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## Musclemen grab papers for Tk 91cr DCC work

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Musclemen of the ruling party-backed ward commissioners of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) have allegedly grabbed the papers for a DCC tender involving Tk 91 crore and 49 lakh.

The tender floated on October 12 for 878 development works in the 90 wards of the DCC involved the highest amount in a bid since Sadeque Hossain Khoka took over as mayor in May this year.

In view of widespread allegations of irregularities and manipulations in the tender process by the ward commissioners, DCC chief engineer Quamruzzaman Mahmud favours cancellation of the tender.

When contacted yesterday, he said newspaper reports on the tender manipulation were 'shameful' for the DCC. "I want fresh tender for ensuring fairness of the process and restoring image of the DCC".

He added that he has already recommended to the mayor, through the chief executive officer (CEO), a fresh tender, cancelling the present one.

The chief engineer felt that participation in the bid should be open to all contractors and not the DCC-enlisted contractors only.

The DCC floated the tender for repair of roads in all the DCC wards and the last date for collecting and submitting the tender documents was October 28.

Sources in the DCC said that only about 5,000 'prospective bidders' dropped tender papers till the last date.

Some of them said all those 'bidders' are men of this or that ward commissioner. If the tender process was free and fair, the number of participants would have been more than 50 thousand, they thought.

There are reports that four ruling party-backed ward commissioners and a city BNP leader, dubbed 'five star', is now controlling the floating of all DCC tenders and a bidder has to pay them 15 per cent of the total amount involved in a tender to win a bid.

There are also allegations against this 'five star' group that they collected 'commission' even in case of a Tk nine crore development project under the Dhaka Environmental Improvement Project of the DCC.

This correspondent contacted a number of ward commissioners to know their views about the tender manipulations. Commissioner of ward No. 1 in Uttara area Hafizul Islam Kusum said that 1,270 tender papers were dropped for only 19 development works in his ward. And this was possible as none interfered in the tender process.

On the other hand, only 243 tender documents were dropped for only 70 development works in eight wards in zone -6 of the DCC, sources mentioned.

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## Madaripur court rejects Selim's bail petition

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Madaripur

The First Class Magistrate's Court, Madaripur, yesterday rejected the bail petition of former minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim MP, an accused in a case filed with Madaripur Sadar thana in connection with an attack on the motorcade of the then opposition leader Khaleda Zia on June 17 last year.

Magistrate Abdul Hakim passed the order following a petition, submitted by the defence lawyers on behalf of the accused.

Selim, Chairman of Awami Jubo League, was arrested on October 21 from his Banani residence in the city under Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPo).

Later, he was shown arrested, in SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

## Three more die: 158 held, 26 firearms recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader died allegedly during army interrogation at Panchagarh and a listed criminal succumbed to his injuries at Madaripur yesterday.

Also, a college student whom army arrested on October 22 in Choumohoni, Noakhali died at the Chest Diseases Hospital in the city Tuesday evening.

Sources said that Jennifer Sayed King, 25, and his friend Liton, 25 -- JCD men -- were picked up in front of New Hotel in the town at about 7:00 Tuesday night. They were handed over to the Panchagarh Police Station and later sent to the Panchagarh Sadar Hospital.

King died at the hospital 6:00am yesterday while the condition of Liton was stated to be critical.

Local army sources said King and Liton were caught extorting money. Shortly afterwards, they were handed over to police. They did not torture King neither did he die in their custody, said a senior army officer in the local camp.

Panchagarh police said the two JCD activists were turned over to them at about 10:00 Tuesday night. After preliminary treatment at the Sadar Hospital they were produced before the court and then sent to the jail custody at about 11:00am Wednesday. As their condition worsened the jail authorities sent them to the Sadar Hospital at about 5:00pm the same day where King died in an hour.

But family members of the victims said King and Liton went to collect money from a local trader who had purchased a mango tree from their (King's) home. But as the trader offered much less than the deal, they had an altercation.

King left the place saying he would come again at 7:00pm to receive the full payment. In the meantime, the trader informed the army camp that the two were trying to extort money from him.

When King and Liton again went to collect the money, army caught them and beat them up mercilessly, leading to King's death, the family members alleged.

Army sources in Dhaka said King was caught extorting during a joint drive SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## Judgement in Shipu murder case today

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Judgement in the Shipu murder case will be given today.

Mohammad Sirajul Islam, Judge of the First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, will pronounce the judgement at 1 pm, court sources said.

The prosecution and the defence sides completed hearing arguments in the case on October 23. The court recorded statements of 23 out of 30 prosecution witnesses.

Iftekhar Ahmed Shipu, 38, a mobile phone trader at UAE Market in the city's Banani area, was shot dead on the night of May 24, 2000.

Victim's brother Istiaque Ahmed, filed a murder case with Gulshan thana accusing three people including Jewel, son of former Awami League lawmaker Kamal Ahmed SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## Govt denies plans to form nat'l security council

UNB, Dhaka

The government yesterday brushed aside speculations that it is considering the formation of "national security council" as a mechanism for ensuring a secure polity.

"It is totally baseless and fabricated. The government has no plans to form anything like national security council," said Khandaker Monirul Alom, principal information officer (PIO) of the government.

He also categorically said no separate police force would be introduced. But a special team of police will be formed with honest, efficient, skilled and educated police officers who will face the SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



## Next hearing Nov 10

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Second Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka, yesterday adjourned the hearing of the Shazneen case till November 10.

Judge Kazi Rahamat Ullah adjourned the hearing following a time petition by the defence lawyers.

In the petition, the lawyers stated that Mosharraf Hossain Kajol, chief defence counsel for three of the six accused -- Hasan, Minu and Parvin -- could not appear in the court due to illness. So, they prayed for SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## No pressure on Bangladesh to export gas: ADB chief

### Lead role in primary edn programme promised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Visiting Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Tadao Chino yesterday said Bangladesh will have to ensure 'appropriate and commercial use' of gas.

"But Bangladesh itself has to decide what is the best appropriate commercial use," Chino told reporters after talks with Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman at the latter's secretariat office. The ADB president arrived here yesterday on a five-day visit.

Later, at a seminar organised by the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), Chino categorically denied mounting pressure on the government to export gas.

"We are not exerting any pressure on Bangladesh to export gas," he said at the seminar held at the Sonargaon Hotel.

Earlier, Chino said the ADB would continue assisting Bangladesh in its fight for poverty eradication, but warned that called for good governance at all levels.

During his visit, the ADB chief will also meet key policymakers and discuss economic issues.

During a one-hour meeting with Saifur yesterday, the ADB president expressed satisfaction over the overall macroeconomic management and appreciated the reforms initiated by the government.

Briefing journalists, Saifur said the ADB president has stressed good governance at all levels. "The president said we have to ensure good governance at all levels including the central bank, financial institutions, National Board of Revenue and the port."

The finance minister also told reporters that the good governance is needed to mobilise resources, otherwise, achieving higher economic growth would end up in failure.

Saifur also said he had proposed formation of an Asian Forum to protect the interest of the Asian countries in the globalised economy. "The ADB president has agreed to take a leading role in formation of the forum," the minister said.

The ADB yesterday announced its lead role in assisting the government in preparing the next phase of primary education development programme.

The assurance came from the

visiting ADB president in a meeting with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office in the afternoon.

He deeply appreciated Khaleda Zia's personal initiative for improving the standard and expansion of education, according to UNB. The donor agency chief lauded the effort of the prime minister for promotion of girls' education and billed the stipend programme as "very remarkable".

ADB Director General for South Asia Department Yoshihiro Iwasaki, Chief Advisor to the President of ADB Yashushi Kanzaki, Director of External Relations Ann Quon and Country Director Toru Shibuchi accompanied the ADB President.

Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Dr Kamal Uddin Siddiqui, ERD Secretary Anisul Haque Chowdhury and ADB's Alternative Executive Director M Saiful Islam were present when the ADB President called on the PM.

Chino, here on a five-day visit to reaffirm the bank's commitment to assist Bangladesh in its development effort and find new areas of cooperation, laid the foundations of ADB's own building at Agargaon in SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

## Reactionary forces on the rise since last polls: Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina said there has been a resurgence of "reactionary and anti-secular forces" in Bangladesh since last year's general election.

"The consequence is inevitable increase in violence and unbridled violation of human rights throughout the country," she said in a lecture on "Democracy, Human Rights and Security Threats" at the Center for the Study of International Relations in Brussels Tuesday night.

Chaired by Professor Andre Meroa, the seminar was attended by EU parliament members, Belgium parliament members, diplomats, students of the institute and Awami League leaders residing in different EU countries.

The Romanian prime minister, Portuguese president and NATO secretary general Xavier Solana also spoke at the seminar.

The former prime minister told her audience that her government had progressed towards a greater liberal and secular democratic society, but the election of 2001 saw a reversal of the social and political development in Bangladesh.

Terminating the October 1 election SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

## Schoolteacher murder 4 including three students arrested

UNB, Dhaka

Detective police yesterday arrested four persons in connection with the murder of Government Laboratory schoolteacher Swapan Goswami, who was gunned down in the city on Saturday last.

The arrested were identified as Moshir Rahman, senior assistant secretary of Land Survey Directorate, his son SM Sabir Rahman Shantunu, Tanveer Sharif Apon and Rifat Akand, 18.

Shantunu and Apon were class seven students of Government Laboratory school while Rifat was the student of Dhanmondi Model high school.

Police first arrested Rifat yesterday and interrogated him about the killing of Swapan Goswami.

As he confessed to killing the teacher, police produced him before the court where he gave a confessional statement to a magistrate.

Following the confessional statement, police arrested rest of the accused.

During the interrogation, Rifat said Apon and Shantunu had planned to kill Swapan Goswami one and a half months back, as they could not succeed in their examinations this year and held Goswami SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## Detention of Auranga: HC asks govt to explain

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday issued rule upon the government to show cause why the detention of Hemayetullah Auranga MP, should not be declared illegal.

The rule came on a petition challenging the detention of Auranga, an independent MP from Shariatpur. The rule was made returnable in one week.

Auranga's counsel submitted before the court that his client, an elected representative to Parliament, was humiliated in public although there was no specific charge against him.

Auranga was arrested during an army raid on Friday from his Hatirpool residence under Section 54 of CrPC. Later, he was detained under the Special Powers Act.

## Biman's Manchester office faces the axe

RAFIQ HASAN

A ministerial investigation report has recommended closure of Biman Bangladesh Airlines' Manchester office and layoff of five staffers at two stations in the UK.

The recommendations came after a two-week investigation by a high official of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism into massive irregularities and misuse of resources, said sources.

The report also suggested some changes in the central ticket reservation office in Dhaka to check irregularities in booking.

The recommendations were sent to the Biman Headquarters and action will be taken soon, the sources added.

If all recommendations work out, Biman will save at least Tk 3.11 crore a year, the sources said.

The report also suggested transfer of Nazrul Islam, manager of the Manchester station at Portland Street, to the London office as cargo manager.

The closure of the Manchester office with a layoff of two staffers will help Biman save around Tk 50 lakh a year, according to the report.

All travel agents in Manchester work under a computer network and can easily communicate with Biman's London office for ticketing and its confirmation and another station in the town is not necessary, the report said.

The staffers at the London city office to be laid off are Taslim Foize

Kabir, reservation in-charge, Sebastian Nehru, a local staffer, and Zeba Khan, another local staffer -- all accused of corruption and mismanagement.

The staffers at the London city office, AM Chowdhury and MA Ali, in charge of ticket reservation, will be under close supervision for next three months.

The report recommended recruitment of two staffers on a daily basis for the London office, with one having good command over the dialect of Sylhet.

The report also recommended monitoring on three travel agents -- Surma Travels, K MC Travels and Travel Links -- approved by the London office, as they were involved SEE PAGE 11 COL 3