

Serena clinches **French Open** AFP, Paris

America's Serena Williams, the third seed, won the second Grand Slam title in her career here yesterday in a family face-off when she beat second seed and her elder sister Venus 7-5, 6-3 in the final of the French Open.

The victory, which came in 91 minutes in the first all-sister final to be played at Roland Garros, was sweet revenge for the 20-year old Serena who lost to Venus in the final of the US Open last year.

Serena's only other previous Grand Slam victory was the 1999 US Open crown and yesterday's win gave her a 15th career title.

Al-Qaida plotted to kill **Musharraf**

PTI, Washington

US intelligence agencies have picked up information indicating al-Qaida terrorists are planning to assassinate Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf.

An intelligence report from Southwest Asia, which has not been confirmed, stated that al-Qaida terrorists were trying to conduct the assassination to precipitate conflict between Pakistan and India. The Washington Times reported on

Friday. "Al-Qaida views a conflict as good for the organisation. The war would make it harder for Pakistan to cooperate with US military and intelligence forces now searching for Al-Qaida terrorists in Afghanistan

Pakistan downs Indian spy drone

AP/AFP, Islamabad

Pakistani jests shot down an unmanned Indian spy plane Friday near the tense border between the nucleararmed South Asian rivals, the Pakistani air force said. An air force statement said the plane was shot down

about 11 pm and crashed near the town of Raja Jang south of Lahore, Pakistan's second largest city. The incident occurred as armies of the two nations face off across the tense confrontation line in the dis-

puted region of Kashmir. India confirmed yesterday it had lost an unmanned

plane over Pakistani territory. A defence ministry spokesman told AFP that an "unmanned aerial vehicle on a routine flight, lost contact" late Friday night and had fallen about 20 kilometres

inside Pakistan territory He added that "in the present state of deployment"

the use of such planes by both sides is common. Pakistani military spokesman General Rashid Qureshi told the official news agency APP that if India launched an aggression, "Pakistan will defend itself."

Qureshi added that "Pakistan has often told India that it did not want an increase in tension between the two

countries. "But with this incident it had proved its "determination to defend every inch of its territory and air space.

Indian police, meanwhile, reported two attacks yesterday by rebels in Indian Kashmir, in which four villagers and three soldiers were killed.

Washington on Friday claimed it had evidence of a significant decline in incursions by Islamist guerrillas into Indian Kashmir.

"We have growing indications that infiltration across the Line of Control is down significantly," said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher, referring to the military ceasefire LoC dividing Kashmir between India and Pakistan

"We can't at this point, say that this change has been done on a permanent basis. That's what (Pakistani) President (Pervez) Musharraf has promised; that's what we're looking for.

US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage on Friday, after holding talks with Musharraf in Islamabad followed by a meeting with Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, said he had secured peace pledges from both camps.

PM asks DCC Mayor Clean city, eradicate mosquito BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia vesterday asked the new mayor of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Sadek Hossain Khoka to ensure civic amenities for the city-dwellers befitting a metropolis of the 21st century

She gave the instruction when Sadek Hossain Khoka, who is also minister for fisheries and livestock, paid a courtesy call on the prime minister as the elected DCC mayor at her office.

Emphasizing the need for fulfilling people's expectations by creating new opportunities and adding facilities for the city-dwellers, she asked him to meet the demands of the time

She also asked the mayor to ensure quick disposal of garbage and rubbish at the town denigrated places.

Regarding the financial indiscipline in DCC the prime minister told him to seek solution of the problems through discussions with the relevant ministries and agencies, including the Ministries of Finance and LGRD & Cooperatives.

The prime minister asked Khoka to give due attention to cleanliness and mosquito eradication drives, repair of roads and streets and solution to water-logging and traffic jam problems.

Judge appointment Lawyers to meet PM soon for **confirmation** STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Senior Supreme Court lawyers will meet Prime Minister Khaleda Zia soon and ask her to confirm the appointments of the three judges who had recently been refused confirmation despite the chief justice's recommendation.

Supreme Court Bar Association President M Ozaer Faruque yesterday phoned the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) seeking an appointment. A PMO official told him that though the PM was sick, an appointment would be arranged very soon.

The lawyers decided yesterday



Wife and son of slain trader Ashrafuddin wail beside his body. Ashrafudin was gunned down in Navabazar in the city vesterday

Trader shot dead at Nayabazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gunmen shot dead a trader in steel sheets in the city's Nayabazar area yesterday. The victim was identified as Ashrafuddin, 28, son of late Nasiruddin of Shamsabad in Nayabazar area under Kotwali police station.

Sources quoting witnesses said two local youths, Mamun and Sultan, shot him point-blank in front of Chittagong Steel Mill in the area at about 2:20pm. He was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where

doctors declared him dead. Ashraf's wife Elina Begum alleged that Mamun and Sultan killed her husband out of enmity over a piece of land.

The body was sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

No case was filed with the Kotwali Police Station in this regard till 7:30pm last night. The on-duty officer of the thana acknowledged the incident but could not give any details.

In another incident, an employee of a private university was shot and seriously injured during a failed mugging attempt.

Sources said Reza Ahmed, 35, an office assistant of Dhanmondi's Stamford University had cashed a cheque for Tk 50,000 from a branch of Prime Bank at road 11/A of the area.

Soon after Reza came out of the bank, a mugger tried to rob him at gunpoint. But Reza resisted and was shot in the chest and lower abdomen by the mugger The victim was admitted to the DMCH in a critical condition



One killed, 17 hurt as train hits truck in B'baria OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

One person was killed and 17 others were injured, six of them seriously, when a train rammed a truck at Poirtala level crossing in Brahmanbaria yesterday.

The dead was identified as Hossain Miah, 28, helper of the illfated truck. He succumbed to his injuries on way to hospital.

According to witnesses, Chittagong bound Mahanagar Godhuli train hit a truck loaded with rice while it was crossing the unmanned level crossing at around 5.25 pm. The engine of the train also went off the track.

The seriously injured persons are train driver. Abul Khaver. 50. Rafique Miah, 30, of Bhairab in Kishoreganj Delwar Hussain,40, of Sreenagar Bhairab in Kishoreganj, Tawhid Miah,18, of Brahmanbaria, Abdul Kaiyum,24, of Kishoreganj and Jakir Miah, 40, of Brahmanbaria. They were rushed to Brahmanbaria Sada Hospital.

PHOTO: STAR

Train communications on Sylhet-Dhaka and Chittagong-Dhaka routes remained snapped till filing of this report at 10 pm.

Police have been deployed on the spot.

No case was filed in this regard with the respective police station

Govt-UNDP mission completes survey in CHT BSS, Rangamati

The visiting Joint Risk Assessment Mission yesterday (Saturday) completed its survey assessing risk and security of the development workers in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

The 13-member mission comprising members of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Danish Embassy and Asian Development Bank (ADB) including government of Bangladesh led by Michael Heyn has begun its survey since June 1 to pave way for resumption of development activities in the region. The mission will leave Rangamati for Dhaka today (Sunday) and likely to hold a press conference in Dhaka on June 12 to make the findings public, chief of the mission Michael Heyn told over telephone. All sorts of development activities, sponsored by donor agencies remained suspended following abduction of three European nationals from Naniarchor upazila of Rangamati district in February last vear.



Foreign Minister Morshed Khan meets Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf in Islamabad yesterday. They discussed bilateral and regional issues specially the current Indo-Pak tensions.

Reconditioned car traders allege Pak FM asked Ban to benefit only

HOTO AFF

and Pakistan," it said.

Quantitative ban on sugar import goes

BSS, Dhaka

The government has withdrawn all quantitative restrictions on sugar import as a step toward liberalisation of trade.

Sugar import will be unrestricted following the government step and businessmen will be able to import any quantity of sugar through LC (Letter of Credit), an official handout said yesterday.

Hawker beaten to death at Narsingdi

UNB, Dhaka

A middle aged man was beaten to death by some extortionists in the town on Friday night.

The extortionists beat up Mostafa Mia, a hawker of Baniasthal area in the town, at abut 10 pm as he refused to pay toll

Later, he was rushed to Sadar Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Police arrested a youth, Sumon, in connection with the killing after a case was filed with Sadar thana

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June 9		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-15	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-49	6-54
Esha	8-15	8-45
Source: Is	lamic Fou	ndation

7 importers of new vehicles

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Bangladesh Reconditioned Vehicles Importers & Dealers Association (BARVIDA) have strongly protested the proposed ban on import of used vehicles.

The proposed ban will increase the annual import bill for vehicles six times and make the country a permanent market for Indian cars with outdated technologies, they said at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

"We contradict the finance minister's statement that it will be possible to buy a new car at the price of an used car due to reduction of tax on new cars," BARVIDA President Md Anwar Hossain said. Other leaders of the association

also were present at the press conference

A 1300 cc Japanese reconditioned vehicle is available in the local market at Tk 3 to 4 lakh now. But price of the same car will be about US\$10,000 to \$12,000 and with 59 per cent tax it would be

around Tk 12 lakh, he said "Indian vehicles can not be compared with Japanese ones because of their poor quality. These are not popular anywhere in the world.

The BARVIDA leaders claimed that the ban will benefit only seven importers of new vehicles, two of whom are influential ministers in the present government. They also named the two ministers whose SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

to continue in office

AP, Islamabad

President Pervez Musharraf has asked Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar to continue in his job until a replacement can be found, Foreign Office officials and relatives of the ailing official said yesterday.

Sattar, who had nasal surgery last month, has asked Musharraf to relieve him of his duties, saying his health condition does not allow him to devote his full energies to his job.

"Following my long, complicated and debilitating surgery, have requested the president to be released," Sattar said Saturday. "I have not resigned and I have not guit. And I trust the president, in his best judgment, will make a decision.

Musharraf named Sattar as foreign minister after seizing power in a bloodless coup in 1999

Ishtiaque Ahmed would meet the PM. They previously wanted the issue to be resolved before the

Supreme Court resumed on June 8. Earlier, this delegation of lawyers had met President AQM Badruddoja Chowdhury, Law Minister Moudud Ahmed and Chief Justice Mahmudul Amin Choudhury.

The lawyers initiated the move when the government did not confirm the services of three additional judges appointed during the Awami League regime. The chief justice had recommended that their services be confirmed. It has always been a norm to uphold his recommendations

Probe into Cessna crash begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A four-member probe body headed by Squadron Leader Masud Imam yesterday started investigating the crash of a training aircraft of Air Parabat Flying Academy on Friday. Members of the committee are

Mahmud Hasan, assistant director of Flight Safety Department, civil aviation; Ratan Kumar, air traffic controller at ZIA and captain Zoyardar of Air Parabat.

On the first day, the probe body questioned some officials of Parabat Flying Academy. It asked them why they allowed the pilot to fly in bad weather.

The committee checked some relevant things and collected videotape, other records and also the weather forecast.

Civil aviation sources however said none of the committee members has any expertise on probing such an incident.

They said only one person having the required expertise now works as a consultant for civil

aviation. The single-engine Cessna-150 crashed onto to a playground at Section-4 in the city's, Uttara Model Town, killing its pilot Moklesur Rahman Sakib.

that a delegation led by Barristei



Aggrieved teachers and classmates with the body of BUET student Sadegunnahar Sony at the DMCH yesterday. She was killed in a crossfire.

NBR chairman says **Revenue target** achievable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chairman of National Board of Revenue (NBR) Dr Shoeb Ahmed yesterday said the revenue collection target for the next financial year is "achievable and not ambitious"

The revenue collection target from NBR source has been fixed at Tk 23750 crore which is 15 per cent higher than that of the current fiscal.

"We have considered a moderate growth rate of 15 per cent for both income tax and VAT," Dr Shoeb Ahmed said at a press conference.

He was asked how he expects to achieve the 15 per cent growth in revenue collection while the current fiscal's target is yet to be achieved.

The NBR chairman said the amount of outstanding customs duty of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) is about Tk 829 crore at this moment

The NBR will have surplus collection if BPC pays the customs duty in time, he said.

The NBR chairman however said that withdrawal of import license fee. reduction of import duties and withdrawal of supplementary duty on 120 categories of goods will result in around Tk 800 crore revenue loss for the government

"If the import volume increases and there is devaluation of taka, the loss would be higher than Tk 800 crore," he said.

The proposed budget has suggested the lowest rate of customs duty at 7.5 per cent instead of the existing 5 per cent. The NBR chairman said the government's revenue income will increase only in this category, which will be nearly Tk 304 crore.

Dr Shoeb said increase in customs duty and supplementary duty on SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Token strike at oil sector installations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

PHOTO: STAF

A token strike was observed at different installations of the oil sector across the country yesterday.

The workers and employees of oil sector and the related transport sectors enforced the strike to protest the government decision to privatise all the profit-making installations including Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC).

During the strike supply of petroleum products from around 40 installations including the main installation at Patenga and other depots in the country remained suspended.

The transport workers and employees of related road and shipping routes also refrained from carrying petroleum products, hindering supply of the products.

However, shortage of oil was not reported from any sale centre as the concerned distributors, dealers and petrol pump owners were supplied sufficiently on the previous two days to avert any possible crisis.

Meanwhile during the strike Oil, Gas and Road-Shipping Worker-Employees Council staged demonstration and rallies at different installations including main three oilmarketing firms of Padma, Meghna and Jamuna Oil Companies in the port city of Chittagong

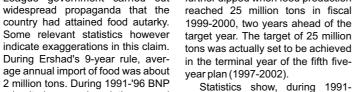
The speakers at a rally presided over by the council convener Alhai Md. Yeakub Ali demanded immediate cancellation of the decision to privatise the sector, otherwise they threatened to go for indefinite strike.

average import was slightly above

conclusion on the basis of the quanng 98-99) is less than the average

annual import during 1991-1996 BNP rule. In his speech Thursday, the finance minister apparently ignored the 1998 deluge -- the worst in the century that submerged most of the croplands necessitating import of huge quantity of food to feed a nation in crises

Besides, the import volume



Statistics show, during 1991-1996, the country imported 87 lakh 8,000 tons of foodgrain, making an 1.7 million tons. During Awami average of 17 lakh 41,000 tons a

On the other hand, during 1996-2001, the country imported one crore 20 lakh 67,000 tons of foodgrain, making an average 24 lakh 13,400 tons a year.

Of the total import during this period (1996-2001), a record quantity of 54 lakh 91,000 was imported in 1998-'99 only to offset the huge crop loss due to the devastating flood. Moreover, food autarky was not SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Facts refute Saifur's claim further dipped when food production League government carried out

REAZ AHMAD Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman in his budget speech termed

Bangladesh's achieving food selfsufficiency a 'propaganda' by the previous Awami League government but facts say different things. The Finance Minister drew the

tity of food imported during AL's fiveyear (1996-2001) rule. Interestingly, as per statistics, the average annual food import during the rest four years of AL rule (exclud-

indicate exaggerations in this claim. During Ershad's 9-year rule, average annual import of food was about 2 million tons. During 1991-'96 BNP rule, it decreased and the annual

League rule, import of food again increased and average annual import stood at 2.4 million tons. Had the country really achieved selfsufficiency in food why the volume of

Food autarky during AL rule

food import increased?" Analysis of the data provided by Saifur however reveals that except in 1998, average annual food import during the second half of 1990s is around one lakh MT less than the average import during first half of the decade Saifur Rahman said, "The Awami