

**BOAT SPARE PARTS  
Navy cancels  
controversial  
work orders**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Navy yesterday cancelled procurement of Tk 1.5 crore spare parts for its six high-speed boats for an exorbitant price of Tk 6.19 crore, sources said.

The Navy yesterday issued the cancellation of orders to two suppliers stating that the spares would not be necessary at this time.

The cancellation of orders came after a report in The Daily Star highlighting inconsistencies and irregularities in the purchase, which included violation of rules and bypassing of the director general of defence purchase (DGDP).

The sources added that the navy would investigate into how this procurement took place violating different rules and regulations.

On November 5, based on a restricted tender, the Naval Store Sub-Depot (NSSD) issued three separate work orders for spares for

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**Tarique sued for  
hate campaign  
against Hasina**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

District Awami League (AL) Vice-President Advocate Shahabuddin yesterday filed a defamation suit against BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, accusing him of conducting "malicious campaign" against AL President Sheikh Hasina.

After hearing the petitioner, Fast Class Magistrate Manirul Islam ordered judicial inquiry in the case.

In the complaint, Advocate Shahabuddin mentioned that Tarique Rahman during a press briefing at his Banani office on November 4 said, "Is Sheikh Hasina my gambling partner?"

The petitioner said Tarique Rahman has undermined the image of Sheikh Hasina through his indecent remark.

Addressing a press conference at Cox's Bazar district Awami League (AL) office yesterday, Shahabuddin and his lawyer Faridul Alam said the BNP senior joint secretary general had been making "defamatory statements" against Awami League President Sheikh Hasina for a long time.

**Proceedings of  
2 graft cases  
against Ershad  
adjourned again**

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday again adjourned the proceedings of two graft cases against former president HM Ershad until January 29, 2007 following time petitions of the defence lawyers.

Judge Malik Abdullah Al Amin of the Special Court for Dhaka Division set the fresh date after Advocate Sheikh Serajul Islam submitted two separate petitions stating that his client Ershad could not appear before the court due to political unrest.

Earlier, Ershad did not appear before the court on September 27

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**Govt body at core of  
human trafficking**

Finds probe

PORIMOL PALMA

An unholy nexus of brokers, a section of government officials and immigration police are involved in illegal migration of thousands of workers, mainly female workers to Middle East countries.

The case of Lebanon is enough to prove their existence, as there are more than 15,000 Bangladeshi workers in Lebanon, whereas according to official statistics Bangladesh only sent around 4,000 workers to the country since 1992.

Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), the regulatory wing of the expatriates' welfare ministry, is a major player of the nexus and a number of its officials earn huge amount of

money as bribes from both regular and illegal workers wishing to work overseas.

Their alliance, however, remains out of reach, as they satisfy the highest authorities of the government, including the secretaries and ministers with financial incentives, sources said.

The investigation following the recent incident of rounding up 31 women, who were about to fly to Lebanon with fake documents on November 17, revealed sensational information about the network of brokers, officials and immigration police.

Even though four BMET officials at Zia International Airport (ZIA) on November 17 said they could not check the documents of the 31

women, as their computer was "out of order," they later admitted to the police about the issuing of illegal immigration clearance by the BMET.

Sources said any aspirant migrant worker seeking immigration clearance from BMET must pay Tk 300 labelled as "board fee" at the very beginning. Totalling more than Tk 5 crore a year, the so-called board fee is distributed among the people involved in the illegal act - top to bottom as per a pre-determined ratio according to their rank.

"The amount of bribe depends on the anomalies detected while the documents are scrutinised. It ranges from Tk 500 to Tk 10,000," a

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**4-party declares  
3-day agitation  
for polls schedule**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of BNP-led four-party alliance said they hope to form the next government as the people are supporting them.

The confident optimism was expressed at an alliance rally yesterday in front of the BNP headquarters at Naya Paltan in the capital.

Sadeque Hossain Khoka, mayor of Dhaka city BNP, announced a three-day long agitation programme at the rally.

On the first day of the programme today the alliance will hold rallies in every thana in the capital, tomorrow it will hold a rally at Muktangan, and on Thursday it will submit a memorandum to the chief election commissioner (CEC) pressing him to announce the election schedule.

The leaders of the alliance said in their speeches that they depend

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**Outlaw killed  
in 'shootout'**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kustlia

An activist of outlawed Biplobi Communist Party (BCP) was killed in a 'shootout' between his accomplices and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) at Pairakhali upazila under Harinakundu upazila in Jhenidah early hours yesterday.

The dead was identified as Sukur Ali alias Kota, 36, from the same village.

According to a Rab 6 press release, a Rab team acted on a tip-off and cordoned off Sukur Ali's residence at Pairakhali village at around 3:00am where members of BCP were holding a secret meeting.

The outlaws ignored Rab's call to surrender and opened fire on Rab, triggering a half-hour long gunfight with Rab, the press release said.

Sukur was found dead inside the house after the gunfight was over while his accomplices managed to flee the scene, claimed Rab.

Rab recovered a pistol and six bullets from the spot. Jhenidah police said Sukur was accused in several cases including five for murder filed with Harinakundu and Jhenidah sadar police stations.

**Eight district  
officials  
transferred**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The caretaker government yesterday transferred eight field level officials as part of its ongoing administrative reshuffle ahead of the general election.

According to a notification issued by the establishment ministry, Ranjit Chakra Sarker, additional deputy commissioner (ADC) of Meherpur was transferred to Sylhet. Direndra Nath Sarker of the establishment ministry will replace him.

Moloy Kumar Roy was made ADC of Nilphamari from Rural Development Academy, Bogra.

Five Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNOs) Md Helal Uddin, Mohammad Zakir Hossain, Peyar Mohammad, Mohammad Jahangir Kabir and Meer Zahurul Islam were made ADC of Chuadanga, Thakurgaon, Netrokona, Moulvibazar and Kurigram respectively.



PHOTO: STAR

Activists of Liberal Democratic Party hit an effigy of Chief Election Commissioner MA Aziz with shoes at a rally at Moghbazar in the capital yesterday.

**2 Iraq ministers escape  
assassination attempts**

2 GIs, 18 Iraqis killed in attacks, 14 bodies recovered

AFP, AP, Baghdad

Two Iraqi Shia ministers escaped assassination bids yesterday as insurgents targeted the country's beleaguered government, still battling to curb the raging bloodshed.

The attacks came as Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Mualllem was holding talks with top officials, including Prime Minister Nuri al-

Maliki, on the second day of his landmark visit.

A Shia deputy health minister, Hakim al-Zamil, said he escaped an assassination bid in which gunmen killed his two bodyguards.

Fellow deputy health minister Ammar al-Assafar was kidnapped Sunday by gunmen dressed in security uniforms from his home in Baghdad's Sunni district of Adhamiyah.

"We as health ministry officials have become a target," Zamil told AFP, saying his convoy was ambushed in central Baghdad's Al-Fadhil neighbourhood on the way home from his ministry.

Cabinet minister without portfolio, Mohammed Abbas al-Oraibi, was the second top Shia government official to survive an assassination bid on Monday.

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**5 brutally killed  
at B'baria house**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Five people including four of a family were brutally murdered by criminals in a house at Charchertala village under Ashuganj upazila yesterday.

The incident occurred when the head of the household Haji Rafiqul Islam, a well-known trader of the area, and his wife were away from home in Madras, India on a medical treatment trip.

The dead were identified as Haji Rafiqul Islam's mother Zebunnesa,

95, his pregnant daughter Farzana Islam Sumi, 28, his granddaughter Reedi, 4, his son Marzan, 18, and caretaker of the house Nurul Haque, 45.

According to villagers and police sources, the assailants entered Rafiqul's residence sometime after Sunday night and killed every one in the house by hitting them in their heads.

The neighbours informed the Ashuganj police after noticing a

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**Terror plot to  
bomb German  
plane unveiled**

AFP, Karlsruhe

Investigators have uncovered a plot to bomb a passenger plane in Germany this year using explosives smuggled on board hidden in luggage, the federal prosecutor's office said yesterday.

"During the summer, several suspects made contact with an individual who had access to the security-restricted zone of an airport," a statement said.

The individual agreed to help smuggle explosives concealed in a

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PHOTO: STAR

Firewood is being used in a brick kiln at Baipail in Gazipur district in violation of the government ban on the use of wood in baking bricks.



PHOTO: STAR

Arriving passengers at Zia International Airport face difficulty leaving the terminal as transports became scarce due to the 14-party blockade yesterday.

**DEADLY CRACKDOWN  
Nepal king must  
be punished**

Recommends probe panel

REUTERS, Kathmandu

An official investigation blamed Nepal's isolated King Gyanendra on Monday for the shooting and killing of pro-democracy protesters earlier this year and said he should be punished.

The panel's findings, unprecedented in the history of Nepal where the king has traditionally been revered as a god, also blamed 201 other politicians, royalist ministers, civil servants, army and police officers for human rights violations, abuse of authority and corruption in the bloody crackdown.

The government says at least 22 people were killed and more than 5,000 wounded when security forces confronted protesters who

eventually forced the monarch to relinquish absolute power and restore democracy.

The panel said in a statement the number of wounded exceeded 9,000.

"The government and parliament must make the required laws and punish all members of the then council of ministers including the king," said Harihar Birahi, a member of the panel headed by retired Supreme Court judge Krishna Jung Rayamajhi.

There was no immediate comment from the palace.

Under the existing constitution, the monarch of the impoverished Himalayan nation enjoys special

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