

# Go for coal-based power plant to resolve crisis

Speakers urge govt

UNB, Dhaka

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday suggested the government immediately go for coal-based power plant, even if it runs on imported coal, to resolve the nagging power crisis.

Energy and Power magazine organised the roundtable on 'Energy Source for Power Generation' at the Cirdap Auditorium in the city.

"We may have many options for power generation, but coal should be the best option in the present perspective as we are not in a position to go for offshore exploration of gas immediately," Dr Ijaz Hossain told the roundtable.

Dr Hossain, a professor of chemical engineering at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), presented the keynote paper at the roundtable.

He claimed that the country with its 2.0 billion tons of coal reserve can generate 10,000MW electricity for the next 50 years.

About the use of renewable energy option, he said it can be "kilowatt-power solution" but the country needs "megawatt-power solution".

State Minister for Power and Energy Shamsul Haque Tuku, who addressed the roundtable as the chief guest, urged the left political parties-backed Gas Protection Committee to shun their movement against open-pit coal extraction.

Criticising the committee for forming a human chain, he said the government is yet to go for any offshore gas block bidding, but they are staging demonstrations.

"Don't oppose the government's programme with a

mere hint from any outside force. You should not resist the government's programme if you really want the country's power crisis to go," the state minister told the committee.

Former state minister for power Iqbal Hasan Mahmood Tuku said that the present power crisis is a longstanding issue and it was created 20 years back when the donor agencies, including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), withdrew their financial support.

He said the lengthy bureaucratic process was the main bottleneck in his endeavour to improve the power sector situation when he discharged his duty as the state minister.

He supported the Awami League government's move for setting up a 1000MW nuclear power plant.

Former state minister for

energy AKM Mosharrif Hossain said the BNP-led government had made a move to go for offshore gas block bidding.

Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Power and Energy Ministry Maj Gen (ret) Subid Ali Bhuiyan said that his committee has submitted a recommendation to the finance ministry to make the highest allocation for the power and energy sector in the coming budget.

Former scientist of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission Yunus Akhand favoured the nuclear power plant to be set up in the country to meet the future power demand as it provides electricity at the cheapest price.

Summit Group Chairman Mohammad Aziz Khan and former director of Petrobangla Mainul Ahsan also spoke at the roundtable.



Director General of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) Hassan Mahmood Khandker speaks at the inaugural ceremony of a training workshop for senior Rab officials at the Rab Forces Headquarters in the city yesterday. On his right is Head of Mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross Finn Ruda.

## 320 died in workplace accidents last year

40pc deaths caused by electrocution: Survey report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 320 people died due to accidents in workplaces last year and 40 percent of deaths were due to electrocution on construction sites or in factories, according to a survey report.

Centre for Corporate Accountability's Bangladesh Worker Safety Programme (BWSP), Bangladesh Occupational Safety Health and Environment Programme (OSHE) and Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) jointly conducted the study based on newspaper reports.

The report said a total of 284 incidents resulted in 320 workplace deaths. Of them,

more than one third of deaths took place in the construction sector.

Some 122 people died due to electrocution and 51 died after falling from height, it added.

The report observed that the construction sector had the highest number of deaths - 120 or 38 percent of the total death. A total of 94 people died in the manufacturing sector and 91 in the service sector.

In the manufacturing sector, 17 deaths took place in rice mills, 11 in garments industry, 10 in ship-breaking industry and nine were in the steel/re-rolling mills.

The report also said 70 people -- almost one fifth of

the victims -- died in Dhaka, 44 in Chittagong, 20 in Jessore, 15 in Narayanganj, 13 in Gazipur and 11 in Comilla.

Only 20 of the 320 victims were women, the report said.

The report was launched in the city yesterday. "These deaths are simply unnecessary and simple precautions by developer companies, factory owners, power development companies and rural electrification committees would prevent the deaths of hundreds of workers," said David Bergman, director of the Centre of Corporate Accountability's Bangladesh Worker Safety Programme, at the launch of the report.

## After 8 years, trial of Ramna Batamul blast case begins

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Trial of the Ramna Batamul blast case began at a Dhaka court yesterday, eight years after the blasts that left ten people dead and scores injured.

On the first day, Judge ANM Bashir Ullah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court recorded the statement of officer-in-charge (OC) of Laksam Kabir Hossain, complainant of the case. Kabir was later cross-examined by defence lawyers.

After recording his statement, the court fixed today for next hearing of the case.

The same court had earlier recorded statements of two witnesses, including complainant of the case filed for murders.

The blast had taken place at Ramna, Batamul, during Pahela Baishakh celebrations on April 14 in 2001.

Following the carnage, two cases -- one for murder and another for possession and use of explosive substances -- were filed with Ramna Police Station.

In his deposition, Kabir Hossain told the court that he was a Sub-Inspector (SI) at Ramna police on April 14, 2001. He was asked to perform his duties at Ramna Batamul where Pahela Baishakh celebrations were being held on that day. At about 8:15am, a bomb exploded around 15 to 20 yards away from the stage. He then rushed to the scene and found seven people dead on the spot and a number of others injured.

Another bomb went off there 10 to 15 minutes after the first explosion, he said.

Kabir said he then informed his higher authorities of the blasts over wireless and they rushed to the scene.

He along with other police official Amal Chandra Chanda, complainant of the case, filed for murders, took the injured persons to medical for treatment.

The injured are Amin Uddin, Omar Faruque, Jahangir, Rafiqul Islam, Mamun, Swapan Kumar Das, Ashim, Afzal, Ibrahim Khalil, Reza and Mahmudul Karim.

During yesterday's hearing, Harkatul Jihad (Huji) chief Mufti Abdul Hannan and four others, now in jail custody, were produced before the court. Another accused Maulana Akbar Hossain, now on a High Court bail, was also present in the court.

Maulana Tajuddin, younger brother of former deputy minister and BNP leader Abdus Salam Pintu, and seven other accused have been at large since the filing of the cases.

## PADMA BRIDGE Tk 33.77 crore for land acquisition in Shariatpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain yesterday handed over compensation money for land acquisition in Shariatpur for the Padma Multiple Bridge Project to DC of Shariatpur at Shetu Bhaban in the city.

Deputy Commissioner Anisur Rahman received a cheque for Tk 33.77 crore from Abul Hossain at a ceremony organised by Bridges Division of the communications ministry.

Earlier, Shariatpur received Tk 11 crore for the same purpose. Allocation for rehabilitation of the affected people will be given later on, said the minister.

Rahman said a camp would be set up at the project site to disburse the compensation money in a transparent manner.

Terminating the Padma Bridge one of the highest priority projects of his government, Abul Hossain reiterated that the railway service would be along the 5.8-kilometre long Padma Bridge right from the opening day.

In the first phase of land acquisition compensation, Tk 146 crore was handed over for Madaripur district.

Tk 415 crore will be given for Munshiganj district in July in the third phase, Abul Hossain said.

Project Director Rafiqul Islam said government would involve NGOs later on for disbursement of compensation and resettlement of the people affected by the bridge project.

The minister said the government aims at completing construction of the bridge by December 2013, two years ahead of the time projected earlier.

He said various donor and development agencies have assured them of giving necessary funds for constructing the bridge.

The design scheme is expected in June, while pre-qualification documents for the bridge tenders are expected by July, said Hossain.

Pre-qualification documents for River Training Works (RTW) will be submitted by November, he said. Resettlement plan to be implemented by NGOs will begin in September.

Tender will be invited for the bridge by January 2010 and that for RTW by April. Construction of the bridge and river training work are expected to begin in September the same year.

Secretary to the Bridges Division of communications ministry Md Abdul Karim and consultant of the project Ken Wheeler of Maunsell Australia Pvt. Ltd., assigned to prepare the design of the bridge, were present at the function.

## DHAKA TODAY

### Book launching

The launching ceremony of a novel of Anwar Azad will be held. Venue: Public Library seminar room. Time: 5:00pm.

### Inaugural ceremony

The inaugural ceremony of the weeklong savings campaign will be held. Venue: Conference room of Dhaka divisional commissioner. Time: 4:00pm.

## INDIAN POLLS Political parties hail Congress

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political parties and cultural organisations yesterday congratulated the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance on its victory in the Indian elections, expecting stronger ties between Bangladesh and India.

Congratulating the Indian government and the people, Awami League Joint General Secretary and Spokesman Syed Ashraf Islam in a statement said, "Through this polls result the existing friendly relations between the two neighbours will deepen in future."

Wishing the best to Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Manmohan Singh for the victory, Bangladesh Jatiya Party-JP Secretary General Sheikh Shahidul Islam said the result reflects India's multi-party democracy and the non-communal feature of the Indians.

Expressing gratitude towards Indira Gandhi, the then prime minister of India, for her all-out support to Bangladesh during the Liberation War, he said they believe the friendship between the two nations would get stronger, which will help solve peacefully the unsettled issues.

Bangabandhu Sanskritik Jote General Secretary Tarana Halim in a statement said, "Congress is our tested friend. The cooperation of the Congress extended to Bangladesh and her people would be immemorial."

Tarana Halim, who is also a lawmaker and cultural activist, congratulated cultural personalities Shatabdi Roy, Tapash Pal, Joya Prada and Kabir Suman on their winning the polls from their respective constituencies.

Other leaders who congratulated the Indian Congress include Bangabandhu Sanskritik Jote Dhaka Metropolitan Branch President Jamal Uddin, General Secretary Wahiduzzaman, National Hindu Maitree Parishad Convener Arun Sarker Rana, Joint Convener Prof Balram Gope, Ramsita Mandir Committee President Ganesh Chandra Ghosh, Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Kalyan Front President Nitai Chandra Ghosh, and General Secretary Nakul Chandra Saha.

The organisations that also congratulated the Congress on the victory are Bangalee Sanskritik Jote, Srizonay Natya Goshti, Chirantan '71, Buddhijibi Shilpi Parishad and Banglar Surja Siri.

## MOBARAK ALI MURDER 6 suspected killers arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five days after the gruesome murder of Mobarak Ali, who was the father-in-law of Managing Director Hossain of Toba Group in the capital, detective police (DB) arrested six suspected killers yesterday.

The arrestees were identified as Rajib Hawlader, 20, son of late Shafi Hawlader, Mohammad Ferdous Hossain, 20, son of Tipu Sultan, Ramzan Ali, 20, son of Dulal Mia, Safin Laskar, 20, son of Sultan Laskar, and Jhantu Mia, 20, son of Altaf of Maghbar, and Mohammad Polash Khan, 25, son of Mohammad Harun-or-Rashid of Khilgaon in the capital.

At a press briefing, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner Shahidul Haque said acting on a tip-off DB police arrested Rajib from Sonalibagh of Maghbar and according to his statement police arrested five others.

At a primary interrogation, they confessed to their involvement in the gun attack on the private car carrying Mobarak on May 12 at Badda, he added.

The DMP commissioner said though police could not ascertain the motive behind the killing, they suspected that a listed top criminal Jisan might be behind the killing, as he demanded Tk 20 lakh from the businessman Delwar a few months back.

Shahidul said police are trying to arrest another three of the gang who remained absconding and trying to recover the arms used in the killing.

Rajib at DB office told The Daily Star that he shot three fries while Ferdous shot two at the private car when Mobarak was taking his three grand children to their school at around 7:15am.

He said four of them with fire arms took position there and on arrival of the car they opened fire leaving him dead while two others took position at the gate of Delwar's house.

Following the killing Delwar filed a murder case with Badda Police Station.

Police have sought help from Interpol to arrest a criminal who threatened Delwar using a foreign cellphone number after the killing.

## WEATHER TODAY

### Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at a few places over all the six divisions with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places over Sylhet division in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:35pm today and rises at 5:14am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 35.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 21.5 degrees Celsius at Madaripur.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	34.0	24.6	78	89
Chittagong	32.5	24.0	72	76
Rajshahi	33.0	23.8	79	71
Khulna	35.0	25.5	71	69
Barisal	34.3	25.8	69	77
Sylhet	30.2	23.1	96	71
Cox's Bazar	34.0	24.4	60	71

## INTERFERENCE WITH IMPORTANT CASES

# Action to be taken against those involved: Sohel Taj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will bring to justice those who had tried to divert important cases, including Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman murder case, jail killing case, Ramna Batamul blast case, August 17 serial bombing case and August 21 grenade attack case, to a different direction.

State Minister for Home Tanjim Ahmad Sohel Taj said this to reporters after a meeting with leaders of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) at his office.

"These incidents have shaken the foundation of the country. The people won't receive justice unless these cases are disposed of efficiently and fairly," he said.

About the BKMEA leaders' demand for introduction of the industrial police, Sohel Taj said the industrial police will be formed soon as the matter is awaiting approval.

He also said they would activate the local committee comprising parliament members, deputy commissioner and superintendent of police to deal with any untoward incidents in the garment industry.

Mid-term and long-term plans will also taken up to protect the garment sector, he added.

About law and order situation, the state minister said the government would not tolerate any kinds of crimes such as extortion, threat and harassment.

Stern action will be taken against the culprits, he added. Regarding recent incidents of 'crossfire', the state minister said the government does not support any kind of extrajudicial killing.

He, however, said the law enforcers also have the right of self-defence.

## SHOOTING FEDERATION TENDERS JS body to probe graft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body yesterday formed a sub-committee headed by ruling party lawmaker Talukdar Mohammad Touhid Murad Jang to investigate alleged corruption of Tk 1 crore in awarding tenders in Shooting Federation.

The parliamentary standing committee on sports and youth also asked the authorities concerned to remove portraits of late president Ziaur Rahman and BNP chief Khaleda Zia from Bangabandhu stadium saying that those portraits are 'not relevant'.

The committee formed another sub-committee headed by Mahubur Ara Gini to identify stadiums, youth and sports centres whose names were either changed or removed during the immediate past BNP-led four-party alliance government.

The sub-committee has also been asked for removing 'unnecessary portraits' from different stadiums and sports centres.

Both the sub-committees have been asked to submit their report to main committees within next 14 days.

"Some of the committee members in the meeting raised strong allegations of corruption in Shooting Federation in awarding several tenders worth Tk 1 crore to a firm named Abdur Rahman," said Zahid Ahsan Russel, chairman of the committee, while talking to reporters after the meeting at the parliament building.

"Tenders were not awarded to the lowest bidders Delco, instead the firm named Abdur Rahman got them," said Zahid quoting several committee members.

The Bangladesh Academy of Sciences (BAS) and the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) organised the five-day 'AuthorAID Research Writing Skills Workshop' that began at the Brac Centre Inn in the city yesterday.

Teachers, researchers, intellectuals and writers from across

## Training for Rab on int'l human rights law held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A training course on human rights for senior officials of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) was held at the Rab Forces Headquarters in the city yesterday.

The workshop on 'International human rights law linking with domestic law' was held under the management of International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Rab Forces Headquarters where 30 Rab officials attended.

Finn Ruda, head of mission of the ICRC, Dhaka, led a team of trainers comprising Rumana Binte Masud and Leonard Gill.

Director General of Rab Hassan Mahmood Khandaker addressed the concluding ceremony of the workshop while Additional Director General Col Rezanur Rahman Khan and all directors of the force were present.

## CHANDPUR-4 SEAT HC dismisses petition of BNP aspirant candidate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday dismissed an election petition filed by Abdul Hannan, an aspirant candidate of BNP for Chandpur-4 constituency for December 29 parliamentary election, challenging the candidature of Harun-ur-Rashid, who was declared elected by the Election Commission (EC).

After holding hearing on the election petition, the HC bench of Justice Shahidul Islam delivered the verdict declaring legal the election result, in which Harun was elected.

Harun's lawyer Advocate Ahsanul Karim told The Daily Star that the HC dismissed the petition of Hannan on the ground that he (Hannan) has no right to file such petition, since he is also a loan defaulter.

Lawyer for Hannan, Barrister Belayet Hossain, however, said they will file an appeal with the Supreme Court against the HC verdict.

Hannan could not contest the December 29 election as the EC had cancelled his candidature on December 10 last year on charge of defaulting bank loan and declared legal the candidature of Harun.

Earlier, the Returning Officer (RO) concerned declared candidature of Hannan legal and cancelled the candidature of Harun on different grounds.

Hannan filed the petition with the HC seeking cancellation of the candidature of Harun and the election result, the lawyers said.

## Obituary

METRO DESK



Zakiya Sultana (Lala), wife of retired additional secretary late Abdul Haque, passed away at Square Hospital in the city on Saturday (May 16) at the age of 73.

She was laid to rest at Banani Graveyard after namaz-e-janaza after Esha prayers at Dhanmondi Baitul Aman Mosque.

She is survived by her four sons and one daughter to mourn her death.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held for salvation of her departed soul at her residence, Candlewood Apartments, House No # 27, Road No # 5 at Dhanmondi in the city after Asr prayers tomorrow (Tuesday).