

## Dockers' wages

**FROM PAGE 12**  
15 per ton while the loading or unloading cost of every TEUS (Twenty Equivalent Unit Standard) container would surge by Tk 555. The handling cost of each container will go up by Tk 83.

Sources said the enhancement is being done following demands by the ruling BNP-backed dock workers' Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA) of the Chittagong Bondor Dock Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal. The CBA had been demanding a 25 per cent increase in their wages since the last six months.

The food minister will be present in today's meeting as he, being the president of the labour wing of the ruling BNP, at present controls the port's labour politics.

Previously, the Chittagong City Corporation Mayor ABM

Mohiuddin Chowdhury, who is also the General Secretary of the Chittagong City unit of the Awami League, had controlled the labour politics of the Chittagong port.

The port users said this wage raise would have a negative impact on the overall export and import of the country, as it would increase the cost of services at the port.

The port users had proposed a five per cent enhancement of wages.

## CCC mayor to file defamatory case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg

Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) and General Secretary of the city unit of the Awami League (AL) ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury alleged that a certain civil guard is jealous of the ongoing development work and is conspiring against him to hinder the development of the port city.

The city mayor told this while addressing a press conference in the auditorium of the local press club yesterday afternoon, a day after receiving bail from the court in connection with a graft case filed against him by the Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC).

The mayor vowed again to fight all conspiracies and conspirators who would dare to stand in the way of developing and building Chittagong to become one of the greatest cities of this region.

Mohiuddin came down heavily on the role of some bureaucrats within the government saying, "these dishonest bureaucrats are prone to create unwanted obstructions to the development works, we too were sometimes misguided by them".

The mayor while explaining his position as a 'clean man' said he did never engaged in the embezzlement of the CCC funds during his entire tenure as the mayor, "I made the corporation a self-reliant institution over the years by introducing some income-generating projects," he said.

The mayor further said he would sue those who tried to harass and damage his image.

## 10 hurt as BNP factions clash in Gafargaon

UNB, Mymensingh

At least ten people were injured as two factions of the ruling BNP clashed at Dogachhia in Gafargaon over establishing supremacy in the area at noon yesterday.

Fazul Haq, 55, was admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital with bullet wounds and two others were taken to Gafargaon health centre.

Police arrested two BNP activists -- Enamul Haq and Abu Sayed -- from the spot.

## Shihab

**FROM PAGE 12**  
police station. It was turned into a regular case on February 10.

The Detective Branch (DB) of police recovered some pieces of the decomposed body from three places in Bashabo and North Goran areas 53 days after the incident. They also arrested Monir Hossain Liton and Abu Syed from Bhagyakul Mistanna Bhandar in the city's Khilgaon area.

Liton and Syed gave confessional statements before two metropolitan magistrates on April 8 and 9 respectively, disclosing the names of four other accused. They are Mahbul Haq Rubel, Faisal Sharif Raju, Imran Hossain Sabuj and Nasim Sheikh.

DB inspector Nazrul Islam, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted a chargesheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court against all the six on April 17.

The court framed charges against them on May 9.

Liton and Syed are now detained in jail custody and the others have been absconding.

## Young man

**FROM PAGE 12**  
(DMCH) for autopsy.

It was not known why Azad was killed. Local people however said the victim might have been killed for giving an interview to a TV channel on the killing of another Mirpur resident, Russell, who was gunned down by local goons Monday.

It is suspected that Azad knew the killers of Russell and they ensured their safety by finishing him off.

The duty officer of the Pallabi Police Station said last night that they are yet to file a case as the victim's relatives have not reported the incident to them.

In another incident, a man, aged about 42, was strangled by unidentified people in the city's Sutrapur area yesterday.

Police recovered the body from near the Gandaria Rifles Club yesterday morning.

Sutrapur police said there were marks of noose around his neck, raising the suspicion that he might have been strangled to death.

## Filling station

**FROM PAGE 1**

The state minister assured the leaders of safety and security to tank lorry drivers, an end to harassment by police sergeants, allocation of firearm licences on a flexible condition.

The owners' association has decided on suspending the strike considering the public sufferings but threatened to go on a strike again in response to the government's failure to carry out the decision in two months.

The scheduled strike resulted in panic buying yesterday.

Petroleum Dealers and Tank Lorry Malik-Sramik Oikya Sangram Parishad had called the strike to press their six-point demands, including an increase in commission against oil sales and an end to 'extortion' by the traffic police.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Truck and Tank Lorry Owners-Workers Union Council in a press statement yesterday urged the government to withdraw the increased tolls for crossing Meghna and Daukandi bridges.

The government in the 2002-03 fiscal budget has increased the tolls to Tk 400 from Tk 195 for trucks, covered vans and tank lorries.

## Ctg flyover

**FROM PAGE 10**

Dr Zafarullah Choudhury, coordinator of Ganashasthya Nagar Hospital, said, "Any attempt to launch a new programme without making any structural change will be futile. If we talk about malnutrition reduction, we are talking about two per cent of the population. Addressing the problem is no easy task and the government has to be sincere."

He underscored the use of the local government in healthcare services. "The existing programme failed to some extent because it was centrally controlled. And the central government means too much bureaucracy. Healthcare services cannot be delivered through bureaucrats," he said.

The new programme that leaves the poor out will end in similar failure, he said.

The World Bank officials here, however, argued that the sector-wide programme has been firmly established in the existing programme, a major shift from a large number of

## Hamida hands over charges

**FROM PAGE 1**

body of the institution made the proposal.

The government on Monday ordered closure of the VNSC for three days till tomorrow to defuse tension arising out of its refusal to grant further extension of Hamida Ali's service. She was already on a five-year extension.

The governing body will now select the principal from senior staff of the VNSC through proper procedure. It will hold a meeting in this regard and publish advertisements in newspapers seeking candidates for the post of principal, said a member of the governing body.

Hamida Ali was principal of the institution for about 21 years. She was appointed to the post during the tenure of the then president Ziaur Rahman.

After handing over charge, Hamida Ali told newsmen that she complied with the decision of Chairman of the governing body Major (ret) Abdul Mannan MP.

"Major Mannan telephoned me last night and again this morning (Tuesday morning) asking me to relinquish charge... But I did not expect any threat from the government... It is really unfortunate," she said without giving details.

She said it is painful to leave an

institution after 'serving it for so many years. "But the treatment I got now was not expected," she told this correspondent.

Hamida Ali hoped that the prestigious institution will continue to stride forward, upholding its glorious tradition.

After taking charge, Rowena Hossain urged all her colleagues to continue their utmost efforts to keep up the image of the institution. She joined it in 1968.

Meanwhile, a group of students of the VNSC demonstrated on the road in front of it yesterday, protesting 'removal' of Hamida Ali.

A 10-member team of students met the education minister yesterday morning. Later, they said the minister did not pay heed to their demand. Police blocked all the entries to the VNSC with barbed wire fence.

Several contingents of women police were deployed in front of the Jatiya Press Club following rumors that students, teachers and guardians might hold a protest rally there.

The five-year extension of Hamida Ali's service expired on July 9. But the governing body of the institution on April 30 proposed extension of her service for two years more for her remarkable contribution to it.

The decision was communicated to chairman of Dhaka Education Board Prof Mohammad Zunayed on July 8 for approval. But the board chairman refused to approve the decision.

The education ministry said it took the decision regarding Hamida Ali as per Article 26 of the Dhaka Education Board Regulations, 1979, relating to service rules of teachers of private educational institutions.

A ministry statement said Hamida Ali was not removed with any motive, she was sent into retirement as per relevant rules.

The statement said that after reaching 60, Hamida had already enjoyed extension of service for three times, up to the age of 65.

Despite request by the Dhaka Education Board to handover charge to a senior teacher, Hamida was illegally claiming to be principal of the institution and was blaming the government in many ways, the statement said.

Besides, there was an evil design to mislead the guardians and students through baseless criticism of the government in newspapers, it added.

The VNSC College is an autonomous institution that started off as a preparatory school in 1952.

## CMCH crippled

**FROM PAGE 1**

Sources said immediately after the arrest, activists and supporters of the CMCH unit of the JCD went on the rampage, closing down the main gate of the hospital. They also ransacked some shops in front of the hospital.

Later in the morning, they used force to suspend all medical services and administrative activities of the hospital. They also closed down all wards, emergency services and the outdoor patients department and offices.

The unruly activists and supporters also refused entry to physicians at the hospital and shut down the blood bank and the medical store at 9:00am.

A terrible situation prevailed over the hospital causing immeasurable sufferings to the patients.

Sources said the closure of the medical store and the blood bank has put the lives of patients already in critical condition at stake. Patients in need of emergency supplies of blood and other essentials at the CMCH and other hospitals and clinics of the town and the suburbs suffered worst due to the closure.

Patients trying to go elsewhere could not leave the hospital as the main gate remained locked.

However, a tripartite meeting was held among the hospital authorities, members of the Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), and Chittagong BNP leaders and the agitating activists and supporters, in the morning. After the meeting, the emergency service

resumed and some three patients in critical conditions were treated at around 11:00am.

Hospital sources said if the situation prevails some serious patients at the hospital might die.

Meanwhile, the hospital authorities sent faxed the health minister, the secretary of the health ministry and the director general of the Department of Health and talked to them on the phone about the grave situation.

No solution to the deadlock has yet been reached.

Additional police forces were deployed on the hospital compound to avert further untoward incidents.

Director of the CMCH Brig. Gen. Shah A Alam said the situation created by means of holding the patients hostage is inhuman. Whatever be the situation, keeping the medical store and blood bank under lock and key is a deplorable act, the director added.

## 4 criminals held after gunfight with police in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four criminals were arrested after a gunfight with police behind the Brothers Sporting Club at Tikaruli in the city on Monday night, police said.

The arrested criminals are Mir Mosharrif Hossain Russell, 24, Shahriar alias Kiron, 24, Abu Ahad Chowdhury alias Ahd, 32, and Shahidul Islam. Police also recovered a pistol from their possession.

Two Sub-inspectors (SI) -- Aziz and SI Nazrul Islam -- were injured during the clash.

Acting on a secret information, a team of Motijheel police went to the spot to arrest the criminals. Sensing the presence of the police team, the criminals opened fire. Police returned fire, injuring Russell, one of the four criminals. He was shot in the legs.

He was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) under police custody.

A case was filed with Motijheel Police Station in this regard.

## Molested child's father on the run

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fear of reprisal by local gangsters has left Mohammad Daud Hossain, a resident of the city's east Jurain, on the run.

His 'faul' is that he filed a case with the Shyamspur Police Station against a local gangster, Sajib, 27, who allegedly kidnapped and molested his ten-year-old son on June 23.

In retaliation, Sajib and his accomplices threatened Daud with death. On June 26, Daud filed a general diary on the death threat.

Daud told The Daily Star that he was staying out, fearing attacks.

Although Sajib went into hiding following filing of the case, his father Abdul Hossain Khan is threatening Daud.

Daud complained that the police did not take any action against the accused.

## JS session

**FROM PAGE 12**

Parliament could go into sitting without a quorum. But the parliamentary rules of procedure provide that the presence of at least 60 members make a quorum.

In another ruling, Sircar also declared the AL's suggestion to form a committee to monitor the "government sponsored repressive acts" unconstitutional.

## 'Phoney' bills

**FROM PAGE 1**

146,793 to the UNDP. The average bill for the previous months for the same line was Tk 10,000.

The bill showed hundreds of calls made to Saudi Arabia through the line, which is connected to the UNDP chief's fax machine. The UNDP denied making any calls to Saudi Arabia and informed the telecom ministry of such a 'malpractice' by the BTB. The ministry, however, ignored the UNDP protest completely.

Meanwhile, the BTB issued an even bloated phone bill of Tk 180,437 for November 2001. The UNDP again protested, but to no avail.

Next month, the UN agency received a Tk 516,931-bill for December 2001 against the UNDP's phone, which was mostly out of order throughout the month. The bills were for calls made to Saudi Arabia where the UNDP has no business.

While the UNDP repeatedly demanded scrapping of the phoney bills, the BTB pressed it to pay Tk 844,161 for the last quarter of 2001.

The UNDP, however, remained defiant and the BTB eventually restored the phone line in January

## 2002. Since then the UNDP has paid

Tk 5,326 per month on an average bill for the telephone.

Meanwhile, the ISD line (No. 811-7811) for the general fax machine in its Dhaka office came under attack from the telecom pirates. The BTB issued bills of Tk 117,369 and Tk 47,381 respectively for April and May, which again included calls made to Saudi Arabia.

The UNDP resident representative could not be contacted as he is out of the country. Neither the secretary of telecom ministry nor the BTB chairman returned this correspondent's calls.

There is strong discontent among BTB officials over the issue. They blame prolonged posting of BTB linemen at one exchange for such malpractices.

Linemen and supervisors switchover connections either at the street-side cabinets or at the main distribution frame, a BTB official said, adding that this is what has happened in the UNDP's case.

The source claimed the authority knows the culprits behind the UNDP scam but take no action against them for their political connection.

## Israelis down

**FROM PAGE 12**

ing to belong to the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades told AFP in the northern West Bank town of Jenin that the armed offshoot of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah group claimed responsibility for the ambush, adding that the three militants behind the attack had escaped unharmd.

As rescue workers evacuated the injured, Israeli helicopters flew overhead.

"I broke a window open and I stepped inside, I saw a horrific scene," said Eitan Ben Zaka, one of the first medics to have arrived on the scene of the carnage from the nearby settlement of Qedumim.

There were children covered in blood. I was trying to extract an injured child from the wreckage when I realised he was dead," he explained.

Israeli radio said that among the wounded were a two-year old toddler, a pregnant woman and three teenagers.

The army spokesman said that before the attack a curfew was reimposed in nearby Qalqilya, as the army had "information a terrorist attack was on its way."

Israeli government spokesman Arye Mekel said "the Palestinians are back at their old murderous game of trying to kill as many Israelis and as many Jews as they possibly can."

"There has been all this talk about change and reforms and

elections and democratization. It's futile. It's a joke. We see that basically they have not changed," he told AFP.

The Emmanuel ambush is the first deadly attack on Israelis since a gunman killed five people, including a mother and three children, in the Itamar settlement in the West Bank on June 20.

The Itamar shooting came a day after the Israelis began reoccupying seven of the eight main cities in the West Bank in response to two suicide blasts in Jerusalem which killed 26 people.

A spokesman for Dan Buses said the bus which was attacked "was one of the most attack-proof we have for going into the territories to protect against terror attacks."

The ambush was a carbon copy of one on December 12 which left 10 Israelis dead at the same spot, 200 metres (yards) from the entrance of the settlement which lies between the Palestinian towns of Nablus and Qalqilya.

A militant from the radical Islamist group Hamas was responsible for that attack, which was the deadliest against a settlement since the Palestinian intifada against Israeli occupation erupted in September 2000.

Emmanuel, an ultra-Orthodox Jewish settlement of 2,700 inhabitants is located in a very hilly area, perfectly suited for such attacks.

## Indefinite strike at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College

UNB, Barisal

Students of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital began an indefinite strike yesterday demanding restoration of their examination centre at the college.

JCD and Chhatra Shibir called the strike and kept all the classrooms under lock and key.

The student organisations on Monday boycotted classes to press home the demand.

Dhaka University (DU) authorities cancelled the examination centre following forcible entry of a JCD leader into the examination hall and misbehaviour with invigilators from Dhaka University.

## 20 hurt, 14 houses ransacked as AL, BNP clash in Magura

UNB, Magura

At least 20 people were injured and 14 houses ransacked when the supporters of BNP and Awami League clashed at Nandolapur village in Sadar upazila yesterday.

Police said the supporters of local AL leader Shariful Islam and BNP leader Noor Islam clashed in the morning over establishing supremacy in the area.

On information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control. They arrested two people -- Razzak and Golam Nabi -- from the spot.

Both the groups filed separate cases in this connection.

## JCD activist

**FROM PAGE 12**

Hearing the news, a group of youths armed with lethal weapons rushed to the Sonadighi crossing and attacked the three.

They beat up Noman and stabbed him while the two others -- Marit and Rashed managed to flee.

Noman was taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) where he died early yesterday morning.

Siraj Uddin, father-in-law of Noman, lodged a case with Boalia police station in this connection.

## Hasina

**FROM PAGE 12**

would visit Washington DC and also have a look at the final draft of a book on memoirs of Bangabandhu while he was in jail.

## Tk 664 cr to corrupt pockets

**FROM PAGE 1**

crore, Bangladesh University Grants Commission Tk 15.71 crore, Directorate of Archaeology Tk 3.98 crore, and Purchase and Collection Management Department of the Jatiya Sangsad Tk 2.14 crore.

For the first time, the CAG's office conducted performance audit on four government organisations, namely the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH), Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA), Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) and National Curriculum and Text Book Board (NCTBB).

The audit reports contain as many as 771 audit objections to the tune of Tk 663.75 crore. The audit reports mainly pointed at embezzlement, wastage, non-deduction of VAT and income tax, and non-compliance of financial rules and regulations.

Presenting the reports, the CAG stressed on strengthening internal control measures in different ministries, divisions and executive agencies to prevent irregularities in administration.

The acting president emphasised sustaining the reform measures and

quality audit to ensure accountability and transparency.

He also underscored the need for sound financial management practices and appreciated the role of auditing to ensure transparency and accountability for good governance.

The CAG also emphasised formation of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in the parliament at the earliest. He apprised the president about the ongoing reform agenda initiated by the audit department to improve the quality of auditing and ensure timely submission of audit reports for proper use of public resources.

He further noted that in the last six years as much as Tk 3,515 crore were recovered following audit objections. During this period, only Tk 171 crore were spent for the audit department.

Deputy Auditor General Abduh Mahmud Khan and Assistant Auditor General Abul Kalam Azad were also present during the presentation of reports at Bangabhaban yesterday morning.

With the presentation of 20 annual audit reports, the CAG's office has completed audit to all ministries up to the year 2000. In

contrast, the previous auditor general presented 14 annual audit reports for the year 2001.

The remaining ministries are presently being audited. Many other ministries also requested the CAG office to conduct special audit to some of the organisations under their jurisdiction to find out financial irregularities, source said.

The president also expressed the hope that the audit department would be able to work more neutrally once the accounts department was separated. He was informed that a separate performance audit directorate has been set up to strengthen the performance audit.

Earlier, the audit reports were presented to the Prime Minister Khaleda Zia who assured the CAG of formation of public accounts committee very soon and of looking into the objections the audit reports made.

According to sources at the CAG's office, hundreds of audit reports are awaiting discussion at the public accounts committee. The amount of unresolved audit objections may amount to around Tk 15,000 crore since independence.

## New health plan

**FROM PAGE 12**

programme has yielded hardly any result and questioned why the government decided to introduce a new programme without the full implementation of the existing one.

"This will be a blunder. Of the 13,000 community clinics, we have built 8,500 and the BNP government has stopped further construction of clinics. It means the essential services will not reach the poor and disadvantaged groups in many areas. Without thinking seriously about important things how can the government decide to launch another programme?" said an anonymous source.

Dr Zafarullah Choudhury, coordinator of Ganashasthya Nagar Hospital, said, "Any attempt to launch a new programme without making any structural change will be futile. If we talk about malnutrition reduction, we are talking about two per cent of the population. Addressing the problem is no easy task and the government has to be sincere."

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The World Bank officials here, however, argued that the sector-wide programme has been firmly established in the existing programme, a major shift from a large number of