

Both factions of BNP

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have been working sincerely towards reforms," Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman, a pro-reform standing committee member of the BNP, told The Daily Star yesterday. Asked whether they would send any letter to the EC, Mahbubur said they would discuss the matter today. Meantime, the EC, which has already begun sending out invitations to the secretary-generals or general secretaries of the 15 parties chosen for the talks, is not sure which of the BNP factions should have the call, said sources in the commission. Election Commissioner Muhammed Sohul Hussain yesterday told The Daily Star, "We still have time to think things over." In the schedule unveiled last week, the BNP is slotted in for the dialogue on November 22.

"We will send invitation to the parties some 15 days before the scheduled date. We hope the situation will work out by this time," he said referring to the crisis in the immediate past ruling party. Asked if the matter is not settled then which of the factions they would choose for the talks, Sohul said he cannot say anything about it now. "We will take a decision when the time comes," he added. Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday said that in no way can the EC send Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan the official letter inviting the BNP to the dialogue. "He [Bhuiyan] doesn't belong to the party anymore. He cannot represent us at any forum," the new secretary general told reporters yesterday. But Mahbubur Rahman, a pro-

reform leader, said they have already rejected the chairperson's decision to expel Bhuiyan from the party. "We have cleared our position Monday. Most of the former law-makers are with us," he said. Besides making statements against each other, both the factions have started contacting the senior leaders and those at the grassroots level to strengthen their camp. The pro-reform group spear-headed by Bhuiyan thinks they deserve the administration's backing as they are "committed to bringing reforms in the party as well as politics in general". Leaders still siding with the chairperson think those at the grassroots level will never allow Bhuiyan to split the party, keeping Khaleda Zia in jail.

Bulu

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He was forced to stop halfway through the work and return the wheat to the authorities as Bulu's men began to obstruct work when he refused to meet their demand, read the FIR. Enraged, the accused beat up his assistant Solaiman after detaining him at the union parishad office on the night of February 22 of the year, Pasha complained adding that they also tried to gun him (Pasha) down. The BNP men later dumped Pasha on roadside unconscious, said the case statement. He said Bulu's men kept harassing him by filing cases when he returned home from hospital after a lengthy recuperation.

Twins born

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separate. Breathing, movement and other activities of the new-borns are normal. "Following a chest x-ray, eco-cardiography and ultrasonogram of the twins' abdomen we will come to the decision whether the babies can be separated," said Dr Mahmud. A board will be formed with surgeons and paediatricians for the purpose, he said. "It seems that the process of separation will be very critical," he added. Father of the twins Khalilur Rahman, a farmer, said the condition of the twins was well from the very beginning and the doctors of the clinic referred them to the DMCH for better examination of the internal condition of the twins. An ultrasonogram of Hashu Begum during pregnancy predicted twins but it did not say anything about their conjoined condition, Khalil said. Experts said when an embryo begins to split into identical twins but stops midway leaving the partially separated egg to mature, it results in conjoined twins. This occurs once in every 1,50,000 to 2,00,000 live births and is three times likely to happen to females than males. The chances of survival of conjoined twins depend on how they are connected. About 40-60 percent are stillborn and 35 percent survive 24 hours or less. For twins who undergo surgery, one often dies after the operation and the rate of survival beyond the age of two is just 20 percent.

2 DU teachers

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Hossain and DU Social Science Dean Prof Harun-or-Rashid- before the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka at 3:00pm with a forwarding report. The case was filed against some 6,000 unnamed students, teachers and outsiders for damaging public and private property, obstructing police from performing duties and pelting policemen with stones on the DU campus on August 22. In the forwarding report, Sub-Inspector Sirajul Islam, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, mentioned that the two arrestees gave important information about the incidents on the DU campus. So, they need to be confined to jail until the investigation of the case is completed, the IO said. The defence lawyers submitted a petition for granting them bail though there are no provisions for seeking bail under the emergency power rules. After hearing both the sides, Metropolitan Magistrate Hassan Sarwar ordered to send them to jail. Earlier, the two were also placed on a four-day remand in another case filed for their involvement in the incidents on the DU campus.

DU syndicate

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Faiz said the university might partially be reopened during the holy month for the convenience of the student-researchers. The authorities would take steps to remove the "sense of insecurity" among the teachers and students before reopening the university, the VC added.

Govt to decide

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(special branch) and legal adviser to the law cell of the home ministry have been invited to attend the meeting. In his letter to the chief adviser the CEC said immediately after the independence of Bangladesh two streams of Urdu speaking people were found in Bangladesh. One group, known as "stranded Pakistanis", had sworn their allegiance to Pakistan and wanted to go back to that country at any cost. Others accepted the emerging reality and swore their allegiance to Bangladesh and merged with the mainstream society and polity. Of the 3,00,000 Urdu speaking people living in Bangladesh, 1,60,000 live in 116 camps set up by the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) in different parts of the country. Many of them were born after 1971 or were minor in that year, said Huda in the letter. "As far as the EC is concerned, there is no problem with regard to the Urdu speaking people living all over the country outside the ICRC camps. They are citizens of Bangladesh and have been listed in the electoral rolls by following the criteria set for the purpose. However, the commission is unable to register the Urdu speaking people living inside the camps as voters due to complications relating to their citizenship," sources said quoting Huda's letter. The CEC said the commission has pondered over the issue and feels that time has now come to look at the issue objectively and with compassion. "The case of Urdu speaking people need to be separated from the 'stranded Pakistanis' and a decision of their citizenship may be taken expeditiously," CEC Huda said.

CA wants Intel

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company is ready to work aggressively with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of ICT in Bangladesh. Intel now mainly focuses on ICT and education sectors. He said they want to immediately set up infrastructure of teachers training programme in Bangladesh. Under such a programme, Intel has already trained up about seven lakh teachers in India. Barrett said Intel is giving priority to teachers training programme, as qualified teacher is important behind the root of all successes. "We'll focus on higher education and shape the education curriculum so that students of today can face the world of tomorrow." The CA said partnership with Intel will help Bangladesh in its forward march towards progress through alleviating poverty, generating employment and increasing economic growth. Partnership can be set up in terms of training, research and technology. He said Bangladesh is ready to move ahead aggressively with IT. The government attached importance to

Hasina, Rehana

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of 24 people were shown as prosecution witnesses in the charge sheet. Azam J Chowdhury, managing director of Eastcoast Trading Pvt Ltd, filed the case with Gulshan police against Hasina and Sheikh Selim on June 13 for extorting Tk 2.99 crore from him. Rehana's name was included in the charge sheet as her involvement with the extortion was found during the investigation. The joint forces arrested the AL chief in connection with the case on July 16 and produced her in a magistrate's court that sent her to a sub-jail. Two more extortion cases were filed with Tejjagon police against Hasina on April 9 and June 13. Besides, the Anti-Corruption Commission on Sunday filed with the same police a case against Hasina and six others for taking bribe. Following the cases, Hasina was granted ad interim bail in two cases filed with Tejjagon and Gulshan police stations from the High Court. But the Supreme Court had earlier stayed the HC order following appeals from the government. UNB adds: The High Court will deliver today its orders deciding the fate of former prime minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina as to whether she should be tried in the warplane purchase scam case. Pending with the trial court, the

ICT education

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introduction of ICT in education accelerates the learning process and excites the youth in education. "Korea is an example, which aggressively educated teachers on ICT to teach the children. Korea has trained over 4,50,000 teachers and it also has one of the highest broadband connectivity in the world," he said. Barrett and Grameen Solution's founder Prof Muhammad Yunus have been running education programmes in developing countries for a few decades, and in the last decade they have spent 1 billion US dollars. "We believe Intel will continue this programmes for decades," Barrett said. Intel and Grameen will jointly introduce several programmes to help the people access the vast resources of medical, educational, and commercial knowledge on the Internet. They will offer low cost PCs on easy monthly instalments and will launch a project to set up telecentres across the country. The telecentres will generate employment opportunities for rural citizens, who will offer services like Internet access, photocopying, printing, and PC usage for e-government and e-commerce. The centres will be financed through micro-loans. Intel and Grameen have planned to make the Intel powered Classmate PCs available for students. Those PCs are affordable and full-featured student laptops – well suited for promoting project based learning in primary schools. Intel is also developing plans to launch its education initiatives in Bangladesh, including Intel Teach, and Intel Learn programmes. The Intel Teach programme trains teachers in how to integrate technology in a curriculum to enhance classroom learning. The community based Intel Learn programme aims at enlightening unserved children aged between 8 and 16 about technology, critical thinking, and collaboration skills. Intel will also work with software companies in Bangladesh to develop localised Internet content and software for the government, schools, and telecentres. "A farmer in Bangladesh is interested in information about fertiliser or insecticide – not about Wall Street," Barrett pointed out. Intel will work with local companies to introduce Intel's Skool Learning and Teaching Technology. The interactive learning website will provide math and science lessons tailored to meet local needs. Intel and Grameen plan to collaborate through public and private partnerships on the deployment of WiMAX technology – which provides a cost effective and efficient way for delivering broadband Internet access to rural communities. "Broadband and wireless connectivity in Bangladesh will ensure ICT access

to WiMAX to expand the worldwide connectivity through broad band, which would help the country's socio-economic progress as a chain reaction. He sought Intel's support in WiMAX technology, a telecommunications technology aimed at providing wireless data over long distance in a variety of ways. The CA said the major objective of the present government is to establish good governance. The present government is pro-private sector and wants to alleviate poverty through involving the private sector. The Intel chairman appreciated grameenphone operations and countrywide networks. Bangladesh could be an example in the world the way grameenphone has spread its network in villages, he said. Intel signed a MoU with Grameen Solutions in the MoU. Intel Country Business Manager GA Manjur and Secretary in-charge of the CA's Office Kazi M Aminul Islam were also present during the meeting.

much-talked-about MiG-29 case had been stayed for long by High Court orders upon applications filed by Hasina and six other accused for quashing the case related to alleged shady deals for the purchase of the supersonic fighter jets from Russia. When Hasina was prime minister (1996-2001), eight Russian-made fighter planes of the brand were procured for Bangladesh Air Force. Immediately after the BNP-led four-party alliance came to power, the now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption filed the MiG-29 case against Sheikh Hasina and the others with Tejjagon Police Station in December 2001. According to the first information report (FIR), the government incurred a loss of Tk 700 crore on account of the warplane purchase. Former army chief Lt Gen (ret'd) Mustafizur Rahman, ex-Air Force chief Air Marshal (ret'd) Jamal Uddin Ahmed, retired defence secretary Syed Yusuf Hossain, Air Commodore (ret'd) Mirza Akhtar Maruf, retired defence joint secretary Mohammad Hossain Seraniabati and businessman Noor Ali are the other charge-sheeted accused in the case.

CA, army chief

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present inflationary pressure. Per capita income increased to 11.1 per cent in FY 2006-07, which caused extra demands by the people and inflation went up," he said. A meeting between private and public sector will also be held today to discuss the recent issues relating price hike and problems faced by the businessmen, the adviser said. The IMF team led by its adviser for the Asia-Pacific region, Thomas Rambough, is likely to discuss with the government the 'next version' of IMF's credit programme while the government may seek a significant amount as budget support to make up for the losses caused by the recent floods, sources said.

US denies

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on normalizing relations with the North, enemies since the Korean War, and explore removing the terrorism designation. Hill suggested that North Korea first needs to go further in dismantling its nuclear programs before the US will take it off the terrorism list. "Getting off the list will depend on further denuclearization," Hill told reporters later Tuesday after a meeting with Japan's nuclear envoy, also in Sydney for a meeting of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum. Hill declined to specify what North Korea must do but said those things have been discussed with North Korean officials. "They know what these steps are," Hill said. Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura, who was in Australia for meetings of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, said he expected to be briefed by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on North Korea's status on the list. "But I believe it depends on all kinds of conditions" like the disabling of nuclear facilities and complete verification," Machimura told reporters in Sydney. "These conditions have to be agreed and then realized. I haven't heard that we've reached that position yet." After a slow start, the parties to the February agreement which include China, Japan, Russia and South Korea as well as the US and North Korea have picked up speed in implementing its terms. North Korea shut down its main nuclear reactor in July. After their weekend meeting, Hill told reporters that North Korea's envoy, Kim Kye Gwan, agreed to disclose its nuclear programs and disable them by the end of this year. Kim separately suggested that North Korea was willing to declare and dismantle the facilities but did not mention the year end date.

Khaleda's lawyers

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vokalatnoma. "We applied to the jail authority to allow us to meet Khaleda Zia to provide her with legal aid," Helal said, adding that the jail authority took the papers and asked them to come today. "We have already applied for the certified copy of the case [against Khaleda] for starting legal procedures. As soon as we get it, we will appeal to the court for her release on bail," Helal told The Daily Star. "We will file a writ petition with the High Court challenging the legality of Khaleda Zia's arrest," he added. The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) on September 2 filed its first graft case against former prime minister Khaleda Zia, her younger son Araraf Rahman Koko and 11 others. They were charged with violating tendering conditions in appointing Global Agro Trade (Private) Company Ltd, an indenting house, for container handling at the Dhaka Inland Container Depot (ICD) and Chittagong Port ICD yard despite its inadequacy in experience and skills. Former lawmakers Simon Begum and Rasheda Begum Hira, among others, were in the lawyers' team that went to meet Khaleda yesterday. They took dry food and some clothes for Khaleda. The jail authority took the food and told them that they would examine it before giving it to Khaleda. DIG (prisons) Maj Shamsul Haider Siddiqui meanwhile told reporters yesterday that both Khaleda and detained Awami League President Sheikh Hasina were in good physical condition. "A number of lawyers and relatives of Khaleda Zia applied to meet her. After completing all procedures we will take the list to her [Khaleda] to select persons she wants to meet on priority basis," Haider said. "The jail authority is cooking food for both Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina together for the sake of convenience," he added.

Ctg businessmen

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the Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Nankara under Choudhagram upazila in Comilla killing the two businessmen and the driver on the spot and injuring three others. The wounded are former CCCI director Munwar Ahmed, businessman Md Asgar Khan and Md Salim Naser. They were first admitted to the Comilla District Hospital and later shifted to the capital's Apollo Hospital. The police seized the covered van and the damaged Pajero jeep. They handed over the bodies of victims to their relatives and gave the relief money to the regional director of Anjuman Mufidul Islam. The namaz-e-janaza of the victims will be held at 10:00am today at the Jamiatul Falah Mosque in city's Dampara area. Meanwhile, the CCCI in a press statement yesterday expressed shock at the tragic death of its former Director Shahedul Alam and Standard Bank Director Harun Salam.

Dhaka rejects

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ministry has informed me that no one by that name [Mohammad Sharifuddin] has been arrested here." The Indian media quoted India's Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Director Vijay Shanker as saying that the bureau received information that Bangladesh had arrested Mohammed Sharifuddin, who also goes by the aliases Abu Hamza and Kanchan. The media also reported that the CBI chief wished to check the veracity of the information with Interpol. Earlier yesterday, external affairs minister of India, Pranab Mukherjee, told the media in New Delhi that his government had sought the assistance of Bangladesh government during the home-secretary level meeting in Delhi in the first week of August to capture the perpetrators of a spate of bomb blasts in India. Denying the claims, a foreign ministry press release yesterday stated, "So far, Bangladesh has not received any request for information in connection with the Hyderabad blasts." When asked whether Dhaka

was asked by New Delhi for assistance during the home-secretary meet, Toudih added, "Yes, but that was back then." This could lead to the first test for the new agreement between the two home ministries to set up a joint-mechanism for sharing actionable intelligence, as New Delhi has already hinted that it may use it for the first time in relation to the Hyderabad bombings. The Indian press also quoted several Indian security sources to point finger at the Bangladeshi chapter of the Harkatul Jihad Al-Islami as the organization behind the August 25 and May 11 bombings in Hyderabad. The foreign ministry termed these reports "disturbing and clearly motivated" and urged the Indian media to avoid "sensationalism" as it would "undermine" friendly relations between the two neighbours. Andhra Pradesh chief minister had earlier accused Bangladeshi militant groups for carrying out the bombings – a claim immediately dismissed by Dhaka as "baseless".

Bush hints

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the US-led invasion of 2003. Aside from Bush himself, Maliki is coming under harsh criticism from many in Congress for his perceived political inaction to reconcile Iraq's warring factions. Back aboard Air Force One en route to a summit of Asia-Pacific leaders in Australia, Bush expressed frustration with the slow pace of political change in Iraq but said he still backed Maliki's "evolving" leadership. Bush's trip to Iraq coincided with the withdrawal of British troops from their last base in the southern city of Basra amid tensions between Washington and its top ally Britain over their policy in Iraq. Staging a surprise detour from his trip to Sydney, Bush arrived at the Al-Asad air base in Anbar along with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and national security adviser Stephen Hadley.

Waiting for him were US Defence Secretary Robert Gates, General Peter Pace, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral William Fallon, the commander of US forces in the Middle East, and Petraeus. Hadley said Bush was trying to frame the debate that will follow next week's Petraeus-Crocker testimony to Congress by spotlighting what he sees as improved security. "So the issue is we are at the point where we can continue to make security progress with X number of forces?" Hadley said. On his first visit to Iraq since June 2006 and his third since the invasion, Bush also met tribal sheikhs from Anbar province who have given his administration hopes of a turnaround in the deadly Sunni insurgency unleashed after the toppling of Saddam Hussein in April 2003. Interviewed by ABC News, Gates said Bush would reach a decision on US troop levels in Iraq "fairly shortly," after the eagerly awaited appearance in Congress of Petraeus and Crocker. Surveying Iraq overall, Donald Rumsfeld's successor as defence secretary added: "Actually, I am more optimistic than I have been at any time since I took this job." Bush and his generals are appealing to recalcitrant members of Congress for time to make the troop surge work, after the US military deployed 28,500 extra soldiers in February to try and end the violence. In an address to raucously cheering Marines at the base, Bush rejected the intensifying pressure from US lawmakers and reiterated his controversial stand that the war in Iraq is a life-or-death struggle against al-Qaeda extremists. "Those decisions will be based on a calm assessment by our military commanders on the conditions on the ground, not a nervous reaction by

Washington politicians to poll results in the media," the president said. "In other words, when we begin to draw down troops from Iraq, it will be from a position of strength and success, not from the position of fear and failure." Travelling to Anbar rather than Baghdad gave Bush an opportunity to highlight the shift in sentiment in the province, which US officials insist is being replicated in other strife-torn parts of Iraq. But security officials said that shortly before Bush's arrival, two car bombs went off in Anbar's provincial capital Ramadi, killing four people and wounding 10. In Baghdad, police found 15 corpses of men shot dead.

Fazlul Haque Milon

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Milon had been absconding since the joint forces started the crackdown on corruption suspects. The elite force also seized the Pajero jeep he was riding to examine its documents. Milon sits on a number of committees of the BNP and its front wings: secretary general of Gazipur unit BNP, convener of Kaliganj upazila unit BNP, secretary general of Sweenchhasebak Dal. He had been a member of the parliamentary standing committee on communications ministry in the last parliament. Elected to the parliament in 2001 from Gazipur-3 (Kaliganj) constituency, Milon was surrounded by allegations of corruption during the BNP-Jama'at alliance government and maintained close link with Hawa Bhaban. He allegedly made a big fortune by selling sand from a stretch of the Shitalakhya River from Ruppaganj to Kapashia, which he leased from the government using political influence. As he was the only BNP lawmaker from Gazipur district, all development fund for the district went through him, fanning the discussion among locals that he did not sign any bill prior to getting 10 percent of the project's money. He allegedly also pocketed huge amount of money by managing for himself construction work through misuse of his political position. Besides, local BNP leaders, picked by him, reportedly collected for him huge toll from local businesses, two cement factories being the frequented victims, local sources said.

Benazir-Musharraf

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and give an amnesty to herself and other politicians covering her two terms in power between 1989 and 1996. Babar said he believed that the talks would resume on Wednesday or a day later in the Gulf emirate. The negotiations were given extra urgency last week when another former premier, Nawaz Sharif, said he planned to return to Pakistan from exile on September 10. He also vowed to oust the military dictator from power in the next six weeks, ruling out any compromise with Pakistan's embattled President Pervez Musharraf.

"His tenure ends on October 15 and he (Musharraf) has no constitutional right to remain. I hope to force him to step down by October 15," The Times' reported on Tuesday, quoting Sharif – who prepares to return to his home country from "forced" exile next week – as saying. The deposed premier, who was ousted in a military coup in 1999, said that after returning to the Islamic nation on September 10, he would lead his Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz in a campaign to force Musharraf to quit as president by October 15 and block any attempt by the dictator to seek re-election. Subsequently, he said, the chief of the Senate would take over as the acting President of Pakistan and hold general elections for a new Parliament, which would then vote in for a new president for a five-year term. Sharif has a second plan too. If he's

arrested on arrival as "threatened" by the Pakistani government, the former Prime Minister said that his party would hold "big, massive rallies" to force the military ruler to back down. "I am not alone in this battle. The entire nation is with me".

Twin suicide

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Arshad said a total of 25 people had died and 66 more were wounded and that initial investigations indicated that the bombings were suicide attacks. Officials said it was too early to say who was responsible for the blasts. However, Religious Affairs Minister Ejaz-ul Haq said they could be a reaction to the war in Afghanistan and Pakistani operations in militant strongholds areas near the Afghan frontier. "This is all probably because of the situation presently in Afghanistan and in Waziristan," a tribally governed area where troops are battling militants, Haq said on Dawn News television. "We are the frontline state in the war against terror, and we are suffering the most." Pakistan has witnessed scores of bombings and other acts of terrorism since siding with the United States after the Sept. 11 attacks. Officials have blamed pro-Taliban and al-Qaeda elements for much of the violence. Rawalpindi has also seen several attacks, including two huge bombs aimed at President Gen Pervez Musharraf that killed at least 16 people, including three suicide attackers, in December 2003.

Barapukuria coal mine

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one as the BCMCL authorities decided to seal the area yesterday considering the imminent threat the CO emissions pose on human health. Inhaling a small percentage of CO can kill any human being, said experts. "We will now review our past mistakes. We shall see whether we needed to inject more nitrogen back in April to July to eliminate risk of carbon monoxide emission," said a source at BCMCL. The BCMCL produced 2,200 tons of coal from this phase alone on Monday and another 1,000 tons yesterday till deciding to seal it off, he added. Combined with coal production from another phase, the BCMCL was producing over 3,200mt coal every day for the last 12 days – enough to cater to the requirement of the Barapukuria 250MW power plant. Prior to the reopening of the Phase 1110, it was all set to import coal for the power plant from Indonesia due to ongoing coal shortage. Now the Power Development Board (PDB) would once again have to rely on imported coal to run its Barapukuria 250MW power plant. It is not certain when this phase could be reopened. "In the best case scenario, it will take several more months," the source pointed out. This phase of the complex

underground mine gives access to 2,30 lakh tons of coal, which has a production value of at least \$100,000. On October 4, 2005 the BCMCL shut down the mine's production phase 1110 due to deadly saturation of gas. On April 4, 2006 Chinese contractors tried to unseal the area to recover the costly mining equipment. But it had to be re-sealed on April 7, 2006, as the gas situation inside it was precarious. Then from April, 2007 the mine's Chinese operators led by CMC, with help of consultants from China University of Mining Technology, started injecting nitrogen into the sealed area to reduce oxygen and to eliminate chances of self-combustion. On August 18, a team, with the backup of fire services, medical teams and a backup power system, started unsealing the area. The Barapukuria coal mine project was approved in March 1992 at a cost of Tk 887 crore under Chinese Supplier's Credit with the completion target of July 31, 2001. Project delays and severe corruption hiked up the project cost to over Tk 1,600 crore. So far, the government has paid off more than Tk 600 crore to China.