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SOE sell-off stuck

Policymakers want to get rid of losses but don't want to lose a massive amount of annual tax

RAZIUR RAHMAN and SHARIER KHAN

While donors continue to hammer on privatisation of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to get rid of losses, government policymakers remain divided on the issue as past records show privatisation did not help any one.

The government privatised around 500 state-owned industries in early eighties. Half of those have already been shut down while most of the remaining 250 have been struggling to survive, according to a top official of the industries ministry.

Again, even if privatisation of all the SOEs including T&T and financial institutions unburden the government of the annual losses of around Tk

3500 crore, it will deprive the government of fixed annual tax earnings of over Tk 6500 crore.

Such a situation forces the policymakers to hold different views on the future of SOEs, regardless of the donor's contention that their privatisation is the best solution.

Since the eighties, the government has been under pressure from donors to privatise all the SOEs to get rid of losses as well as to "salvage" these enterprises. But it did not follow a consistent path in this regard due to lack of political will or proper economic analysis.

Initially the government's plan was to privatise only loss-incurring enter

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Spain shoot Irish out

REUTERS, Suwon

Spain edged out gutsy Ireland in dramatic penalty shootout, the first of the 2002 World Cup, to reach the quarter-finals after the second round game ended 1-1 after extra time here yesterday.

Spain, trying to shake off a reputation as World Cup underachievers, owed their victory to their 21-year-old keeper Iker Casillas, who saved two penalties in the shootout and one in normal time.

Matt Holland, David Connolly and Kevin Kilbane failed with their spot kicks for Ireland before Gaizka Mendieta stepped up to put Spain into the last eight. Spain won the shootout 3-2.

Juanfran and Juan Carlos Valeron failed to score in the shootout for Spain, who had used all their substitutes and played extra time with 10 men after midfielder David Albelda left the pitch with a groin injury.

"To save penalties is all about luck," said Casillas, who also saved one penalty during normal time. "It would have been unfair for us to get out after

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Grameen Match Report

Shake-up in top tier of Titas Gas

More changes in mid, low ranks soon

STAR REPORT

The government yesterday made massive changes at executive level in the Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd. (TGTDC) as part of efforts to rejuvenate the company.

Changes in mid and lower ranks would follow this, sources said.

Titas General Manager (GM) MA Rais Siddique was transferred to Gas Transmission Company Ltd (GTCL) and GM of GTCL Mahbubur Rahman was brought to Titas as a

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Judgement in Rubel murder case today

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Judgement in the sensational Rubel murder case will be given today, court sources said.

Mollah Mostafa Kamal, judge of Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, will



Shamim Reza Rubel

pronounce the verdict.

The prosecution and the defence sides completed arguments in the case on June 3.

The court recorded statements of 35 out of 62 prosecution witnesses.

The trial of the case began in the court on July 27, 1999.

Shamim Reza Rubel, 24, a BBA student of the Independent University, was picked up by a team of DB police from in front of his Siddeswari resident on July 23, 1998 and was allegedly tortured to death in custody the same day.

The victim's father Abdur Rab filed a murder case with Ramna police station the following day.

The Investigation Officer (IO) of the case submitted a charge sheet to the CMM's Court, Dhaka against

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PHOTO: AFP

Spain's Gaizka Mendieta (L) jumps into the arms of Spanish goalkeeper Iker Casillas (C-blue) after scoring the winning goal in a penalty shootout against Ireland as teammate Juanfran (R) joins in in Suwon yesterday.



Hartal passes off

AL central office kept under siege

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Yesterday's dawn-to-dusk hartal enforced by the Awami League (AL) put a lid on economic activities and paralysed normal life across the country. However, no major untoward incident took place.

At least one person was bullet-hit and several others were injured in clubbing by police in the capital and its adjoining areas. Arrested were at least 20 people.

Police kept the AL central office on the Bangabandhu Avenue virtually under siege during the run of the hartal.

Yesterday's hartal, the fourth in eight months of the BNP-Jamaat alliance's rule, was enforced against the "anti-people" budget, "political persecution and lawlessness".

In the city, traders kept the shutters of establishments down and transport workers put their vehicles off the road. Only rickshaws and a

small number of auto-rickshaws plied the streets. Educational institutions remained closed and the presence at public offices was thin.

At Golam Bazaar in Keraniganj, Hanif (full name unknown), a laundry man, sustained bullets in the abdomen and left hand at 11.00am. Hanif was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and later shifted to the Suhrwardy Hospital.

People accompanying Hanif to the DMCH alleged that he was injured when a pro-hartal procession was passing by the area -- a version denied by police. Police said the man was injured while cleaning a firearm.

At 10:40am, at least six activists of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of the AL, were injured in police clubbing on a BCL procession led by its Acting President Marufa Akhtar Poppy on

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Golden Senegoal

AFP, Oita

Senegal became the first African side to reach the World Cup quarter-finals for 12 years here yesterday when a golden goal strike from Henri Camara saw the minnows snatch a 2-1 win over Sweden.

Camara pounced 14 minutes into extra-time, bagging his second goal of an even match when he danced past Swedish skipper Johan Mjallby before drilling a low shot past Magnus Hedman from the edge of the area.

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DHL Spec Report

