

# EU pledges 'bold' nuke offer to Iran

AFP, Brussels

The European Union is preparing to make a "bold" offer to Iran, including possible security guarantees, to persuade it to curb its atomic plans, the bloc's foreign policy chief said yesterday.

Javier Solana made the comment ahead of a meeting of EU foreign ministers including the so-called EU-3 – Britain, France and Germany – tasked with trying to defuse the West's diplomatic standoff with the Islamic state.

"Any offer which requires us to halt our peaceful nuclear activities will be invalid," Ahmadinejad was quoted as saying on Sunday by the state news agency Isna.

"I am surprised that a group of people hold meetings without us being present there and make decisions for us," he said.

Solana pointed out that the Iranians had yet to see the Union's offer.

As a signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Iran has the right to build a civilian nuclear programme, but it must submit to inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN watchdog body.

It has refused to fully cooperate with the agency and Ahmadinejad has pledged to forge ahead as international pressure to give up enrichment has increased.

"This is one of the last chances to resolve this conflict from a diplomatic point of view," Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn told reporters.

## Power crisis

**FROM PAGE 1**  
"steps taken to face the ongoing power crisis" presented at the conference said even if the government could implement all its short-term and long-term projects still there would be a rise in load shedding next year.

While the country has a power deficit of 1250mw at present the paper projects as high as 1624mw deficit in 2007 and 1430mw deficit in 2008.

"You will have to have the chicken and the egg together to get chicks," Iqbal Hasan Mahmud, state minister for power, said. Saying that he tried to improve things since 2002, Mahmud claimed that it was lack of fund that always stood in the way.

He also pointed out that the donors have not provided any aid in the power sector for a long time. At one point they were only interested in investing in distribution, not in generation. Recently they have however assured the government of assistance in generation too, he said. "Power plants cannot be installed overnight, you will have to understand it. It's not about millions, but billions," he explained.

Power Secretary ANH Akther Hossain presented the paper where he elaborately depicted the prevailing power situation, the government steps taken to overcome the situation, pick-hour load management, and coordination among different agencies under the power ministry.

Asked about the allegations of corruption that is said to be the main reason for the country's miserable

power situation Mahmud said the same was said by the World Bank's country director at a seminar in Hotel Sheraton. "I instantly rejected her claims and invited her to my office and offered her access to all my files. Later on I even wrote to her, but I have not yet received any answer."

The minister was accompanied by the chairman of Power Development Board as well as other high officials of the ministry.

Later in the morning while speaking as chief guest at a share offloading ceremony of Dhaka Electric Supply Company (DESCO) and Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB) at the Dhaka Stock Exchange, Mahmud said Bangladesh is not the only country to be experiencing load shedding.

"Even in Delhi there has been 10-hour long load shedding, but The Daily Star and the Independent print news of the country's power crisis in the front page and that of Delhi somewhere inside," the minister complained.

Meanwhile, 25 percent shares of the two companies have been offloaded. "Offering one-fourth shares of the two power producing entities to the public is needed to mitigate the liquidity crisis and to bring transparency and dynamism to the sector," the minister said.

**CAAB warned**

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"Biman," says MA Momen, managing director of Biman. "If the aircraft was not good for flying, it would not have been allowed to fly to New York from the Brussels airport."

As the FAA did not allow the Biman aircraft to land in New York, the flight was diverted to Montreal on May 13 along with its passengers. The aircraft was inspected by the Canadian authorities and found okay, he said.

"I apologise to the passengers for the immense suffering they had to face. We have arranged their flights to New York. And we have also arranged alternative flights for some 60 Biman passengers from New York," Momen added.

CAAB sources said the FAA sent a long list of flaws in the DC-10, which have not been addressed.

"Of course when (FAA) inspectors inspect the aircraft, they make lists of flaws and we correct those flaws accordingly. On December 14, 2005, the aircraft was cleared by the FAA. After routine inspections, they had given us a list of flaws in February. We corrected those. It is not unusual for any old aircraft to have some flaws."

Biman did not get any FAA notification disapproving the DC-10 landing in New York.

While this incident is an insult to the nation, it is not affecting the Biman financially. In fact, it is a blessing in disguise for Biman, which was incurring losses of up to Tk 55 lakh per flight on the New York route.

"We will close the New York office. May be, we will run an off-flight ticket centre there as in Toronto," Momen said.

"Now that this flight is off, we will get more flying time. This flight can be operated on the profitable Middle East routes where we cannot provide higher frequency of flights due to lack of aircraft."

The Biman authorities and the FAA have had another conflict recently over a newly added Biman flight to New York from Manchester. Biman is a class-B operator in the world's aviation sector. A class-B operator is not allowed to operate from a third country. But before the launching of Manchester-New York flight, Biman was not aware of this regulation. When it ran three to four flights, the FAA imposed a huge penalty on it, and the flight was to be cancelled.

Meanwhile, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Fakrul Islam Alamgir told BSS that Biman's DC-10 fleet would be phased out and replaced by Airbuses or Boeings either on dry lease or wet lease.

A study by the Boeing company and a set of recommendations of Biman suggest modernising its fleet with four wide-body Boeing aircraft

and five narrow-body aircraft.

**HC asks govt**

**FROM PAGE 1**

law secretary, defence secretary, inspector general of police (IGP) and chief of army staff, and six respondents in the other petition are home secretary, foreign secretary, IGP, deputy commissioner (DC) of police (North Zone), DC of the Detective Branch (DB) and the FBI, Washington DC.

Senior advocate TH Khan moved for petition of Sadeque's wife while Barrister Abdur Razzak moved for the other petitioner.

Barrister Abdur Razzak, counsel for MK Hasan, told newsmen that the High Court issued the rule to be sure whether Sadeque is being kept inside Bangladesh or has been taken to the USA.

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**Man held**

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highly explosive substance, sources said.

Assistant Director of Rab-6 FM Badruzzaman lodged an FIR in Khulna Sadar Police Station the same night as complainant SI Rafique was assigned to investigate the case.

Kartik Saha hails from Mathurapur village under Sakkhra Sadar upazila and is a shrimp trader by profession. He has fallen sick due to intense interrogation by Rab before being handed over to Khulna police.

He will be further interrogated after being taken on remand, said the IO (Investigation Officer) of the case.

Procurement of uranium and its use are not only banned in Bangladesh but all over the world.

Finally on April 23, the government officially admitted that Sadeque was deported to US.

## Judges killed

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Expressing anger for the denial, he said he had surrendered to the Rab on condition that he would be allowed to meet the press.

When the court wanted to know his profession Rahman said, "Murder, as Mujahed of Allah."

Referring to the bomb attack on jatra mancha at Laxmigola in Bogra, the JMB leader said the police investigator had falsely implicated Asadullah Al Galib in the case. But Galib was not associated with JMB.

Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai claimed that he was not involved in the murder of the two judges at Jhalakhati late last year and pleaded not guilty of the charge.

Khaled Saifullah told the court, "I've finished my task by leading the squad to kill the judges on instruction from Abdul Rahman."

He said confessional statements of Ataur Rahman Sunny and Abdul Awal were extracted under physical torture. He compared the Joint Interrogation Cell of Dhaka with those in Iraq now under occupation of US Army.

Ataur Rahman Sunny told the court that their fight was against injustices in every

sphere of the society. He pointed to the Berlin based Transparency International reports and said Bangladesh had ranked as the most corrupt country for the fifth consecutive year for corruption at the state level.

"Our mission has not been completed," said Sunny, the military commander of JMB.

The hearing of the case will resume on May 18.

## Extortionists

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Police, meanwhile, held Shahidul Islam Firoze, a manpower trader and "rival" of Shahabuddin, at the Zia International Airport when he was about to fly to Saudi Arabia in the early hours yesterday in connection with Sunday's incident.

According to Shahabuddin, Firoze has "good links" with top criminal Tanvir Ahmed Joy who organised the attack on the Turk Associate for Firoze.

When contacted over telephone, Shahabuddin also informed matter to Singapore police through his nephew, requesting an inquiry.

The same caller phoned Shahabuddin again a few days later and increased the extortion money to Tk 5 crore as he refused to pay the previous amount.

About two weeks ago, Firoze's younger brother Shamsher Alam Nashi contacted Shahabuddin, proposing a negotiation with Joy about fixing the sum at Tk 1 crore.

"When Nashi last called me on Saturday, I refused him again. He said they will now deal the matter in their own way. The attack at the Turk Associate office was conducted the following day," Shahabuddin told The Daily Star.

He said he received at least 20 phone calls yesterday from the same persons regarding the demand. All these people are members of an international extortion syndicate controlled by Joy, Shahabuddin added.

Shahabuddin also said Joy told him that his men made a similar attack on the Orbit International in Gulshan 10 days ago.

Meantime, the condition of Shahjahan, one of the five injured in the attack now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital, was reported to be critical. Four others were released after treatment yesterday.

Officials of Turk Associate yesterday said the agency will bear the treatment expenses for the injured and compensate the family of dead Ramzan Ali, who went to their office to see off his brother to Saudi Arabia.

They said three of their 20 staff stopped attending office out of fear while others are panicked about further attacks.

**Bomb goes off**

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Tarique Zia said sensing sure defeat in the next elections the opposition alliance is pressing for their "illogical" demands for reforms in the Election Commission and caretaker government.

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**Students allege**

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1,200 students," a student of Pharmacy department said.

While the chairman of Pharmacy department said they applied for accreditation on Wednesday, Mashirul Rahman, a member of Stamford University Board of Trustees, contradicted the statement and said he himself will move for the accreditation and complete the process in a week.

A student has to register his or her name for the next semester before the results are published and if one waits for the result, Tk 500 is charged as 'late fee'.

A student has to bribe the guard if she or he forgets to bring the ID card, said a student, adding, "Sometimes the amount is up to Tk 200 as the guards do not allow us to enter even during the examinations."

Another student said they are not allowed to bring snacks from outside while they have to buy a singara for as much as Tk 8 from the university canteen.

A female English student said they have few books in the library, although the authorities charge them an annual library fee of Tk 1,000.

Students said the university

## Minu blames

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reasons and identify the persons responsible. And they will be brought to book."

He asked government officials to remain vigilant against recurrence of such incidents.

Minu did not reply to questions whether action would be taken against the local BNP lawmaker, who allegedly ordered the police to fire on people.

### DEMANDS MET

Minu announced the government has met all the 14 demands of Kansat people while the REB has withdrawn some charges and reduced many other fees for all the PBBS in the country, a day before the deadline for fulfilling the Kansat peoples' demands expires today.

REB CONVENOR Golam Rabbani expressed satisfaction over the government steps.

The legislator said the government has already sent Tk 83 lakh as compensation for those killed or injured in police atrocities at Kansat. Distribution of the money will start with its disbursement among families of the 17 people killed at a May 24 grand rally at Kansat.

Families of those killed will get Tk 2 lakh each and one person blinded in police action will get Tk 1 lakh.

Ten seriously injured 10 persons will get Tk 50,000 each, 100 others with less injuries Tk 25,000 each and 600 more with minor injuries Tk 3,000 each.

"Some cases filed against the PBBS leaders will be withdrawn

## Ctg PDB office

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he observed.

Later, the demonstrators submitted a memorandum to the chief engineer.

Earlier, a protest rally was held in front of Singapore-Bangkok Market by the Parishad Chairman Chandan Dhar.

The speakers at the rally said erratic power supply has been paralysing the normal activities and hampering productions at industries. Identifying the examinees of on-going Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) Examination as the worst sufferers, they demanded smooth supply of power during the examinations.

Vehicles plying the busy Agrabad Sheikh Mujib Road were stuck in a traffic jam during the demonstration.

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