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Apprehending eviction from their slum at Agargaon in the city, a father and his son sleep under an umbrella at a nearby park yesterday (top) and slum dwellers protest the current squatter eviction drive. — Star photos by Anisur Rahman and Amran Hossain

## Mudslide buries 10 in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, August 13: At least 10 members of two families were killed in a pre-dawn landslide at Enayetbazar near the BRTC terminal in the port city today due to heavy rain, police and Fire Brigade said.

The victims included three women and three children. The dead were identified as Mofizur Rahman (35), his wife Shahana Akter (25), daughter Sumi (1) and brother Billal Hossain (28). Victims of the other family are Abdul Mannan (40), his wife Paki Begum (28), two sons Md Hasan (12) and Md Hossain (9), brother Babul Miah (32) and his 60-year-old mother. The name of the old woman could not be known.

Police said the sleeping slum dwellers were trapped to death when a big chunk of earth of a hill collapsed on their thatched houses.

On receipt of information, police and Fire Brigade personnel rushed to the spot this morning and recovered the bodies by removing the earth.

A heart-rending scene was created there as the victims' relatives and neighbours wailed while hundreds of people thronged from surrounding areas, witnesses said.

Over 20 other slum dwellers were killed in landslides during the rainy season last year, sources said.

Meanwhile, torrential rains

from midnight last night till about noon today disrupted normal life in the port city. Met Office recorded 294 mm rainfall in the past 24 hours till noon today.

Most of the low-lying areas including Chawkbazar, Bahadurhat, Bakalia, Katalgonj, Sholakbazar, Chatal and Nasirabad were inundated.

Road link between Chittagong and Cox's Bazar remained snapped as rain water inundated about one kilometer stretch of the highway at Nollila, official sources said.

Flight operation was suspended at Chittagong international airport till noon today due to incessant rains that

caused water-logging at the approach of the airport and around the runway.

A Chittagong-bound airbus from the Middle East was diverted to Dhaka due to inclement weather, airport sources said.

The airbus however returned from Dhaka and landed at Chittagong airport in the afternoon. Two other scheduled flights also were delayed.

Cargo handling at Chittagong port was also hampered today due to incessant rains, port sources said.

Most of the city dwellers stayed indoors and traffic on roads was thin.

## BNP denies press reports

By Staff Correspondent

Contrary to reports in a section of the press, BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia did neither blame India for killing Ziaur Rahman nor said that her party, if voted to power, would scrap all agreements with India, according to a BNP statement yesterday.

The UNB, a private sector news agency, reported that addressing a rally in the city on Wednesday, "Begum Zia blamed India for masterminding the assassination of President Ziaur Rahman." The report was carried by two English language dailies (not The Daily Star).

Besides, a leading Bangla daily also quoted the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament as saying that India played a

See Page 12 Col 8

## Indian reaction to Khaleda's reported remarks

From Pallab Bhattacharya

NEW DELHI, Aug 13: India today described as 'false and outrageous' recent remarks attributed to former Bangladesh

See Page 12 Col 5

## Big queue for ATOL

CAAB faces intense pressure 'to clear the cases'

By Shehab Ahmed

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) is under pressure from different private airline companies trying to obtain Air Transport Operating Licence (ATOL) without fulfilling all the criteria, CAAB sources said.

A number of companies have been lobbying for ATOL. Two of those — Air Maximus and Best Aviation — are trying to introduce cargo services.

Air Maximus has obtained clearance for 'general maintenance' but it is yet to get clearance as regards other criteria.

The Best Aviation proposed to run services with Boeing 707. But it is yet to get clearance from CAAB which is the regulatory body for operation of airlines in the country.

The sources said CAAB is "under pressure to clear the cases", something it does not

like as the agency is trying to upgrade Bangladesh's rating with the US Federal Aviation Agency which has downgraded it to B category.

Besides, the experience about the private companies is not good. Aero Bengal did not pay its dues although it closed down its business. The GMG is yet to clear its dues, a CAAB source said.

Aero Bengal had trouble with Kazakhstan Airlines, which took away the leased aircraft. Bismillah Airlines also had problem with its Russian company.

Out of more than two dozen companies which applied for ATOL, only six got the licence. Three companies started operation in 1994, carrying passengers and a limited cargo. One of those started as a cargo charterer. Another, run by MAF, an

NGO, operated a small sea plane for ambulance and emergency services and the other, Heavy Lift, started a helicopter service, mainly catering to the needs of Occidental oil company, now taken over by UNOCAL.

Only two of the airlines, Air Parabat and CMG, are surviving now, carrying passengers and limited cargo. Aero Bengal, the first private airline, ceased operation nearly two years back.

But those who were given permission to run cargo and helicopter services ran into trouble.

Bismillah Airlines, which started cargo service between Dhaka and Bangkok with a Soviet built Antonov-12 aircraft, soon ran into trouble after the Russian company took away its aircraft following a hitch on payment.

See page 11 Col 7

## 'Rehabilitate, then evict slum people'

By Staff Correspondent

Slum dwellers in the city yesterday denounced the government move to demolish the slums without taking any steps for their rehabilitation.

They joined a protest rally at Agargaon, organised by the newly formed Bustee Uchchedh Protirodh Sangram Committee.

Addressing the rally, the committee leaders vowed to protect the rights of slum dwellers and announced an action programme for this. The programme includes a procession in the city tomorrow and a rally at Paltan Maidan on August 19.

Some political leaders in-

See Page 12 Col 3

## Surgery suffers at DMCH

Supply dwindles despite ever-increasing demand for beds and equipment

By Naimul Haq

The government has virtually taken no steps to meet the ever-increasing demand for beds, operation theatres, surgical instruments, autoclave machines and other vital instruments in the General Surgery department at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, doctors alleged.

"We have a limited number of beds but the rush of patients seeking admission is increasing everyday. In such a situation, we are compelled to refuse admission to a large number of patients requiring immediate treatment," said a senior member of the surgery squad at the biggest and busiest hospital in the country.

Almost every hour, at least three critically injured surgery patients are admitted to the hospital through its emergency wing while about 300 'cold cases', on an average, seek admission through the out patient department (OPD) everyday.

If any major accident occurs in the city or nearby districts, the victims naturally come to DMCH for treatment. "The entire focus is on DMCH, hence the load is extremely high. We can neither refuse to take patients nor provide them with proper care," said a Medical Officer.

About the workload in the surgery department, he said, "Imagine how many patients we

have to handle at a time. There are occasions when we have to carry out operations on three or four patients at a time. But we do not have adequate instruments, medicines and required devices."

In reply to a question, the medical officer said, "We operate on the patients as usual in a hurry. But we cannot really guarantee if after surgery the patients would be free from germs or not."

Asked to explain, he said, "The surgical instruments are sterilised only once a day. During the interval between two operations, the instruments are simply immersed in hot water and not sterilised again as per

rules."

The General Surgery department has the heaviest rush of patients in the OPD. Showing a register, he told this correspondent late Thursday, "Today we have 195 patients, most of whom require some degree of emergency treatment. All the patients are hoping to be admitted but as per our record, none can be admitted due to non-availability of beds."

Another doctor said, "Even when beds are vacated, we have to take difficult decisions about who is to be admitted and who is to be refused because there are so many who need admission."

He went on, "In view of the

See Page 12 Col 1

## DCC's dubious drive

City's revenue officials do it their way

By Morshed Ali Khan

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has 'mysteriously failed' to remove illicit hanging hoardings belonging to clinics, private universities, colleges, community halls and other business establishments.

The Revenue Department of the DCC that authorises all sorts of advertisement hoardings, mega-signs, metal signs and neon-signs in the city, has 'mysteriously' excluded hundreds of these unauthorised overhead boards from their ongoing ejection drive.

In the latest style of setting up illegal hoardings, these business houses have dug up the road or road protrusion and mounted their cache above the roads. The displays look like arched gateways, traditionally built at the access of a Jamindar estate.

As per DCC record only one private university in Dhanmoldi, out of hundreds in the city, sought permission from the DCC to mark their hoarding. But DCC sources said the permission to this university

was given violating municipal law.

A DCC source said this type of overhead hoardings not only creates a vision nuisance but also threatens public safety and can cause accidents. At places the hoardings have been set up in road turnings!

"The municipality law prohibits any such nuisance. We cannot understand how this exception was given by the revenue department," the DCC source said.

See Page 12 Col 4

## Signature campaign on at JU

By JU Correspondent

General Students' Unity (GSU) of Jahangirnagar University (JU) has collected about 3,000 signatures of students in favour of its six-point demands including expulsion and cancellation of certificates of the rapists, killers and extortionists.

The 'signature campaign' started on Wednesday to gain support in favour of the GSU demands and to create pressure on the university authorities.

Talking to The Daily Star, GSU leaders said that they would organise a convention of eminent citizens from different walks of life on rape, killing,

extortion and terrorism that took place on the campus during the last few years leaving a stigma on the university.

## Public inquiry planned

By JU Correspondent

A Public Inquiry Commission is likely to be formed to investigate rapes, killings, terrorism and extortion on the Jahangirnagar University campus inception.

The proposed Commission

See Page 12 Col 2

GSU will hold rally, bring out procession, organise anti-rape and anti-terrorism photo exhibition and screening of films as part of the solidarity movement.

Meanwhile, teachers and students slammed the university authorities for only filing case against the rapists ignoring other demands of the students.

"Neglecting our main demand of expulsion and cancellation of certificates of all identified rapists and their abettors, the authorities have filed cases only against six ex-

See Page 12 Col 3

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
**Ministry of Industries**  
Shilpa Bhaban, 91, Motijheel C/A  
Dhaka

## Notice

### Application for Selection of CIP (Industries) 2000

Ministry of Industries invites application from Chief Executives of Industrial Enterprises for selection of CIP (Industries) for the year 2000.

The intending Chief Executives are to apply in prescribed proforma, to be obtained from the undersigned during office hours from 9.00 AM to 5.00 PM.

Applications in prescribed proforma, should reach the undersigned on or before 10-9-99.

**Md Khurshed Alam**  
Senior Assistant Secretary  
(Investment-2)  
Phone: 9567370

## ADAB, Coalition for the Urban Poor and Grassroots People's Organizations Appeal

to the Honourable Prime Minister of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

to stop slum demolition until all slum dwellers are properly rehabilitated

Honourable Prime Minister,

You were gracious enough to make a pledge after the inhuman demolition of the Bhasantek slum on 17 February 1997 that no more slum would be demolished without making proper arrangements for the rehabilitation of the slum dwellers. It is a matter of deep regret that in violation of that commitment your government has now expressed a firm determination to demolish all slums in Dhaka. A number of slums have already been bulldozed, rendering about 50,000 poor men, women and children homeless and driving them into a state of utter distress and uncertainty.

Honourable Prime Minister,

You are certainly aware that about 30,000,00 people — almost one-third of the population of Dhaka — are compelled to live in the city slums. They are all uprooted people — pauperized through various kinds of exploitation and oppression, river erosion and natural disasters and deprived of adequate employment opportunity — who have finally taken shelter in the Dhaka slums. However, despite the subhuman living condition imposed on them, they have never been a burden on the city. Conversely, they have always made significant contributions to the development of the country. It is they who serve as labourers in all industries including garment factories as well as in the transport and construction sectors. They undertake all kinds of labour including domestic service. If all slums in Dhaka are wiped out today, it will not only rob this huge population of their livelihoods but also inevitably have a telling effect on the overall economy of the country.

Honourable Prime Minister,

Slum dwellers are being thrown out in the name of containing terrorism and in doing so virtually all slum dwellers are being indiscriminately branded as terrorists. Moreover, they are being accused of complicity in the trade of drugs and illegal weapons and various other crimes. Hurling such blanket charges at them amounts to humiliating the ordinary citizens. This will help the real terrorists and their godfathers, who hold the slum dwellers hostage in their continued indulgence in terrorism and extortion, hide their true colours and cover all their sins. Evicting the innocent slum dwellers without taking any effective action against the real culprits is completely unjust, illogical and unethical. The way slum dwellers are being evicted by using bulldozers, *mastaans* and the police without making the minimum arrangements for their rehabilitation is a gross violation of their fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution, not to mention their human rights.

Honourable Prime Minister,

The government expects the evicted slum dwellers to return to their villages. But everybody knows that these people took shelter in the city slums after they had lost all their assets and had no option available to them. Where will they seek refuge and find employment when pushed back to the rural areas? You mentioned in an interview that 90 per cent slums dwellers would like to return to their villages and they would be rehabilitated in a period of five years. Is it then really necessary to evict the slum dwellers in such a great hurry and by force?

We therefore earnestly request you to reconsider the whole matter and take a more humane view of it. We request that demolishing slums be immediately stopped and the slum dwellers be rehabilitated under a comprehensive long-term plan. The measures your government has already taken to rehabilitate the evicted residents of the Bhasantek slum have been widely appreciated but the implementation of a single project like Bhasantek (which is yet to begin) or distribution of some cash to the slum dwellers is not enough to solve this complex problem.

Honourable Prime Minister,

Nobody wants to live in a slum of her/his own free will. We also want Dhaka city to be free of slums. This is what even the slum dwellers dream of. But such a dream can come true only when both rural and urban poverty is effectively reduced and the urban poor are properly rehabilitated. We therefore put forward only one demand to you — the realization of your previous commitment that "no slum would be demolished without making proper arrangements for rehabilitation". Rehabilitation before demolition, not the other way round and that too in phases. Let this be the process of making Dhaka a slum-free city.

Qazi Faruque Ahmed

Chairperson

Association of Development

Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB)

Md. Shahabuddin

Chairperson

Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP)

Dhaka City Committee

Abdul Khalek Howlader

Convener

Grassroots People's Organizations

Dhaka City Committee