

## Bill Gates eyes flight to space

AFP, Updated

The world's richest man Bill Gates is considering a possible flight into space, a Russian cosmonaut said from International Space Station yesterday, citing Gates' colleague, current space tourist Charles Simonyi.

"Charles said that Bill Gates is also preparing to visit space," cosmonaut Fyodor Yurchikhin told journalists during a video link-up from the space station, broadcast on state television Rossiya.

### Religion-based

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paper based on a recent study, former ambassador and Billa director Wali-Ur Rahman said there is no other alternative but to restrain militancy to upholding the spirit of Liberation War, good governance and strengthening of democratic culture.

Rahman added that even during the state of emergency, Jamaat is still continuing its clandestine activities to spread religion-based politics through 42 organisations.

Jamaat at present controls around 60 percent mosques and mosque-based educational facilities in the country. The party has already set up at least one madrasa in every village to provide Islamic education, Rahman pointed out.

He also added that Jamaat has established a strong network of followers across the country by investing a huge amount of money in the transport sector. Besides, it has organised a large number of party activists through mosques and madrasas in villages all over the country.

Islami Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat, has made a strong presence in five universities and 12 colleges in the country. Dhaka University is their next target. Shibir has also been spreading its control in rural areas with the help of Islamic NGOs. It even opened up operational cells in different parts of the country to organise militant activities, he added.

Though the law enforcement agencies are trying to bring the militants behind bars, the policy makers should put their emphasis on capturing patronizers as well as financiers of militancy, the speakers said.

They also stressed the need for timely action against the militants with a specific strategy while upholding the constitution.

Among others, Dr Syed Anwar Husain of University of Dhaka, Ambassador Arshaduzzaman, Abdul Ahad Chowdhury of Muktijoddha Sangsads and Kamru Hasen Khan of Peshajibi Samannay Parishad also spoke at the meeting.

## US for polls early

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The envoy said the US supports the present activities of the caretaker government, but at the same time expects that fundamental and human rights are respected and the due process of law is followed for those arrested on charge of corruption.

Butenis said as they want proper investigations into the killing of former finance minister SAMS Kibria and the grenade attacks on an Awami League rally in Dhaka and the trials of the perpetrators, they also demand appropriate investigations into the killing of journalists in Khulna and the trial of their killers.

She mentioned the names of journalists Harun-ur-Rashid, Manik Saha, Humayun Kabir and Sheikh Belaluddin who were killed in terrorist attacks in Khulna and praised their courage in seeking the truth.

Butenis said press in Bangladesh is vibrant and without courageous newspaper reporting about human rights abuses and corruption, those evils would continue to spread unchecked.

Khulna Press Club President Makbul Hossain Mintu Alhaj Niamat Ali, Sahabuddin Ahmed, Abu Hasan, Ferdousi Ali and Shaheb Ali,

## AL, Jamaat to face

FROM PAGE 1

Jamaat-e-Islami had filed the case against AL-led 14-party alliance leaders including Sheikh Hasina for political gains.

"We are ready to face a legal battle," he said.

Expressing surprise for pressing charge sheet against 14-party alliance leaders, JSD General Secretary Syed Zafar Sajad said everybody knows where the top leaders of 14-party stayed on October 28 when the Paltan event took place.

"JSD will face the case filed against Hasanul Haque Inu through legal process. We know it is a false case," he said in a press release.

"Pressing the charge sheet against the top leaders of 14-party including Hasanul Haque Inu without proper investigation will raise question about the caretaker government and its administration," he said.

## Nor'wester kills 1 in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A nor'wester coupled with heavy rain swept over the port city yesterday afternoon, killing a garment worker and uprooting a number of trees.

The dead was identified as Sourav Barua, 20, of Top Man Garments of Imam Group at Mansurabad under Double Mooring Police Station.

"Space Adventures has had no contact with Bill Gates," spokesman Natalya Dedovets told AFP.

Simonyi, Yurchikhin and fellow cosmonaut Oleg Kotov docked at the International Space Station on Monday, after a flight that cost the former Microsoft engineer 25 million dollars (19 million euros).

Simonyi is scheduled to return to Earth on April 20 together with the current ISS team - Russia's Mikhail Tyurin and American Miguel Lopez-Alegria -- while the two Russian cosmonauts will stay on for a 190-day shift in orbit.

Simonyi, who made his fortune at Microsoft, is the fifth tourist to travel to the ISS, following the United States' Dennis Tito in 2001 and Greg Olsen in 2005, South Africa's Mark Shuttleworth in 2002, and a US citizen of Iranian origin, Anousheh Ansari in 2006.

Space Adventures plans to expand its offerings next year to include a 100-million-dollar trip around the moon and a 100,000-dollar budget option: five minutes of sub-orbital space flight.

**Waiting for son**

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101 women, were released on bail yesterday from Dhaka Central Jail.

The accused were arrested in different bailable cases in the last 16 days but they could not file bail petition following the second amendment to the Emergency Power Rules 2007 on March 21, which suspended the right to bail for those accused of offences under the Penal Code.

The restriction was removed in the third amendment to the Emergency Power Rules 2007 on April 8 and hearing on bail petitions in different cases filed under the Penal Code started in Dhaka courts from Monday.

Many of the released accused yesterday said they faced a lot of trouble because of overloading inside the jail.

"We severely faced lack of food and water supplies and scarcity of space. The temperature inside the jail also rose tremendously," said a released accused.

But, despite the job carrying the title assistant to the president, one of the highest ranks in the White House, at least one candidate turned it down saying it would be difficult to work alongside powerful, domineering war hawk Vice President Dick Cheney.

"The very fundamental issue is, they don't know where the hell they're going," retired Marine Gen. John Sheehan told the Post.

## Police reform

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concrete decisions if the proposals come within a short time in line with the ongoing police reform project.

The police reform project, which is already underway, will be completed soon, according to an official.

About the demand for increasing the facilities for police that involves financial support, the CA urged the top police officials to come up shortly with their specific proposals and assured them that the government would consider those after proper examination.

He also reminded them of the government's resource constraint and said the police will have to be made professional, transparent and service-oriented so that they themselves could feel proud of their services.

Communications Adviser Maj Gen (retd) MA Matin, Cabinet Secretary Ali Imam Majumder, Home Secretary Abdul Karim and Inspector General of Police (IGP) Noor Mohammad also spoke on the occasion.

Butenis said he is happy to learn that alongside the religious curriculum, education on secular and modern information technology is being imparted to the madrasa students.

Firoz Alam, deputy commissioner, Khulna, presided over the function, which was also addressed by Alia Madrasa Principal Abu Saleh.

**Cases against**

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case-filing process against the suspects that includes politicians and top business men, sources added.

Under the section 165 of the Income Tax Ordinance, the minimum punishment for submitting fabricated income tax statement is three months' detention, which can go up to three years' imprisonment or fine or both.

The punishment for concealing income related details under the section 166 is from three months' to five years' imprisonment or fine or both.

The punishment under the section 164 of the ordinance is one-year jail or fine or both for non-compliance of the income tax rules.

The ACC had initially said it would attack the properties of the 15 suspects, who had not filed their wealth statements, and file cases against them. But no property was attached so far while cases were filed against only four of them for non-submission of wealth statements.

Other than these cases, the ACC as of now has filed cases against only 15 suspects who are now in jail.

The NBR chairman revealed last month that the undisclosed bank deposits of these people totalled around Tk 119 crore.

Terming the charge sheet pressed against top Jamaat-e-Islami leaders as false, Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Muhammad Qamaruzzaman said, "The charge sheet is nothing but an initiative to conceal the killing by Awami League...we will face the case legally."

"They [AL] attacked us and killed our activists...it was not secret," he said, adding, "We have the video evidence that they attacked with oars and sticks according to the order of Sheikh Hasina."

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## Heavy fighting in Sri Lanka kills 21

AFP, Colombo

Heavy fighting between government troops and Tamil Tiger rebels in northern Sri Lanka has left 21 people dead on both sides, the defence ministry said yesterday.

The dead was identified as Sourav Barua, 20, of Top Man Garments of Imam Group at Mansurabad under Double Mooring Police Station.

Sourav was struck by lightning as he was taking lunch in a tin-shed room on the rooftop of the garment factory during the storm.

He was rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Four vehicles in South Khulshi Residential Area were damaged as a boundary wall collapsed on them during the twister.

The ministry said in a statement that one government soldier was killed and four others wounded, adding that intercepted rebel radio communication showed that 20 members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were killed in the military retaliation.

Over 4,000 people died between December 2005 and the first week of March 2007, including 675 civilians and 1,040 security personnel, according to defence ministry figures.

The LTTE has waged a 35-year campaign for independence that has claimed more than 60,000 lives.

## Hasina, Nizami

**4 killed in clashes in Somalia**

AFP, Mogadishu

At least four civilians were killed yesterday in renewed clashes in the Somali capital between Ethiopian forces and Islamist fighters that a shattered a ceasefire, residents said.

There was sporadic gunfire and heavy mortar shells around a stadium in southern Mogadishu, where the two sides recently fought the worst battles seen in the Somali capital in 15 years, leaving as many as 1,000 dead.

"The fighting is going on in our neighbourhood and around four people have been killed, one of them is a young boy. They were civilians killed stray bullets," said Gure Ahmed Olow, a resident of Sagar district in northern Mogadishu.

Another resident, Sahal Mohamed, said: "We cannot go outside to check on the casualties because stray bullets are flying all over. I have seen three wounded civilians, two of them are from the same family and the third one is a neighbour".

Residents saw Ethiopian and Somali troops reinforcing in Sagar area, where the rival sides also fired heavy artillery.

The new fighting, which erupted overnight shattered a week-old ceasefire announced by elders from Mogadishu's dominant Hawiye clan after talks with Ethiopian military commanders.

"As they are bringing charges against me, I would come back soon," the AL chief said adding that she had already asked her political secretary to make arrangements so that she can return home as early as possible.

She also hinted at curtailing her visit to her ailing daughter at Florida.

"I trust the people of my country. They know whatever I do is in their interest and for their benefit," Hasina said.

"The government thinks that it can intimidate me, but it forgot that members of my party successfully fought against another military government," she added.

She also hinted at curtailing her visit to her ailing daughter at Florida.

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