



Myanmar citizens living in Japan hold portraits of Aung San Suu Kyi as they shout slogans during a rally in front of the Myanmar embassy in Tokyo yesterday.

## Suu Kyi charged with breaching terms of her house arrest

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar's military junta charged pro-democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday with breaching the terms of her house arrest over a bizarre incident in which a US man swam to her lakeside house.

The 63-year-old goes on trial on Monday on the charges, which carry a jail term of up to five years and would stretch her detention past its supposed expiry date this month and through controversial elections due in 2010.

The Nobel Peace Prize laureate and her two maids appeared in court at the notorious Insein Prison near Yangon, hours after police whisked her from the residence where she has been detained for most of the past two decades.

"The authorities have charged Aung San Suu Kyi and her two maids under the Law Safeguarding the State from the Dangers of Subversive Elements, one of her lawyers, Hla Myo Myint, told reporters outside the prison.

The law governs the conditions under which Aung San Suu Kyi is held under house arrest. Legal sources said she was accused of violating the law by communicating with foreigners.

US national John Yettaw, who was held last week for sneaking into her house and

staying there for two days before he was caught, was also charged with breaking the security law and immigration conditions, Hla Myo Myint said.

Yettaw, 53, apparently used a pair of homemade flippers to swim across a lake to her crumbling residence in an apparent show of solidarity, but Aung San Suu Kyi's main lawyer Kyi Win said they had asked him to leave.

"We have to blame him," Kyi Win said. "He is a fool."

Aung San Suu Kyi would not be allowed to return home but would be held at a special house on the grounds of the prison while proceedings were under way, Kyi Win added.

Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party, which won a landslide election victory in 1990, but was never allowed to govern, said it "strongly denounces" the charges against its leader.

"She did not commit any crime," it said in a statement.

The charges against her provoked international anger, with the US State Department describing them as "troubling" and European Union special envoy Piero Fassino saying that there was "no justification".

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said he was "deeply disturbed" by the

"unlawful" detention. Dozens of Myanmar protesters meanwhile rallied in front of the country's embassy in Tokyo.

The Oxford-educated daughter of the country's founding father General Aung San, Aung San Suu Kyi has spent 13 of the past 19 years in virtual isolation in her home living with her maids and receiving visits from her doctors and lawyers.

Her most recent six-year period of detention is due to end on May 27 but diplomats said the junta was keen to keep her locked up ahead of elections that it has promised next year as part of its "roadmap to democracy".

Aung Din, executive director of the US Campaign for Burma, said it was the "cunning plan of the regime -- to put Aung San Suu Kyi in continuous detention beyond the six years allowed by the law they used to justify the detention."

Her party said at the weekend that she was in poor health and called for her to be given urgent medical assistance after her doctor was taken in for questioning over the incident with the American. He remains in detention.

She was unable to eat and put on an intravenous drip twice in the past week, suffering from dehydration and low blood pressure.

## West condemns Suu Kyi charges, Asia silent

AFP, London

Western governments lined up to condemn "disturbing" new charges brought against Myanmar's pro-democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday, but there was a deafening silence in Asia.

Gordon Brown, leader of the former colonial power Britain, said the junta which has kept her under house arrest for years wanted any excuse to extend her detention while the European Union said the move could not be justified.

The United States also said it was "troubled" by the development but there was no immediate response from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), the regional bloc which includes the country formerly known as Burma.

"I am deeply disturbed that Aung San Suu Kyi may be charged with breaching the terms of her detention," Brown said in a statement.

"The Burmese regime is clearly intent on finding any pretext, no matter how tenuous, to extend her unlawful detention," he said.

"If the 2010 elections are to have any semblance of credibility, she and all political prisoners must be freed to participate."

The 63-year-old, who was stopped by the junta from taking power after winning elections two decades ago, has been charged with breaching the terms of her house arrest after a US man swam across a lake and hid inside her home.

She will go on trial on Monday on the charges, which carry a maximum jail term of five years and would stretch her detention past its supposed expiry date this month and through elections due in 2010.

The Nobel Peace Prize laureate and her two maids appeared in court at the notorious Insein Prison near Yangon, hours after police whisked her away from the residence where she has been detained for most of the past two decades.

## Congress to emerge as single largest party

Say Rajasthan bookies

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Jaipur

Whatever may be the outcome of the Lok Sabha elections, the punters are betting on Congress emerging as the single largest party, according to bookies in Rajasthan.

If one goes by present odds being offered in the betting market, then the Congress is likely to win 140 to 145 seats and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), 125 to 130 seats.

The betting market in Rajasthan is considered huge and as per rough estimates, it deals at over Rs.500-600 crores (Rs.5-6 billion). A Jaipur-based bookie told IANS that the odds

for the Congress to win around 145 seats are 1 to 0.60-0.70 paisa.

That means someone betting a rupee on the Congress winning 145 seats and then winning the bet will make Rs.1.60-1.70. The lower the rate the higher the chances.

For Congress winning 150 seats, the odds are 1:1.50.

The odds for the BJP winning 125 seats are 1:0.23-0.27, and for 130 seats, increase to 1:0.68-0.75.

A bookie from Sikar, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the 'market' in their district is betting on the Congress, which, according to him, is likely to get around 140 seats.

## Indian parties hold strategy sessions to woo allies

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, New Delhi

A day after televisions projected a badly fractured Lok Sabha, leading contenders for power discussed ways yesterday to woo new allies and estranged partners in a bid to cobble a majority in parliament.

Leaders of the ruling Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the so-called Third Front held informal discussions and prepared to hold strategy sessions in the run up to the eagerly awaited vote count Saturday.

Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi, touted as the BJP's poster boy, flew into New Delhi to add strength to the party's confidence levels.

The BJP's core group is to meet at the residence of its prime ministerial candidate LK Advani and follow it up with talks with smaller groups that are expected to play a key role in government formation.

Modi explained to reporters why he was in New Delhi: "We are here for political reasons

and to discuss the post-poll scenario. It is no secret."

The Congress will also meet later Thursday at party president Sonia Gandhi's residence.

Party sources said the meeting will be attended by Digvijay Singh, Commerce Minister Kamal Nath, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee, Defence Minister AK Antony, Ahmed Patel and Janardhan Divedi.

Congress general secretary Rahul Gandhi, who was the star campaigner in the staggered April-May election that ended Wednesday, is also expected to join the discussions.

"We will take stock of where we have done well and also chart out a future course once the results are out Saturday," said a party leader.

Exit polls by television channels Wednesday predicted that the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) would finish just marginally ahead of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The Third Front, made up of Communists and regional parties, is tipped to win around 100 seats.



Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Ravi Shankar Prasad (C) escapes the media in New Delhi yesterday after a BJP strategy session to discuss post polls alliances at the residence of prime ministerial candidate Lal Krishna Advani.

## Move to axe ACC's power

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proposal for introducing a no-meeting day and a visitor-free day in the Bangladesh Secretariat to improve the working atmosphere.

In recent days, after the political government assumed office, the number of visitors has significantly increased, which sometimes creates disturbance for the administration.

It also discussed an option that the minister, state minister and the secretary of a ministry should not be abroad at a time because it "hampers the decision-making process."

The meeting discussed and recommended reintroduction of mobile courts to

contain crimes, particularly adulteration of food and other consumer products, as there have been reports of widespread offence of this sort once again.

After separation of the judiciary, the operation of mobile courts was squeezed as the administration cadre service was stripped of magistracy powers.

"If such mobile courts are reintroduced, it will be within the spirit of the separation of judiciary--there will be no contrast or contradiction," the cabinet secretary said.

He noted that the home secretary placed a proposal in the meeting for arming the law-enforcing agencies with powers to do mobile phone

contain crimes, particularly adulteration of food and other consumer products, as there have been reports of widespread offence of this sort once again.

"We discussed the matter mainly to contain the threat issued by miscreants through mobile phones. This power will give them authority to quickly identify the miscreants and take action against them," Aziz said.

Meanwhile, a cabinet subcommittee held a meeting at the cabinet division to discuss proposals for amending the Public Procurement Regulations 2008 to expedite government procurement process.

The meeting, presided over by Finance Minister AMA Muhith, ended inconclusively, sources said, adding that more meetings will be held in this regard.

## Fallen Chinese leader reveals Tiananmen secrets

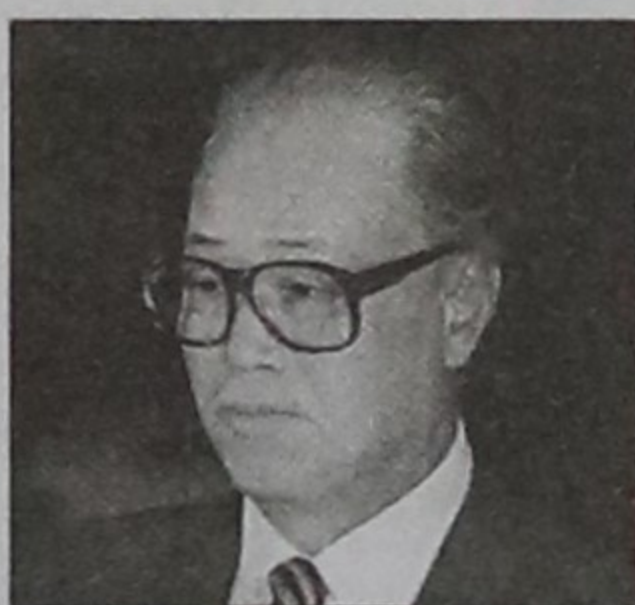
AFP, Beijing

The memoir of a top Chinese leader who was deposed over his sympathy with 1989 pro-democracy protesters has been published ahead of the anniversary of the bloody Tiananmen crackdown he tried to prevent.

The disclosure of Zhao Ziyang's recollections could prove embarrassing to China ahead of the 20th anniversary of the June 4 crackdown on demonstrators that led to hundreds, possibly thousands, of deaths.

Zhao, who died in 2005 after more than 15 years under house arrest, secretly recorded his memoir on tapes and passed them on to friends, according to the book's preface by Adi Ignatius, also the editor of the Harvard Business Review.

"When Zhao died... some of the people who knew of the



Zhao Ziyang

recordings launched a complex, clandestine effort to gather the materials in one place and then transcribe them for publication," Ignatius wrote.

In one extract from "Prisoner of the State," published in English by US firm Simon and Schuster, Zhao describes his feelings as tanks and soldiers moved towards Tiananmen Square to crush the protests, which had gone on for weeks.

## CIA chief in Israel for secret talks on Iran

AFP, Jerusalem

CIA chief Leon Panetta has held secret talks in Israel with top officials who assured him the Jewish state would not launch a surprise strike on Iran, a report said on Thursday.

According to the public radio report, Panetta arrived in Israel two weeks ago for a round of talks with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defence Minister Ehud Barak and other top officials.

The talks focused on Iran's nuclear programme, which the United States and Israel suspect is aimed at developing an atomic bomb, a claim denied by Tehran.

The Israeli leaders assured Panetta that "Israel does not intend to surprise the US on Iran."

President Barack Obama's decision to engage Tehran in direct talks in an effort to end

the nuclear standoff have raised concern in Israel which called on the negotiations to be limited in time and accompanied by tough sanctions.

Israel nevertheless refuses to remove the option of taking military action against the Islamic republic.

Netanyahu has said that Iran's nuclear ambitions posed an "existential threat" to the Jewish state.

Iran is very close to acquiring nuclear weapons, the head of Israel's military intelligence was reported as telling a powerful parliamentary committee on Tuesday.

"Iran is at the moment very close to getting a military nuclear arsenal," Amos Yadlin told parliament's foreign affairs and defence committee, adding that "Iran can manage to stabilise its military nuclear programme by 2010."

## Separate pay commission

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"Apart from their own syllabus, the English medium schools and madrasas will have to follow the curriculum," he added.

Mentioning around 42 percent students dropped out from school before their SSC examinations this year he said the government has already initiated to provide free textbooks to secondary-level students to reduce the number of drop-outs.

Regarding the HEQEP, he said the project, after being implemented, will ensure proper educational environ-

ment, enhance research programmes and ensure modern communication among different universities.

Eminent academician Prof AM Harun-ar-Rashid urged the government to make the educational institutions free from the clutches of politics.

Emphasising science education, he said there should be a central research laboratory and library in the country to boost the qualitative improvements.

UGC Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam said the project covers all the universities of the country and it will help

enhance the quality of academic research and innovative teaching.

The project will provide research fund and other facilities to the universities to generate large number of capable and competent human resources to face the global challenges, he said.

UGC Member Prof Tajul Islam gave an overview of the project while HEQEP project director Ruknud-Deen Ahmed, World Bank representative Mohammad A Toure and UGC Member Prof Atfal Hye Shibly also spoke on the occasion.

## BNP demands

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programme in front of the Jatiya Press Club.

"We want a proper and neutral investigation into the Palkhona incident. But the government is trying to divert people's attention to hide the real culprits," Delwar alleged while talking to journalists.

He suddenly fell sick during the programme and was rushed to a city hospital.

Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain said people have been suffering from gas and power crises.

He said they are worried about the law and order in the country.

Senior BNP leaders Moudud Ahmed and Jamiruddin Sircar along with pro-BNP lawyers formed a human chain in the High Court area while leaders and workers of Chhatra Dal held the programme at Shahbagh.

Party leaders Abdul Mannan and Selima Rahman participated in the programme at Bangla Motor and Sonargaon intersections while Moyeen Khan and Shamsur Mobin Chowdhury along with party activists formed human chain in Teigaon College area.

BNP leader Rizvi Ahmed led the programme on Manik Mia Avenue while Moazzem Hossain Alal and Salauddin Quader Chowdhury along with several hundred workers formed human chains near Asad gate and at Gabtoli.

It was part of the party's month-long protest programme across the country from May 5.

Delwar on April 23 announced the programme demanding an end to power, water and gas crises.



### Request for Proposal

#### Demand and Supply Assessment of different Safety Products and Services for MSMEs

Katalyst, a market development project under the Ministry of Commerce, requests proposals from interested consulting firms/team of consultants for the assessment of demand and supply of safety products/services which are directly or indirectly related to the overall working environment and productivity of Micro, Small and Medium sized Enterprises.

A detailed Terms of Reference and other information will be available from Katalyst (Please mail to [irsd@swisscontact-bd.org](mailto:irsd@swisscontact-bd.org)).

Katalyst invites interested parties to submit their Proposal to the **Division Manager, Industry & Rural Sectors Division, Katalyst, House 20, Road 6, Baridhara, Dhaka** mentioning "Proposal on demand and supply assessment of different safety products and services for MSMEs" on top of the envelope by **May 31, 2009**.



### Request for Proposal

Katalyst, a market development project under Ministry of Commerce requests proposals from interested consulting firms/research/development organizations and other relevant entities for implementing the following assignment:

**Assignment: Conducting in-depth study in order to assess the potential of packaging as a service in selected value chain sectors and developing relevant strategies for facilitating growth of the packaging services sector.**

Katalyst is looking at Packaging as a service sector and exploring the possible improvements that can be made in the existing packaging practices in Bangladesh. The contracting organization is expected to design, develop and execute an in-depth study, with the assistance and guidance of Katalyst. The tasks include, among others:

- Conducting a literature survey to understand the various practices, regulations regarding packaging
- Mapping sub-sectors that are the main users of packaging services
- Conducting a demand assessment and value addition of packaging in different value chain sectors
- Identifying the constraints to growth of the packaging sector and the opportunities to address the same
- Assessing the market dynamics of the service providers involved in the packaging service sector
- Developing a strategy for the packaging service sector

Interested organizations are to submit their final proposals consisting of a separate technical and financial bid by 23 May, 2009 with "Packaging Study Proposals" written on top of their envelope. The proposal should be based on the terms of reference that can be collected by e-mailing to [services.division@swisscontact-bd.org](mailto:services.division@swisscontact-bd.org) along with a brief profile of your company.