

### 3 power projects

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that Harbin hid around 15 percent project cost.

The Daily Star in a report last year showed that Harbin had hidden about \$16 million cost in Chandpur power project. The then alliance government had approved Harbin's flawed bid for this project strongly arguing that its bid offer is \$45 million as against \$51 million of its Chinese competitor CMEC.

The caretaker government formed a committee to scrutinise the Harbin deal. The committee cleared this deal as it largely depended on information given by the same PDB officials who helped Harbin bag the deal. The committee however strongly suggested that the project cost cannot be increased and it should be strictly monitored.

The PDB set June 11 for signing the final agreement with Harbin. But at the last minute, the Chinese company in a letter refused to sign the deal. It said the contract was supposed to be signed one year ago. And the bid validity expired one year ago. Harbin also said it would withdraw the performance guarantee of Tk 30 crore that was issued against the project.

The PDB then asked Harbin to sign the deal. But the company argued that the plant and equipment price had gone up globally in the last one year. It would only sign the deal if the PDB agreed to increase the cost to \$65 million.

As the PDB cannot do this, it wrote to the power ministry for a decision. The ministry then sought the law ministry's guidance in this regard.

"If we go for re-tender now, it will kill about 8 to 10 months. Besides, the project cost would increase by about 20 million dollars," said an official.

"The government should have scrapped the Harbin deal long ago. It had no practical experience in installing power plants excepting the Tongi plant (which is highly flawed). If we must spend more money, we should not sign a deal with a company that was blacklisted by a government agency (Eastern Refinery Ltd) for failing to commission a small 3 MW plant," said a power expert.

Harbin is also implementing 90 MW Fenchuganj power project under a contract that was signed in mid-2005 with a 10 percent down payment amounting to Tk 52 crore made to Harbin in violation of government norms. But the company has suspended implementation of the project due to tax related complications.

Sources said the National Board of Revenue (NBR) has imposed huge tax on Harbin against the project. This tax was previously exempted illegally through a government order issued under the influence of ex-finance minister Saifur Rahman's son.

"The PDB has requested the NBR to resolve the matter as soon as possible. This is the only power project under implementation now," a PDB official said.

Contract for the Fenchuganj combined cycle power project was awarded to Harbin in its fifth round of re-tender. Interestingly, the PDB had disqualified Harbin as a bidder for this project in the third round tender in 2002, when this company

### EC plans

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express their opinion on the proposed electoral reforms, he added.

The immediate past EC led by Justice MA Aziz had invited 116 political parties including a large number of organisations in name only to a dialogue on the preparation of the voter list in 2005. Excepting the then ruling four parties including the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami, most of the major political parties boycotted the series of discussions that turned out to be a complete farce.

A huge number of political parties regularly contest the parliamentary elections, but most of them fail to win a seat.

In 1973, only 14 parties participated in the country's first parliamentary polls but the number rose to 81 in 1996. Fifty-five parties contested the last general election that took place in 2001.

Now the EC with ATM Shamsul Huda at the helm wants to keep the political parties that exist only on paper out of the parliamentary election by introducing mandatory registration.

Election Commissioner Sakhawati said the commission wants to hold a meaningful dialogue with the political parties on electoral reforms.

"The talks with a large number of little-known parties cannot produce good results. So, we have plans to use some criteria for those wanting to be holding the dialogue," Sakhawati told The Daily Star.

Besides, the EC has drafted an application form that will be distributed among the political parties that are not fit for registration but still want to be a part of the discussion. The form would seek information about their organisational strength and other relevant matters so the commission could decide on who should be allowed and who not, sources said.

On timetable for the talks, Sakhawati said they are waiting for the ban on indoor politics to go. "We will start the dialogue once the political parties are ready to take part in," he said.

### India, Pakistan home officials talk terror

AFP, New Delhi

India and Pakistan's top home and interior ministry bureaucrats began two days of talks yesterday on terrorism and drug trafficking, officials from both sides said.

The talks in New Delhi, part of a slow three-year-old peace process between the two nuclear-armed rivals, were led by Indian home secretary Madhukar Gupta and Pakistan interior secretary Syed Kamal Shah.

"The Indian side will raise security concerns and urge the Pakistani side to widen cooperation in combating the menace of terrorism in deference to the objectives set out by the leaders of both countries," the Indian home ministry said in a statement on the eve of the talks.

India and Pakistan agreed to form a joint anti-terror panel after a series of blasts on crowded commuter trains in the financial hub of Mumbai a year ago that killed 186 people.

India has often blamed bloody attacks on its soil on militant groups based in Pakistan, which vigorously denies the accusations.

### DU students

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next syndicate meet.

The fact-finding committee working to detect fake students at the university yesterday reported to the syndicate about two students, who allegedly submitted fake freedom fighter certificates, to get enrolled under the quota.

One of them is from library science department and another from business studies faculty. These certificates have been sent to the Liberation War Ministry for clarification.

The syndicate yesterday also approved two students as legal after being confirmed about their admission.

On June 5, the authorities cancelled admission of 77 fake students, 44 of them were from public administration department. Of the rest, nine were from IR department, 22 from economics department and two from political science department and two from the social welfare and research institute.

The fact-finding committee was formed on October 10 last year in the wake of allegations of inconsistencies in admission papers of 11 students of public administration department of 2004-2005 academic session.

A drive was launched in March this year to identify fake students in the faculties of arts and social sciences following the probe committee's interim report on frauds in admission.

### Tigers

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paceman Lasith Malinga and spin wizard Muttiah Muralidaran equally shared eight wickets to add more salt on the visitors' wounds.

There is forecast of more rain today following yesterday's heavy showers in the afternoon that stopped the first day's play with sixteen overs remaining. The damage had, however, been done much earlier.

And the late interruption could not stop the home side from taking absolute control as they finished on 154-1 with Malinda Wanapura, who brilliantly recovered from his first-ball duck on debut at the SSC last week, batting on 79. Kumar Sangakkara accompanied him with 51.

Pace spearhead Mashrafe Bin Mortaza had the lone success by removing opener Michael Vandort, who made 14 off 52 deliveries during a 41-run opening wicket.

Sri Lanka skipper Mahela Jayawardene won the toss for the second successive time in the series under brilliant sunshine and opted to use the early hour's advantage. His seamers, especially Malinga and Dilhara Fernando who took two wickets, did not frustrate by folding the rival innings in just over two hours.

The Bangladesh first innings could have had the look of a phone number but Rajin Saleh did not want to follow his teammates as he was the only batsman to reach the double figure with a 62-ball 21 in 107 minutes.

"Since the knowledge base of the farmers here is weak, it is a matter of concern how you deal with them about the issue," he said, adding that the NGOs working in the rural areas could act as facilitators in this regard. This will also reduce the transaction cost, he observed.

North South University Associate Professor Dr Mizan R Khan said that though flood is a regular phenomenon in Bangladesh, there are not enough structural measures to cope with it and thereby call for unconventional measures like flood insurance.

The micro-finance institutions working at the village level could work as facilitators of the insurance companies, he said and added that strong risk assessment should be made in advance so that the farmers are never cheated.

According to PREM, agriculture is the source of employment for more than 80 percent of the rural population and nearly 35 million people in Bangladesh are affected by flooding every year.

Traditionally, the damage caused by floods are managed by

### Tuku's wife

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of the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court yesterday ordered to send former state minister Tuku's wife Romana Mahmud, son Abed Hasan Mahmud and daughter Farah Hasan Mahmud to jail.

After Abed surrendered to the court and police produced Romana and Sarah before it, the court ordered to send them to jail rejecting their bail petitions.

The IO pressed charges against Tuku and three of his family members on June 28 and the court issued arrest warrants against Tuku's family members on July 2.

Following the warrants, Mohammapur police yesterday noon arrested Romana and Farah from their residence and forwarded them to the court. After hearing of the arrest of his mother and sister, Abed, Tuku's son, surrendered to the court yesterday afternoon.

Golam Shahrier Chowdhury, deputy director (DD) of the ACC, filed the case against Tuku and his three family members with Mohammapur Police Station on March 21 as their wealth valued at Tk 35.95 crore did not match with the source of their income.

**NASIM CASE**  
ACC Assistant Director Mahbubul Alam submitted charge sheet against former home minister Nasim and his wife Laila Arzumand Banu to the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka showing 31 people as prosecution witnesses.

On March 21, DD of the ACC Akhter Hossain filed a case against Nasim and his wife Laila with Dhanmondi Police Station for providing false information in their wealth statements submitted to the ACC earlier.

In the case, Akhter mentioned that Nasim and his wife concealed information about wealth worth Tk 1.26 crore in their statements.

Nasim is now in jail while his wife is on bail.

**HUDACASE**

### Khaleda's proposal

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what will be the provision regarding the term limits for the posts of the party chairperson and the secretary general.

According to the source, the former premier did not get any copy of the reform proposal announced by party Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan on June 25, although she had asked that camp of the reformists to meet her.

Meanwhile, reformist leaders of Mannan camp said they are searching for alternative ways in case the chairperson does not give her consent to holding a party council amid the ongoing state of emergency. They said their preparations for holding the council are nonetheless going on in full swing.

They are also preparing themselves for calling a 'meeting of councillors on popular demand' on the issue of party reforms if the chairperson does not agree to hold a council. Such a meeting might become necessary since the party's constitution does not have any provision for calling a 'requisitioned meeting', reformists of Mannan camp said.

The Mannan camp reformists also claimed that they are continuing their campaign for their reform proposal among prospective councillors eliciting support from many of them.

According to the leaders, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan will announce a revised proposal in a day or two and he will also clear his position regarding the party chairperson's recent comment that he is involved in anti-party activities.

"Proposals are still coming and the secretary general will meet the chairperson after finalising the proposal," Maj (ret'd) Hafiz Uddin Ahmed told reporters yesterday after meeting Bhuiyna in the latter's Gulshan residence.

The Mannan camp reformists

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against former communications minister barrister Huda and two others in connection with a theft case filed against them with Dohar Police Station in March this year.

Charges were framed against the other two, Monir Hossain and Haider Ali, in absentia.

Huda pleaded not guilty after First Class Magistrate Delwara Begum read out the charges against him.

On May 17, police Inspector Syed Nazrul Islam, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted charge sheet to a first class magistrate's court in Dhaka against Huda and the other two showing 17 people as prosecution witnesses.

On March 6, Mohammad Salahuddin from Nurpur of Dohar upazila in Dhaka accused that on October 28 last year, Huda and his men beat up Salahuddin so severely that his life was put at risk.

As per Huda's instruction, the two others also took away Tk 17, 700 from his possession and they ordered him not to speak of the incident.

**SALAHUDDIN CASE**  
Another Dhaka Court yesterday framed charges against former BNP lawmaker Salahuddin Ahmed in connection with a money laundering case filed with Shyampur Police Station.

Salahuddin pleaded not guilty and demanded justice after Judge Sayed Jahed Mansur read out the charges against him.

The joint forces raided his Shyampur residence on February 4 and seized a large sum of foreign currencies from his residence.

Following the seizure, police filed a case against Salahuddin under the Money Laundering Act. The IO pressed charges against him on May 16.

said their leader in the reform campaign did not do anything violating the party constitution and he will clear his position regarding the chairperson's accusation soon.

"We are not doing anything violating the party constitution, the secretary general announced the proposal to serve the party's interest," Hafiz Uddin, a vice-president of BNP, said adding that many of their party leaders are in jail so everybody must understand the predicament, and they are being mindful of Khaleda's sentiment under the current situation.

"A state of emergency is on... indoor politics is banned... even the movement of our chairperson is restricted ... that is why we couldn't meet her," he said adding that they have trust in the chairperson and she also should have trust in them.

"The secretary general will meet the chairperson after finalising the reform proposal as suggestions are still coming in," he added.

When asked to comment on Khaleda's remark that the secretary general might face disciplinary actions if he does anything violating the party constitution, Hafiz said, "The secretary general will respond to her personally and that will be the end of the misunderstanding."

Pro-Mannan reformist and a former state minister Prof Rejaul Karim, who also met the secretary general yesterday, said they are working for real democracy in the party. "Some new proposals might be added and some might get deleted," he said.

Some other grassroots level leaders also met Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday to express their support for his party reform initiative.

### Tarique

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him also about the 2.01-acre land at Salkakandi in Bogra and his bank accounts.

Earlier on July 1, a four-member team of the anti-graft national taskforce questioned Tarique's wife and mother-in-law about his wealth declared to the anti-graft body.

"We asked him (Tarique) about the wealth statement to the ACC and took notes of what he said in reply," Zahirul Huda told reporters at the jail gate.

"The information in the wealth statement was given in summary form, so we asked him to clarify on some points," he said adding that they would match his statements against the records.

Asked if there was any discrepancy between what he told them yesterday and the statement to the ACC, Huda said, "It is premature for us to comment."

Queried if they should need him to be quizzed further, he said, "It depends on if his statements tally with the records."

The other two members of the team are Abdus Samad Al Azad, deputy commissioner of income tax, and Major Redwanur Rahman.

Tarique, senior joint secretary general of the BNP, was accompanied by his lawyer Ahmed Aazam Khan for the last 50 minutes of the questioning.

Charged with extortion, he submitted his wealth statement through his lawyers on June 10 where he claimed that he together with his wife and daughter have assets worth around Tk 1.40 crore.

### 12 firearms

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revolver from there.

Rab sources said Bidhan and Sumon had been involved in arms trading and other criminal activities in the city for long. Kotwali police yesterday produced Bidhan in a magistrate's court that sent him to jail.

Our staff correspondent from Khulna adds: Rab personnel recovered two pipe guns, one single barrel gun, ten bombs, and two cartridges from the house of listed criminal Shawkat Sheikh in Nalta union under Kaliganj upazila of Satkhira district yesterday morning.

Rab sources said the recovered arms and ammunition belong to Nalta Union Parishad Chairman Abdul Wahab. He kept those in the custody of Shawkat.

In another operation, Rab-6 personnel arrested five drug peddlers at Daulatpur in Khulna City on Monday night.

The arrestees are Masud Sheikh, Arif Sheikh, Rabeya Khatoon, Moni Begum and Hafizur Rahman. They were handed over to Daulatpur Police Station yesterday.

In Khagrachhari, the Joint forces arrested a listed criminal and seized four firearms and secret documents from his hideout in Panchhari early yesterday, reports UNB.

The forces raided the hideout in a remote area at around 3:30am and arrested Sunil Kumar Tripura. They recovered one SMG, three light guns and secret documents of a group named Bangladesh-Tripura National Association.

Police said Sunil was wanted in murder, rape and extortion cases. After interrogation, he was handed over to Panchhari Police Station.

### US kills 23

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Sunday morning discovered 22 dead insurgents, including seven wearing suicide vests, as well as 24 homemade grenades, 20 roadside bombs, and other weapons.

"Most of the enemy were dressed in similar white dishdashas (ankle-length shirts) and white running shoes, an outfit often associated with extremist fighters prepared to kill themselves," the statement said.

Clashes erupted again on Sunday afternoon, when insurgents attacked US-led forces with machine gun fire, grenades and a suicide vest.

Another insurgent was killed and two were detained in the ensuing battle as helicopters and fighter jets were scrambled to destroy an alleged bunker with precision-guided bombs.

The security situation in Anbar, once the epicentre of the country's Sunni insurgency, has been improving in recent months as local tribes have joined with US and Iraqi forces to fight al-Qaeda in Iraq.

al-Qaeda has responded by broadening its attacks to include the tribes as well as US and Iraqi forces, and the province remains a dangerous area.

Ahead of Saturday's battle US-led forces had "received reports that a significant number of anti-Iraqi forces had gathered on the outskirts of Ramadi to stage a series of large scale attacks," the statement said.

In October last year al-Qaeda declared Ramadi to be the capital of an "Islamic State of Iraq", but since then it has seen its support collapse among the local population as tribal chiefs switch allegiances.

### BB asks banks to find

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got orders from First Solution to transfer Tk 13.72 lakh to clients while the agency's security deposit is \$10,000 (around Tk 7 lakh). The Prime Bank has pending orders to transfer Tk 28 lakh against a security deposit of \$10,000. The Brac Bank has pending orders of Tk 78 lakh with \$2,898 (around Tk 2 lakh) of security deposit. Uttara Bank has pending orders to transfer Tk 12 lakh against the agency's security deposit of \$25,000 (around Tk 17 lakh).

The Eastern Bank and Mutual Trust Bank have no pending orders from First Solution and have security deposits of \$10,000 and \$3,500. The Janata Bank has signed the deal with First Solution recently and is yet to start any transaction.

The BB sent an inspection team to London last year to investigate activities of the London-based money transferring agencies that have transaction with Bangladesh. The team found that a number of agencies unlawfully publicised that they have BB approval. First Solution even used the BB logo on its letterhead and other papers.

The central bank asked these agencies to stop such unlawful activities.

The BB is now considering introducing a fixed higher amount of money as the security deposits for the money transferring agencies.

"We have to be more cautious in selecting remittance houses in future," the BB governor told report-

ers on Monday after the concluding ceremony of a training course for the newly recruited 100 BB assistant directors.

Meanwhile, the East London Advertiser reported on June 28 that the First Solution is one of hundreds of small money transfer businesses operating across Britain modelled on the US giant Western Union.

"First Solution has been operating around three years. Its Brick Lane office says it takes around £50,000 a day, which is then banked with Barclays and NatWest for processing.

"Records at Companies House show First Solution Money Transfer Ltd is run and owned by three directors.

"These include Dr Fazal Mahmood, managing director of Channel S, the Bengali satellite TV station, and Nazrul Islam, a reporter on Tower Hamlets council's East End Life newspaper," the East London Advertiser reported.

Nazrul, however, explained to the newspaper that he had resigned as a director and sold his shareholding because of "family commitments" a "couple of weeks ago".

Asked if he was aware that First Solution had been having problems, he said, "No. I didn't attend board meetings. It was the others who run the company."

### 9 killed in Pakistan

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Sporadic exchanges of gunfire continued throughout the afternoon. The students torched two government buildings as the violence escalated, an AFP correspondent said.

Later students set fire to the nearby Ministry of Environment Building and a nearby property belonging to the Capital Development Authority. A loud blast was heard, believed to be related to the fires.

A cameraman for a private television channel was shot dead when troops let off a burst of gunfire to disperse the mob as it tried to smash up a nearby girls' school, an AFP photographer who witnessed the incident said.

A loudspeaker announcement from the mosque as night fell warned of impending suicide attacks.

"The blood of the martyrs will not go to waste. We are ready for suicide attacks," the unidentified mullah's voice said.

Hospitals in Islamabad declared a state of emergency as blood-spattered minibuses from the mosque ferried in casualties, as well as private ambulances.

They said many of the injured were female students from the mosque suffering from tear gas inhalation. One girl was undergoing surgery to remove bullets from her back and hand.

A spokesman for the mosque said 12 students in all had been

killed but this was not confirmed by officials.

Musharraf, a key ally in the US "war on terror", has faced mounting criticism at home and abroad over the failure to crack down on the Red Mosque's campaign to enforce Islamic Sharia laws.

Musharraf said last week that suicide bombers from an Al-Qaeda-linked Islamic militant group were sheltering in the mosque.

But he has held off largely for fear of causing casualties among the thousands of students -- especially the women, most of whom hail from Taliban-sympathising areas along the Afghan border.

One of the two brothers who runs the mosque, Abdul Rashid Ghazi, said the students had retaliated after security forces opened fire, and said the authorities had broken an agreement not to besiege the mosque.

"The administration wants to see dead bodies scattered on the roads. Why are they doing this?" he told a local television channel. "There had been no action from our side since the Chinese incident."

The mosque has been monitored by scores of security personnel since its students took control of a neighbouring government-run children's library in January.

### UK bombs plot

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British newspapers said up to five of the suspects already held in Britain were doctors.

A 27-year-old Indian, detained in Australia, became the sixth doctor implicated in the plot.

Following a British police tip, the man was arrested at Brisbane airport as he tried to leave the country, Australian officials said.

The Indian had been working since September in the Gold Coast Hospital in eastern Queensland state. Australian police were also questioning a second doctor, Queensland Premier Peter Beattie told reporters. Both were recruited from the English city of Liverpool.

Beattie told reporters "the doctor was regarded by the hospital in many senses to be a model citizen."

The suspects in custody include a Jordanian surgeon named by officials in Amman as Mohammed Jamil Abdelkader Asha, and his wife. The Jordanian's offices in a British hospital were searched Monday.

British media identified one of the two Glasgow attackers as an Iraqi doctor named Bilal Abdulla.

Police refused to comment on BBC reports that all those arrested were from the Middle East.

They said however there are "ever clearer" links between the Glasgow attack and the failed bombings in London, adding that both investigations were now under the control of the London police's Counter-Terrorism Command.

The first arrests were made Saturday when police detained two men who drove a blazing Jeep Cherokee loaded with gas canisters into the doors of Glasgow airport's main terminal. One of them remains in critical condition in hospital with severe burns.

That attack came just a day after two Mercedes cars laden with gas canisters and nails were found abandoned in London's entertainment district.

Britain remains on the highest

national security threat level, meaning another attack is feared to be imminent.

Anti-terrorist officers later arrested a 26-year-old man and a 27-year-old woman, believed to be Asha and his wife, on a motorway in northwest England. They are now being questioned in London.

A fifth suspect, a 26-year-old man, was arrested in Liverpool on Saturday night. On Sunday, two other men, aged 25 and 28, were detained outside Glasgow.

Police were given permission Monday to detain five of the suspects so far arrested until Saturday under anti-terror laws.

"I'm very encouraged by the progress" made in the investigation, said Home Secretary Jacqui Smith, who made a defiant statement to lawmakers. "It is through our unity that the terrorists will eventually be defeated," she said.

Seeking to ease fears of a new al-Qaeda-style campaign, the government called a new meeting of its so-called COBRA crisis cell, the fifth in four days.

The security source told AFP that the "bomb factory" which produced the explosive ingredients for both the London and Glasgow attacks was near the Scottish city.

Some commentators have cast doubt on how well-trained the London and Glasgow attackers were.

London's Evening Standard newspaper reported that the London bombings failed to explode because of a technical problem with mobile phones, left in the cars, that were supposed to detonate the gas canisters.

The perpetrators called one of the mobiles twice and the other four times. Neither bomb detonated, and detectives used the calls logged to trace those responsible, the paper said.