However, none was hurt in the incident.

30-hour shutdown ends at noon today 60 hurt in sporadic violence

By Staff Correspondent

The opposition-sponsored hartal yesterday paralysed normal life, economic activities and halted traffic across the country, leaving at least 60 people injured in sporadic incidents of violence. The 30-hour shutdown ends at noon today.

The BNP-led opposition alliance called the general strike to protest government's decision to provide "corridor" to India on the pretext of trans-shipment.

More than a dozen people were injured, three by bullets, in an armed attack on a BNP procession when it was passing Munshiganj Sadar Hospital at about 10am.

Some 20 people were also wounded in separate clashes in

Chittagong during hartal hours. No major incident of violence was, however, reported from other parts of the country till filing this report last night.

In other major cities, such as Rajshahi and Barisal, hartal was observed peacefully.

In capital Dhaka, at least 30, including a cop, were hurt. Police and witnesses said Constable Nuruzzaman was seriously hurt when he tried to fix a tear-gas canister at city's main trouble spot Jatrabari.

The policeman was taken to Rajarbagh police hospital immediately and later shifted to Combined Military Hospital in a critical condition.

As usual, Shaheed Faruq Road at north Jatrabari was the

most troubled spot in the city as opposition activists and law enforcers were locked in hours-long clashes. Police lobbed a good number of teargas shells as pickets exploded bombs and pelted stones at the men in uniform. Some 15 people were injured.

At least eight people were injured when pickets hurled bombs at a local Awami League office at Jatrabari at about 5pm. Three of the injured were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Tension prevailed in city's Bijoynagar, Kakrail, Nava Paltan, Malibagh and Mouchak areas where activists of BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami

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The 'unknown Indian' slips into history

Nirad Chaudhuri passes away at 101

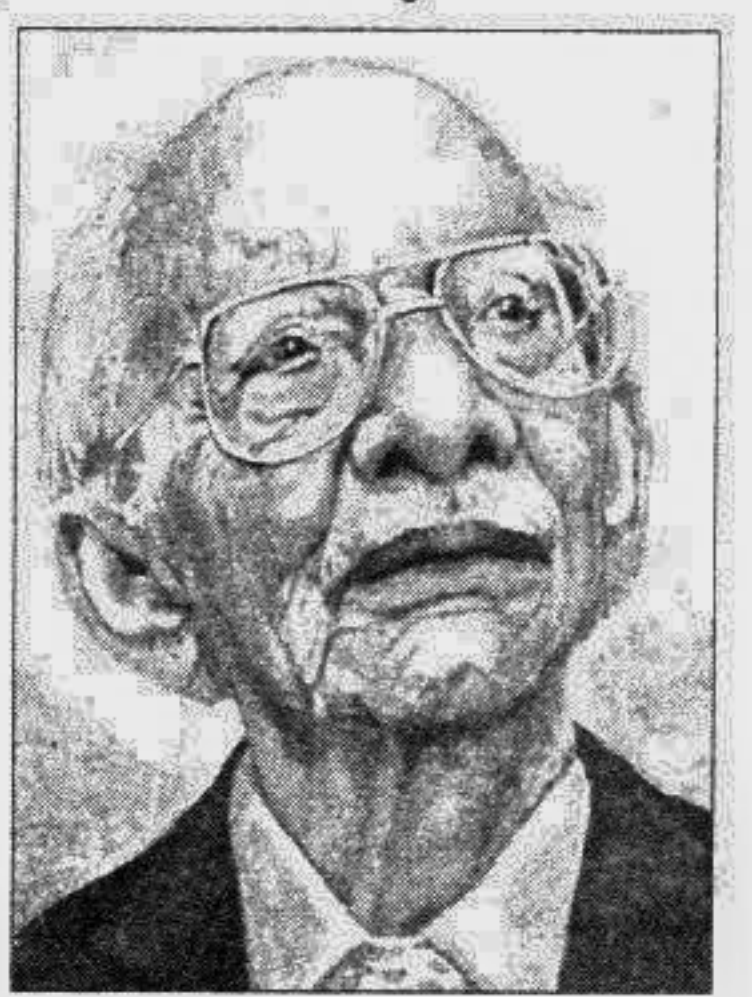
OXFORD, England, Aug 2: Nirad C Chaudhuri, the Indian-born author and scholar who was acclaimed abroad but scorned at home, died in Oxford yesterday. He was 101, reports AP.

Chaudhuri had suffered a stroke on July 12. He was recovering when his condition deteriorated further last Tuesday, said Padu Mylvaganam, who has been caring for Chaudhuri for the last two years. He died peacefully in his bed at the Oxford home he has had for 30 years, Mylvaganam said.

Chaudhuri, who was most noted for his first work, 'The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian,' could be described as a man born in the wrong country in the wrong century.

He made his entry into the scene of scholarly literature with a thick memoir of his childhood in colonial India, in what is now Bangladesh. It was a lively, insightful description and commentary on Indian customs, family structures, caste, relations between Hindus and Muslims and between Indians and the British.

The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian' was written with sympathy toward the 200 years of British rule that was unpopular at home. As a bare-



foot boy, he read Shakespeare alongside Sanskrit classics, admiring western culture equally with his own. Critics called him the last British imperialist.

Throughout his life, Chaudhuri gained a reputation for eccentricity. When he lived in New Delhi's run-down old city, he strolled to work in a natty western suit and bowler hat. After moving to England in his 70s, Chaudhuri preferred the wraparound dhoti of his native Bengal to receive guests at his

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Nat'l Action Plan for children approved

The Cabinet yesterday approved a child-grooming national action plan and a trust fund for rehabilitation of repressed or distressed women and children, reports UNB.

Officials said the approval was given in a regular weekly meeting of the Cabinet at PM's Office with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The National Action Plan (1997-2002) for children aims at rapid implementation of commitments for their overall development and upbringing.

"Matters relating to rapid implementation of pledges stipulated in the Constitution, UN Child Rights Convention and National Child Policy for sound grooming of children are being incorporated in this plan," the Cabinet noted.

The draft plan will be an 'important document' in implementing children's rights. Perspectives of implementation of the rights of children to survive, flourish, get protection and participation are reflected in the NAP.

Steps have been articulated in the plan for monitoring implementation progress, the Cabinet meeting was told.

The Cabinet also endorsed a policy for setting up Destitute Women and Children Welfare Trust.

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Fresh move for awarding blocks 9&11 to Tullow

By Sharier Khan

Moves are underway in Petrobranga to revive negotiations under the Second Round Block Bidding to award oil and gas exploration work in blocks 9 and 11 to Tullow, an Irish company that incurred severe losses in the last two years, sources said.

Negotiations on these blocks were suspended in July last year under public pressure and also because Petrobranga could not "find" a technically efficient and financially solvent partner for Tullow. The sources further said that some political high-ups have "stakes" with Tullow and they now want to revive the negotiations.

Tullow has already purchased 80 per cent concerns of

American oil companies Rexwood and Okland in blocks 17 and 18. The companies were the original operators in the two blocks. The purchase was concealed from Petrobranga for nearly two years. Tullow's Bangladesh Director Kazi Shahid Ahmed got 5 per cent of the concerns on "carried interest" basis.

Tullow is now publicising in the Internet that the government had ensured it blocks 9 and 11 with 45 per cent operating share in each.

Surprisingly, Tullow, in its web page in the Internet, is also claiming that the company's proposal on Block 11 provides for "an initial seismic survey before determining a drilling

programme". In their bids to justify selection of Tullow as the "best bidder", government negotiators in press interviews earlier had argued that Tullow's drilling programmes in blocks 9 and 11 were "the best".

Tullow is trying to get these two blocks with the help of an influential political lobby. But its financial health continued to decline for the second consecutive year. According to its web page, Tullow's pre-tax loss in 1998-99 increased to 18 million Irish Pounds (IR£) while its revenue declined to IR£ 5m. Its pre-tax loss in the previous year was IR£ 0.2 m.

Though Block 9 was originally...
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Prayer Timings

August 3

Azan	Jamaat
Fajr 4:10	4:15
Johr 12:50	1:25
Asr 5:00	5:10
Maghrib 6:55	7:00
Esha 7:55	8:15

Source: Islamic Foundation