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# CG to consider its last power bid

**SHARIER KHAN**

With some success and some failure in its bag in the last two years, the cabinet purchase committee of the caretaker government this week will consider approval of its last power scheme -- the 50-megawatt Sikalaha rental power project.

While the tender for the rental project was held in mid-October amid some strict guidelines to ensure a controversy-free bidding process, recommendation of the bid is being placed before the cabinet committee along with some unanswered questions, sources say.

"But these could have been avoided," comments an official.

In its recommendation, the power ministry suggested awarding the three-year rental scheme to a joint venture led by Royce Power Engineering Ltd of Hong Kong with local companies Asian Entech Power Corporation and Shasha Denims Ltd that proposed to set up the plant using cheap but environmentally hostile Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO).

Last week the cabinet committee cancelled the 450mw Bibiyana power project bid on ground of high power tariff offer, although the ministry thought that the price offer by Malaysian-Korean consortium Powertek was justified. This cancellation marks the caretaker government's complete failure in making any progress with any large-scale private power projects.

The power ministry under the caretaker administration wanted to float three tenders for large-scale power projects -- the 450mw Sirajganj, 450mw Meghnaghat-3 and 450mw Bibiyana power projects.

The Sirajganj and Meghnaghat-3 tenders were shelved following suggestions by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), which wanted a brand

## UN panel due today to see preparations for JS election

**DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT**

A 3-member high-level panel established by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will arrive here today on a weeklong visit to evaluate the preparations of the upcoming parliamentary polls.

"The panel is tasked with assessing the preparations and conduct of the elections through visits to Bangladesh before and during the election," a spokesperson of the UN secretary-general said in a statement Friday.

Francisc Vendrell, former special representative of the European Union in

## Obama plans to create 2.5m jobs

**AP, Washington**

President-elect Barack Obama yesterday outlined his plan to create 2.5 million jobs in coming years to rebuild roads and bridges and modernise schools while developing alternative energy sources and more efficient cars.

"These aren't just steps to pull ourselves out of this immediate crisis; these are the long-term investments in our economic future that have been ignored for far too long," Obama said in the weekly Democratic radio address. The economic recovery plan being developed by his staff aims to create 2.5 million jobs by January 2011, and he wants to get it through Congress quickly and sign it soon after taking office.

He called the plan "big enough to meet the challenges we face" and said that it will jump-start job creation but also "lay the foundation for a strong and growing economy."

Aides said the economic plan outlined Saturday went further than the president-elect has gone before.

A trio of crises -- housing, credit and financial -- have badly damaged the economy, and financial analysts have projected the country's economic hardships will continue through much of 2009.

## Crowley hopes for all-party, fair polls

**BSS, New York**

US Congressman Joseph Crowley has expressed the hope that Bangladesh's general elections will be held in a free and fair manner with participation of all political parties.

"The upcoming parliamentary elections must be well accepted through participation of all major political parties," the congressman said at a reception here Friday evening.

Bangladeshi expatriates accorded the reception to Crowley at Dhaka Club in New York for his being re-elected to the US Congress.

With district leader of

## Defaulted loans go up 37pc in PCBs

*Central bank concerned about low quality loans*

**REJAUL KARIM BYRON**

Defaulted loans with private commercial banks (PCBs) increased by 37 percent in nine months till September with the rate of rise being the highest in the last three months due to excessive disbursement of low quality loans.

According to Bangladesh Bank (BB) statistics, the rate of increase of defaulted loans was above 100 per cent with more than one third of the 30 PCBs.

On the contrary, defaulted loans with the PCBs were coming down gradually over the last few years.

BB sources said defaulted loans rose due to granting of excessive loans, which caused concern for the central bank.

A BB press release on Thursday said excessive growth of credit (the trend is noticeable especially in the PCBs) was hampering its quality. Defaulted loans with the banking sector, especially private and foreign banks, increased to a significant level in three months from July to September.

The central bank issued the press release to explain why it is taking measures to rein in private sector credit growth.

Sources in the PCBs say as commodity prices have fallen in international market, local businessmen are delaying repayment of import finance loans.

BB officials said they are going to take various measures as defaulted loans with the PCBs went up sharply. The measures include investigating the situation in each bank and taking steps after the probe.



Police prevent New Market traders and Dhaka College students on Mirpur Road yesterday after they clashed over a feud centring purchase of furniture on Friday.

## 15 hurt as students clash with traders

**Traffic movement halted for 3 hrs**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

At least 15 people were injured in clashes between Dhaka College students and traders of an adjoining market over a trivial incident in the city yesterday.

The two-hour long skirmishes closed traffic movement on the Dhaka College stretch of Mirpur Road for about three hours from 11:30am, creating severe gridlock in neighbouring areas.

The traders and employees of Chandrima Super Market

## US missile kills terror plot mastermind

*Wanted Qaeda operative among 5 killed in Pakistan strike*

**AFP, Islamabad**

The alleged al-Qaeda mastermind of a 2006 transatlantic airplane bombing plot was killed in a US missile attack in north-west Pakistan early yesterday, officials told AFP.

Rashid Rauf died when a missile hit a tribesman's house in the village of Alikhel, part of a border district known as a stronghold for al-Qaeda and Taliban militants.

He had been on the run from Pakistani authorities for just under a year.

Also among the five killed in the early morning incident was

## Tigers crash to innings defeat

**BISHWAJIT ROY in Bloemfontein**

Dale Steyn claimed his ninth five-wicket haul as Bangladesh crashed to an innings and 129-run defeat against South Africa in the first Test at the OUTsurance oval on Saturday.

After the rain-ruled third

Prayer Timing		
November 23		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-05	5-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-21	5-24
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

**আপনি কি বুঝতে পারছেন? কে কত কত! বুঝে যাঁরা বলিতে থাকে সে দিন।**  
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ডাক্তার ডেন্টাল কল্লিডো	১০২৭ ০০০০০০০৩	ইউরোপ বিজ্ঞান	১০২৭ ০০০০০০০৪
কম্পিউটার বিজ্ঞান	১০২৭ ০০০০০০০৫	মুদ্রা বিজ্ঞান	১০২৭ ০০০০০০০৬
অন্যান্য বিজ্ঞান	১০২৭ ০০০০০০০৭	সিগনেট বিজ্ঞান	১০২৭ ০০০০০০০৮

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