

# US House okays Indo-US nuke deal

India welcomes approval

REUTERS, Washington

The US House of Representatives gave overwhelming initial approval on Wednesday to a landmark civilian nuclear cooperation accord with India, an important but far from final step in making the agreement a reality.

The approval vote was 359-68 after lawmakers rejected amendments that aimed to put limits on India's nuclear weapons programme and were proposed by critics concerned the deal would harm nonproliferation goals.

Lawmakers also rejected an effort to defer action until India did more to back US efforts to contain Iran.

The deal would allow nuclear-armed India to buy American nuclear reactors and fuel for the first time in more than 30 years, despite the fact it has still not signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

It also requires the rising South

Asian power to open civilian nuclear facilities to international inspections, forgo future nuclear tests and cooperate with the United States and other nations on halting the spread of nuclear exports.

"History will regard what we do today as a tidal shift in relations between India and the United States. This will be known as the day when Congress signalled definitively the end of the Cold War paradigm governing interactions between New Delhi and Washington," said Rep. Tom Lantos of California, senior Democrat on the House International Relations Committee.

The Senate must also approve the bill but a vote is not expected until September. The House and Senate would vote again after US-India negotiations on the technical details of the agreement are completed.

India must also complete negoti-

ations with the International Atomic Energy Agency on a system of inspections for its civilian nuclear facilities and the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group must change its regulations to allow nuclear transfers to India.

India welcomed on Thursday the US House of Representatives' initial approval of a landmark civilian nuclear cooperation deal but said the accord had a long way to go before it was fully sealed.

Democratic Rep. Edward Markey of Massachusetts, head of a bipartisan nonproliferation task force, lambasted the deal as pouring "nuclear fuel on the fire of an India-Pakistan nuclear arms race" because it would allow New Delhi to expand its nuclear weapons production to upward of 50 bombs a year from seven.

During several hours of debate, the House, led by President George

## JUDICIARY SEPARATION Comparative chart of govt anomalies placed to SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Intervener of the judiciary separation case yesterday submitted before the Supreme Court (SC) a comparative chart depicting the anomalies the government created in implementing the 12-point SC directives.

The full bench of the SC headed by Chief Justice Syed JR Mudassar Hosain fixed August 27 for the next hearing on the matter after examining the chart.

After the attorney general submitted two rules -- which the government published on June 12 through a gazette as part of judiciary separation -- before the court on June 24, Barrister Amir-UI Islam, intervener of the case, said the government had not maintained 12-point SC directives.

The court then asked Barrister Amir-UI to submit a comparative chart of anomalies on July 27.

Pointing out the discrepancies, Dr Kamal Hossain said the government framed the rules to maintain



The UN observation post destroyed in southern Lebanon by an Israeli aircraft's precision bomb on Wednesday that left four unarmed UN observers dead.

## CPA to protest ranking of Ctg port as most dangerous

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) will send a letter to Kuala Lumpur based International Maritime Bureau (IMB) protesting against the labelling of Chittagong port as most dangerous port in the world in its latest piracy report.

"I am preparing a letter to protest the latest piracy report of IMB where Chittagong was mentioned as most dangerous port in the world," CPA Chairman ASM Shahadat Hossain told The Daily Star last night.

He said the IMB report was wrong as there were no incidents of piracy in Chittagong port this year. The IMB report, however,

## Poor road work causes bumpy rides in city

PINAKI ROY

Most of the roads in the capital including the VIP ones have become patchworks of potholes due to low quality of the materials used to build them and unplanned digging into the roads.

Almost perpetual deteriorated condition of these roads is forcing the commuters to have bumpy rides on the city streets.

Although the city authorities spent nearly Tk 200 crore to renovate the city roads last year, conditions of most of the roads have become severely bad. The city authorities are again preparing to spend another Tk 184 crore in the name of renovation of these roads.

"The condition of the roads

became bad due to digging into those. We have been conducting a survey of roads in the city and will start work soon as the budget has just passed," said Idris Miah, chief engineer of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC).

It has been found during a recent visit to Dhanmondi, Gulshan, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Mirpur Road, Tongi Road, Gulistan, Mirpur and the old part of the city that most of the roads of these areas are full of potholes. Roads in posh and diplomatic areas also have the same fate.

"VIP roads are renovated by Dhaka Urban Transport Authority (Duta), those are supposed to be in better conditions," said Idris Miah.

"On some roads a car ride is

always bumpy because of the bad condition of the roads," Mayeen Ahmed, a city dweller from Lalmitia told The Daily Star.

Potholes and uncovered manholes also increase the chance of accidents, he added.

Lanes and by-lanes of most of the residential areas have become unfit to operate a vehicle on, this correspondent found.

The DCC engineering section blamed digging into the roads by different utility providers including DESA, WASA, TITAS and T&T for the deterioration.

When the utility providers dig into a road, the city corporation repairs it again, but it never becomes as it was before.



Residents of Dhanmondi and users of Road-27 continue to suffer as the authorities concerned after digging into the road just filled it up with dirt without paving it.

## Another 55 dengue patients hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Another 55 patients diagnosed with dengue fever have been admitted to different hospitals and clinics in the capital yesterday as the dengue fever monitoring by Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) marks a month today.

Although the dengue virus spreads during the months of May through August every year, the DCC began its dengue fever monitoring programme from June 28 that includes identification of dengue virus-affected people, areas they live in and trends of fever, a DCC health official said.

"We are monitoring around 150 government and non-government hospitals and clinics in the city to locate the most dengue-prone areas," he said.

During the one month of

## Opposition to go for greater agitation after road march

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jalil has said the combined opposition will announce a greater agitation programme on July 30.

"The programme is intended to intensify the current anti-government agitation to force the alliance government to sit with the opposition for dialogue and meet the demand for electoral reforms," he said at a meeting at Gono Forum office yesterday.

Dhaka city unit of the AL-led 14-party opposition combine organised the meeting with Gono Forum leader Mostafa Mohsin Montu in the chair.

Referring to the proposed

## Dhaka's debut in ARF meet today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The 13th Asean Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial Meeting will be held in Kuala Lumpur today where Bangladesh will be officially admitted as ARF's 26th member.

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan, who has already reached Kuala Lumpur, will lead the Bangladesh delegation to the ARF meeting.

He is scheduled to make a statement on Bangladesh's entry into the Forum at the inaugural session today, foreign ministry officials said yesterday.

Replying to a query from the Malaysian media on arrival in Kuala Lumpur, Morshed highlighted the significance of the ARF process and the importance Bangladesh

attached to it. He also stated that Bangladesh would like to share her experience and contribute to the ARF.

According to a message received here from Malaysia, the foreign minister spent a busy day yesterday exchanging views on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues with his counterparts from Australia, Thailand, Malaysia and the Republic of Korea.

Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer praised Bangladesh's role in the UN peace-keeping missions and her efforts in the sphere of socio-economic development.

In this context, Morshed mentioned Bangladesh's sustained

## al-Qaeda vows to avenge Israel attacks

AFP, Dubai

al-Qaeda second in command Ayman al-Zawahiri vowed yesterday that the network would carry out attacks against Israel and its US backers to avenge the Israeli offensives against Lebanon and the Gaza Strip.

In a videotape aired by Arabic television channel Al-Jazeera, Osama bin Laden's right-hand man also called for an alliance of Sunni and Shia Muslim fighters transcending sectarian animosities and

## 8 to die for killing UP chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Eight received death penalty while four others were acquitted in the sensational murder case of union parishad (UP) chairman Sheikh Mostafa Habib.

District and Sessions Judge of Khulna AKM Ishtiaque Hossain delivered the verdict yesterday in presence of the accused.

The recipients of death penalty are Sheikh Akram Hossain, Kamrul Islam, Md Jamil Hossain, Noor-e-Alam, Minhaj Sarder, Arjan Ali, Shahid Golder and Motiar Rahman alias Moti Mian.

The acquitted are Ahsan, Rafique Mallik, Sobhan Mallik and

## 12-point agenda set for Indo-Bangla water transit meet

JASIM UDDIN KHAN

Dhaka has formulated a 12-point draft agenda for the ninth standing committee meeting of Bangladesh-India Inland Water Transit Protocol to be held in New Delhi next month.

Bangladesh will request India to provide cooperation in maintaining its inland waterways as most of the Bangladeshi rivers facing navigability crisis run through India before entering Bangladesh.

"If water is withdrawn from common rivers, it will render the rivers empty of vessels on both sides of the border and it will also hamper the friendly spirit of the protocol," a high official of the Ministry of Shipping told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said the length of the country's inland waterways has come down to a mere 3,800km from 24,000km in 1971.

A high level inter-ministerial meeting at the shipping ministry recently decided to send a proposal to India for arranging the ninth standing committee meeting in the

third or fourth week of next month.

The meeting also approved the 12-point draft agenda for discussion in the New Delhi meeting.

According to the draft agenda Bangladesh will request India to increase transportation of cargoes from Bangladesh to India, develop waterways in between Rajshahi-Godagari and Dhulian in India, introduce a joint transport service between Anglithara and Namkhana points and settling the due service charges for a number of Indian vessels.

Sources said no vessels have been plying from Bangladesh to India during last couple of years, as Indian importers found the waterways unprofitable to use.

Meanwhile, India has been asking Bangladesh to make the Rajshahi-Godagari and Dhulian waterway operational by dredging but Bangladesh could not reopen the route due to lack of funds.

Dhaka will seek Tk 32,79,638 in arrears service charges owed by

## Saddam's first trial ends, verdict on October 16

AFP, Baghdad

Deposed Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein will hear October 16 whether he has been found guilty of crimes against humanity and is to be executed, his judge said yesterday on the last day of his trial.

Judge Rauf Abdel Rahman brought a day of turbulent proceedings to a close after court appointed lawyers completed the defense case, saying: "The trial will adjourn until October 16 to check over the files of this case."

Saddam and seven co-defendants -- two of whom also face the death penalty -- are accused of ordering the killings of 148 villagers in the northern village

of Dujail after assassins tried to kill the then Iraqi leader in 1982.

The trial has been marred by the refusal of the accused's own lawyers to appear in court, but Rahman insisted on pressing forward with the case using court appointed counsel, triggering angry exchanges during hearings.

On Thursday, the last defendant to make his case, Awad Ahmed al-Bandar, had to be physically pushed back into his chair by court bailiffs after the glowering former judge denounced his counsel and tried to defend himself.

Rahman told him to "shut up" and a furious al-Bandar later exclaimed: "If you were to execute