

## Tk 39cr embezzled from wage earners' welfare fund

UNB, Dhaka

An official audit into the Wage Earners' Welfare Fund, now under the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Ministry, unearthed financial anomalies involving Tk 38.78 crore in three years between fiscal year 1998 and 2001.

The audit found 19 "serious irregularities" in the Fund expenditures that caused huge loss to the government exchequer, frustrating

the objective of using the Fund.

Even there is no organisational structure to manage the Fund, said the audit report that was placed in parliament recently.

The Wage Earners' Welfare Fund, set up in 1990 under the Labour and Manpower Ministry, is now under the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Ministry.

The Comptroller and Auditor General, in the audit report, sug-

gested enacting necessary laws to regulate expenditure in order to ensure proper use of the Fund and avoid its misuse.

The audit found anomalies involving Tk 94.50 lakh which should have been incorporated into the Fund but was never realised from Mashhurul Huq Memorial High School and College, supervised by Bangladesh Mission in Qatar. The amount was given to the

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## BFUJ protests actions against press freedom

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) noted yesterday that the government is interfering with freedom of press and media in the recent times.

The BFUJ comments came at its executive committee meeting yesterday at the Jatiya Press Club.

Observing that cases against journalists are lodged to harass them, BFUJ leaders reiterated their demand to amend sections 501 and 502 of Penal Code to end such harassment.

Condemning the recent government-sponsored repression on newspapers and, BFUJ leaders protested harassment cases filed against editors and reporters of

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## JICA to sign deal on solid waste management

ABDUL KADER

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is going to conduct a study soon on solid waste management of Dhaka city to finalise a master plan for an appropriate waste management system.

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), in this regard will sign a contract today with JICA, sources said.

The JICA will conduct the study in 14 months observing the current solid waste management system and finalise a master plan follow-

ing that study with the DCC.

To make the city clean and neat by removing garbage in a planned way instead of the current haphazard management, the Bangladesh government sought the assistance of Japan, sources said.

In response to that, a seven-member preparatory team from Japan is now in Bangladesh to review the present condition of waste management and to discuss the scope of work with the concerned officials of DCC, sources said.

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## New outlaw groups swing into action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The Jihadi Party and the Hizbut Touhid, two underground organisations, have started criminal activities in the southwestern zone.

Police recently arrested 14 activists of the two parties including a minor boy from Jhenidah--the stronghold of the parties. They have been kept in isolation in Jhenidah district jail.

Police could not make any headway in the investigation till yesterday into the ultimate goals of these two underground organisations which are fundamentalist by nature.

The owners of five motorcycles and two mobile phone sets seized from Hizbut Tauhid and Jihadi Party activists are yet to be identified.

Jhenidah police officials do not rule out the possibility of these two underground Islamist parties having links with the underworld. The Jihadi Party leaflets sermonise on economic salvation of the distressed people through armed

struggle. Activists of the Hizbut Tauhid, on the other hand, are hardliners hostile to the Jamaat-e-Islami, as the leaflets seized by police transpire.

"We have information that the Hizbut Tauhid is involved in smuggling of arms and explosives into the country and is trying to incite religious fanaticism among the people," said Sub-inspector Shamsul Huq and Sub-inspector Mizanur Rahman of the Hariakundu Police Station of Jhenidah district. They suspect that activists of these two Islamist underground organisations are in possession of arms, ammunition and explosives. The Jihadi Party has identified police as enemies of Islam in its leaflets.

According to DB (Detective Branch) officials, the Jihadi Party and the Hizbut Tauhid are gradually spreading their networks in the southwestern region.

The 14 arrestees now in J h e n i d a h

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## Agencies probe origin of arms in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

In the wake of recent arms recovery in Bandarban, intelligence agencies are investigating whether criminals are using the hill district as their new route for smuggling illegal arms.

Recovery of sophisticated arms within a short span of time has sent an alarm to the local people, police and other law enforcing agencies.

Intelligence agencies have been directed to keep vigil.

Acting on information from special army intelligence and other intelligence agencies stationed in Bandarban, one M-16 rifle, one AK-47 rifle, 124 rounds of bullet and a foreign-made wireless set were recovered during the first week of this month.

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## Bodies of man, infant found in Pallabi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two dead bodies, including that of a three-month-old baby, were recovered from Pallabi yesterday.

Locals found the baby in a polythene bag behind the community centre in front of Pallabi Police Station.

Police believe it might have been an illegitimate one.

Meanwhile, the body of a man was recovered from a ditch in Duaripara village yesterday morning.

The victim, identified as

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## 900 tonnes rice, Tk 1cr given to flood victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The disaster management and relief ministry so far allocated about 900 tonnes of rice and Tk 1 crore for the flood affected people in 23 districts.

The districts are Jamalpur, Pabna, Tangail, Manikganj, Munshiganj, Narsingdi, Narayanganj, Kishoreganj, Rajbari, Madaripur, Natore, Naogaon,

Nilphamari, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Dinajpur, Thakurgaon, Panchagarh, Bogra, Laxmipur, Chandpur, Dhaka and Chittagong.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Disaster Management and Relief Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf said the ministry has adequate fund and relief materials.

"We have already given block

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## Sunken launch not yet salvaged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rescuers could not yet lift the triple-deck launch that went down in the Meghna with about 750 passengers aboard on the night of July 8 in the latest in a series of such disasters.

The MV Nasrin-1 traced 120 feet deep in water and 150 feet off the riverbank Monday could not be salvaged until last night because of rough weather and turbulent currents.

The hopes of retrieving more bodies are all but extinguished, said

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## Drama Control Act maybe reintroduced

UNB, Dhaka

The government plans to reintroduce the Drama Control Act to stop obscenity in films and plays, parliament was told yesterday.

To preserve the national culture, task forces have been formed in all districts to monitor the film screenings, Information Minister Tariqul Islam said, replying to a supplementary from Delwar Hossain Sayeedi of Jamaat.

He, however, added it will be

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
July 16		6-49 pm
July 17	5-21 am	

Prayer Timings		
July 16		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-55	7-00
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation