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# Deficit despite increase in postal income

By Mustak Hossain

Despite increase in revenue, the postal service of the country has been running at a huge deficit.

The department's deficiency is around 60 per cent in the preceding four fiscal years since 1994-95, according to a department statement.

The administration's decline was Tk 34.93 crore in 1994-95 and inflated to Tk 55.32 crore in 1997-98.

The post service's earnings expanded about 11 per cent in last four years since fiscal 1994-95. Expenditure rose about 23 per cent during the corresponding period, next year.

The department earned a grossed Tk 100.75 crore in fiscal 1994-95 and bulged to Tk 111.5 crore in 1997-98.

The amount bulged during

the year 1991 to 1997 due to increase in employee's salary and allowance, a source in the department said.

The expenditure was Tk 135.68 crores in 1994-95 and it has increased to Tk 166.82 crore in 1997-98 fiscal year.

One of the main reasons behind the increase is the cost of materials and services the postal department uses. They have increased several times during the period but the postal department has not hiked charges since 1989.

The department has only increased postage charges by 25 per cent on postal articles sent abroad which was effective from March 9. No postage charges has been increased for inland mail, postal sources said.

Citing an example, an official said, "Cost for printing en-

velopes has increased about 127 per cent since 1986. Previously the printing cost for an envelope was Tk 0.30 and now it is to Tk 0.68."

The department has to bear some additional expenses like providing subsidy of about Tk 16 crore every year for expansion of rural postal service among the rural people through Extra Department Post Offices (EDPO).

The ratio of departmental and extra departmental employees now stands at 43:57 percent. There are about 21,677 posts in EDPO and 16,852 departmental posts.

Audit and Accounts is an additional department but postal department has to bear all expenses of the audit and has to spend about Tk 4 crore annually, said another official.



Steffi Graf gestures during a press conference yesterday. —AFP photo

## Graf calls it a day

HEIDELBERG, Germany, Aug 13: German Steffi Graf announced her retirement today after a career during which she won 22 grand slam titles and confirmed her status as the best woman's player of her generation, reports Reuters.

The former world number one, 30, told a news conference in her home town of Heidelberg she was quitting immediately after a series of injuries.

The seven times Wimbledon champion said last month she would stop playing major tournaments at the end of the year.

She was hoping to play her 54th and last grand slam tournament at the US Open in September but a strained left hamstring which forced her out of a tournament in California earlier this month made her change her plans. The pony-tailed blonde with the devastating forehead became the youngest player to receive a WTA ranking at 13 years and four months in 1982.

She held 107 tournaments and won top spot for 377 weeks, an all time record. In 1988 she won the grand slam of the four major tournaments plus the Olympic title in Seoul.

## 3 of a family electrocuted in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Aug 13: Three members of a family — husband, wife and their son — were electrocuted at their house on the Hospital Road in the city on Thursday.

The victims are Milon Shaha (45), his wife Geeta Rani Shaha (30) and their youngest son Ripon Shaha (18).

Geeta Rani accidentally came in touch with a piece of snapped electric wire in the bathroom of their rented semi-pucca house. When she cried out, her husband touched her body. Their son Ripon also died when he touched his parents.

The tragedy took place in only six minutes. Neighbours took them to the Sadar Hospital where doctors declared them dead.

The bodies were cremated today. After the cremation Liton Shaha, 22, the eldest son of the family came from Calcutta.

State Minister for Disaster Management Talukdar Abdul Khaleque visited the place of occurrence this morning. He has ordered an enquiry.

But none from the PDB visited the house.

## CU gunfight

Case filed against 14 BCL leaders, workers

CHITTAGONG, Aug 13: Hat-hazari police today filed a case against 14 leaders and workers of Chittagong University unit of Chhatra League in connection with Thursday's gunfight on the campus, reports UNB.

The accused are Shah Amanat Hall unit president Mahbubur Rahman, general secretary Shahidul Islam, organising secretary Shahadat Hossain, and activists Sohel, Gopal Krishna, Manik, Munna, Chapal, Shaiful Islam, Khairuzzaman, Azad, Bahar and Parvez.

Six of the activists were arrested from the campus soon after the gunfight.

Authorities declared the university closed for an indefinite period after the gunfight between two factions of BCL that left 50 people injured.

## Rehabilitate

From Page 1

cluding Manjurul Ahsan Khan, AFM Mahbubul, Rashed Khan Menon and Khalequzzaman also spoke at the rally.

The speakers expressed deep concern that several thousand poor people have already been evicted from different city slums.

They urged the government to make arrangements for rehabilitation of slum dwellers before evicting them. They pointed out that a large number of poor people live in slums in the city and those were allowed to be set up over the years.

# Flood takes worse turn at Ctg, Cox's Bazar

CHITTAGONG, Aug 13: The flood situation in the district and Cox's Bazar deteriorated further today due to downpour and onrush of hill waters, reports UNB.

Road communication between Chittagong and Cox's Bazar, which was snapped on Thursday, is yet to be restored. At least 33 unions in Chakaria, Ramu, Patia, Anowara, Fatikchhari, Rangunia, Rauzan, Satkania and Hathazari thanas have been inundated by flood waters.

Some one lakh people of these areas were marooned and standing crops on 22,000 acres of land went under water.

## River position

All the rivers in Brahmaputra and Ganges basins swelled further in the last 24 hours till 9 am yesterday.

According to Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre, the Jamuna, Buriganga, Mahananda, Padma and Meghna are likely to swell further till 6 am today.

In Brahmaputra basin, the Brahmaputra rose by 24cm at Noonkhawa and 17cm at Chilmari while the Jamuna rose by 19cm at Sirajganj and 10cm at Bahadurabad. The Dharala marked a rise by 24cm at Kurigram, the Teesta rose by 26cm at Kaunia, and the Old Brahmaputra increased by

35cm at Jamalpur and 27cm at Mymensingh.

In Ganges basin, the Padma recorded further rise by 19cm at Pankha, 11cm each at Rajshahi and Hardinge Bridge point while the Karatoa rose by 4cm at Panchagarh, the Punarbhaba rose by 67cm at Dinajpur, the Mahananda 14cm at Chapainawabganj and the Gorai 11cm at Gorai Railway Bridge points.

The Surma in Meghna basin recorded further rise by 8cm at Sylhet. It was flowing 35cm above danger level at Kanaighat. The Halda in the Hill basin rose by 115cm at Narayanhat and was flowing 104cm above danger level yesterday morning.

# Hasina blasts opponents

Movement aims to protect killers

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has blasted the opposition for unleashing terrorism in the name of movement to protect the "killers," reports UNB.

"People will not join a movement which is not for the people, rather for protecting the killers of Bangabandhu," she said at a discussion meeting organised by Bangabandhu Parishad at Engineers' Institution yesterday.

Hasina made it clear that the verdict of the Bangabandhu murder case had been pronounced and that would be executed someday under the law of the land.

National Professor Kabir Chowdhury, who is also president of the Parishad, presided over the meeting. It was also addressed by Bangabandhu Parishad general secretary and the Prime Minister's political adviser Dr SA Maleq, journalist ABM Musa, drama artiste Prof Momenul Haque, and Bangladesh Bank governor Dr M Farahuddin.

The Prime Minister said ev-

ery move of the present government was targeted to the welfare of the people. Awami League is a party of the people and is working for the people.

She said the government had taken a superannuation programme for the old rural poor. Arayan project for the homeless and special scheme for the unemployed youths.

The government has undertaken plans to strengthen local government bodies through decentralisation of the administration and reach services to people's doorstep.

Every single programme we are taking is programme for the rural poor. We are trying to build a strong rural economy," she said.

Referring to the struggle for people's economic freedom, initiated by father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, she said all his life Bangabandhu struggled for the emancipation of the exploited and poor people.

Bangabandhu completed the task of rebuilding the war-ravaged country and then switched

on to the mission for economic emancipation of the people, she said. "But Bangabandhu would not complete his task as he was killed brutally by the anti-liberation forces."

The PM recalled that the late leader tried to introduce a system uniting all under one banner to work for economic emancipation of the people.

After the killing of Bangabandhu, people's rights were snatched and the politics of coup, killing and conspiracy was instituted in the country. People were ignored in all spheres, she said.

The Prime Minister said Awami League through a long struggle established the rights of the people and started the movement for their economic freedom. She called for all to join the movement to realise the dream of Bangabandhu for a happy and prosperous Sonar Bangla.

"Our respect to the father of the nation can best be paid by freeing the nation from poverty and hunger, terrorism and violence," she said.

# Surgery suffers

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problem we are often compelled to request the emergency wing to admit only those patients who require urgent treatment."

All the doctors however spoke on condition of anonymity.

Abdul Baten is one of the victims of 'mismanagement' in the hospital. He had to wait for 11 days to get a bed in the general surgery ward. He was referred from a clinic in Chittagong with 'inflated neck'.

In this ward there are only 12 beds for male patients and five beds for female patients. However, extra beds have been arranged on corridors and spaces between two scheduled beds.

The free bed female ward was seen "crowded with patients on Thursday. An attending nurse showing a register said, "We have 75 patients at this moment, many of whom are 'doubling' or sharing beds. We have 54 beds in this ward."

During a spot visit, it was found that the main focus lights in the operation theatres (OT) were not functioning properly. The hydraulic system of the OT table was also found malfunctioning. "There is no end to problems," said a frustrated surgeon while showing the defective devices.

"Surgery department is the most important one in the hospital but it is not getting due at-

tion. Majority of the emergency patients come to the surgery ward but its capacity was not increased and the facilities were never developed. The department remains virtually handicapped," he added.

"We cannot trust the university authorities any more as they have expelled only a few of the rapists, failed to take action against other identified ones, allowed the rapists to write their examinations under special arrangement, brought them back to the campus and again filed a case against a few of them barring many," he said.

A professor requesting anonymity said filing of case against the rapists will not work "because there was a case against the killers but they continue to stay in the halls, collect tolls and resort to hoodlums as they have the blessing of the university administration."

Six of the activists were arrested from the campus soon after the gunfight.

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## Inquiry

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under the leadership of Dr Kamal Hossain is expected to be formed after a citizens' convention at the university later this month.

The proposal for such a commission came yesterday when leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU) met Dr Kamal Hossain to discuss recent developments in JU.

## 9th Asian Art Biennial in Dhaka from Nov 5

The ninth Asian Art Biennial Bangladesh 1999 will be held in Dhaka from November 5 to 30, reports BSS.

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has already sent invitation to participants from 54 Asia-Pacific and African countries, said a release of the academy issued yesterday.

## Rehabilitate

From Page 1

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The speakers expressed deep concern that several thousand poor people have already been evicted from different city slums.

They urged the government to make arrangements for rehabilitation of slum dwellers before evicting them. They pointed out that a large number of poor people live in slums in the city and those were allowed to be set up over the years.

Around 18 thousand shanties in different city slums were demolished by the government in a recent move. On Thursday, the High Court directed the government not to demolish any slum till the hearing of a writ petition in this regard on August 19.

# Congress manifesto puts SAARC high on agenda

From Pallab Bhattacharya

NEW DELHI, Aug 13: India's main opposition party Congress today released its manifesto for next months' general elections saying, if voted back to power, it would work for improving India's relations with its neighbours and creating a nonlegislative Parliament for South Asia along the lines of European Parliament.

The manifesto, released by Congress President Sonia Gandhi, said the party would strive to strengthen the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

The South Asian parliament will serve as a forum for discussion on issues common to all countries in the region, it said.

The manifesto said there would be no let-up in the fight against Pakistan-backed terrorism in India but at the same time "durable confidence build-

ing measures going beyond bus rides will be high on (Congress) agenda.

The Congress is "committed to a meaningful bilateral dialogue with Pakistan on all issues, including Jammu and Kashmir within the framework of 1972 Shimla Accord, it said adding Pakistan has to "change its attitude to India in most fundamental manner."

The manifesto said India, China and Pakistan have joint responsibility for nuclear non-proliferation in this region.

It said the Congress would engage United States in a comprehensive dialogue on all issues of mutual concern and will take concrete steps to give an institutional shape to this dialogue.

On India's economic front, the manifesto promised drastic legislations aimed at disciplining government spending and increasing economic growth to

7 to 8 per cent and reforms with a "human face." Among top of Congress economic agenda will be a new company law and foreign exchange management act.

After release of the manifesto Sonia Gandhi, replying to questions from newsmen, said the "prime minister of Congress will be decided by victorious MPs after elections."

Asked if she was not being projected as Congress Prime Ministerial candidate because of her foreign origin, Sonia Gandhi said, "I have no answer. The people of India will give an answer to this."

She parried a question if senior Congress leader and former Finance Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, who will contest the parliamentary elections, was an alternative Prime Ministerial candidate of Congress.

Strongly opposing coalition government ruling India, Sonia

Gandhi refused to commit her party to any power-sharing with its electoral allies like AIADMK led by J Jayalalitha and Rashtriya Janata Dal headed by Laloo Prasad Yadav.

Stating that stability of government would be the main issue in the coming poll, she said, "We have seen coalition governments not being able to manage."

"The Atal Bihari Vajpayee government has been involved in a series of mismanagements... the last is Kargil."

Asked whose victory was it in Kargil, she said the "victory there was that of the Indian armed forces and not that of the government."

The Congress chief said her party had been bringing to the fore of the Vajpayee government's "weaknesses" on Kargil issue and would continue to do so

# Explosion rips apart Manila govt building

MANILA, Aug 13: Eight people were killed and 12 injured when a powerful explosion ripped through the offices of the Philippines' National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) early Friday, police said, reports AFP.

The bomb blast 45 minutes after midnight tore apart the office of the special investigation division of the bureau, the country's equivalent to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Police said they were still investigating the cause of the blast, which sparked a brief fire and brought down the roof of the one-storey office adjacent to the main building.

As bomb experts searched for clues Friday morning, the NBI received an anonymous

telephone call saying another bomb was to explode on the fifth floor, radio reports said.

The pre-dawn blast, which was heard several blocks away, shattered glass windows of nearby buildings, including the Western Pacific headquarters of the World Health Organisation, witnesses interviewed on radio said.

Eight bodies were recovered from the burnt wreckage, four of them agents of the bureau. Four other remains were mangled beyond recognition, said NBI chief Federico Opiniono.

Twelve injured victims were treated at two nearby hospitals, police said.

Opiniono said the explosion occurred while agents were questioning members of a drug ring arrested during a raid in

the suburban town of Paranaque a day earlier.

He said the NBI's special investigation unit has recently been at the forefront of raids against big-time drug traffickers and gunrunners, but declined to speculate on whether the blast was intended or was an accident.

Officials said the special investigation division stored grenades, firearms and ammunition confiscated by justice department agents from previous raids.

However, explosives experts from the Manila police said the device that tore through the office was more powerful than a grenade because it created a crater four-feet in diameter and 15 inches deep.

## 9 drown in Madaripur boat capsizes

MADARIPUR, Aug 13: At least nine people drowned when a boat with 28 passengers aboard capsized in a canal at Mostafapur in the district Wednesday night.

Body of one Monohor Bagchi, 65, was recovered an hour after the incident while the eight other bodies found in the canal today.

The rest of the victims were identified as Mirinal Bala, 30, Mukul Baroi, 3, Bhairab Bala, 7, Pijush Bala, 30, Chandranath Bala, 65, Gouranga Mondole, 60, Goulak Biswas, 50 and Milon Bala, 7.

Villagers said, a total of 28 passengers boarded the boat after having dinner at their relatives' house. The boat sank after hitting the sluice gate of the canal.

## BNP

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role in the killing of Zia. Another Bangla daily quoted Begum Zia as saying that BNP, if returns to power, will scrap all agreements with India.

BNP Office Secretary Nazrul Islam Khan in a statement yesterday said, "One or two newspaper's misquoted Begum Zia. She didn't blame India for the killing of Zia. Besides, she did not say that BNP, if voted to power, would scrap all agreements with India."

The statement further said, Begum Zia told the rally on T&T Bhaban premises on Wednesday, "Ziaur Rahman had to give his life as he didn't accept to give the country self-hegemony and wanted to make the country self-reliant. In this context, she didn't mention the name of any country."

On the issue of agreements, the BNP statement said, "Begum Zia told the rally that if voted to power, BNP will scrap the agreements signed by the present government that are inconsistent with national interests. She did not say that all agreements would be scrapped."

## Six alleged snatchers held in city

Police arrested six alleged snatchers from Mirpur and Kafrul areas in the city Thursday night, reports BSS.

A team of Kafrul police arrested one Arif, accused in seven cases with Cantonment and Kafrul police stations at about 1 am.

Police said arrested Arif is a listed terrorist and involved in different criminal activities in Kafrul area.

Another team of Mirpur police arrested five alleged muggers from Paikpara area and recovered some snatched valuables from their possession. Police also seized three chapaties, one Chinese axe and three cocktails from their possession.

The arrested are: Shyamol alias Redoy, Obaidul alias Mohiuddin, Ruhul alias Ruhul Amin, Siddique and Shah Alam.

## One held for city Juba League leader murder

Sutrapur police yesterday arrested one Abdul Motalab from PC Benarjee Lane for his alleged involvement in the killing of Juba League leader Delwar Hossain alias Dilu, reports BSS.

Delwar Hossain alias Dilu, 32, president of 89 ward Awami Juba League was shot dead by miscreants in front of a video shop at PC Benarjee Lane at about 10:30 Thursday night.

Police said arrested Motalab along with his accomplices murdered Dilu as a sequel to previous enquiry.

# Nargis' nightmare

By Staff Correspondent

Critically ill 14-year old Nargis after being refused admission to Dhaka Medical College Hospital through its emergency department spent a night on the staircase inside the hospital.

Late in the night (Tuesday), she was driven out of the hospital by security guards. But later, accompanied by her old mother, she came back to the hospital.

On Wednesday morning, as advised by a doctor, Nargis went to patient department (OPD). She was then admitted on 'humanitarian ground' and kept in Ward Number 9.

Due to help from Prof Kader Khan of general Surgery department, Nargis was able to find a 'seat' in the hospital. Otherwise she would have to wait for at least two months to get a bed.

"I have examined her and found her in a serious condition. She is hardly able to move due to infection and pain," said Prof Khan.

## Sylhet bus terminal

# Row over right of way kills one, hurts 35

From: Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 13: A rickshawpuller was killed and 35 others were injured in clashes between the transport workers and a bridal party in the central bus terminal area here this evening.

The trouble started when a bridal party passing the terminal area asked some transport workers to clear the road for their vehicles. The workers at this became agitated and attacked the bridal party. They beat them mercilessly, injuring

about 15 bridal party members.

The transport workers also set two motorbikes on fire.

The bridal party members left the scene in the face of the attack by the transport workers.

But, after an hour, the bridal party members along with some other people returned to the bus terminal and attacked the transport workers. They were locked in fierce clash, exchanged fire and blasted crackers during the clash. At least 20 transport workers were injured in the clash.

The bridal party members also damaged some vehicles at the terminal.

A rickshawpuller, identified as Shorab, 30, was crushed under the wheels of a speeding minibus during chase and counter chase between the two clashing groups.

Immediately after the incident, the bridal party members put up a barricade on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway in Chandripool area, disrupting traffic on the road.

The injured were admitted to Sylhet MAG Osmany Medical College Hospital.

The transport workers went on a strike demanding arrest of the 'attackers'.