



The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

Plus Star Lifestyle

COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know

www.thedailystar.net

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XIX No. 144

DHAKA TUESDAY JUNE 9, 2009

• JAISHTHA 26, 1416 BS • JAMADIUS SANI 14, 1430 HJRI • 24 PAGES PLUS STAR LIFESTYLE PRICE: Tk 10.00 •

PDB plans big for six coal-fired power plants

Over 2,900MW to be added by 2015; ten rental plants by year-end

SHARIER KHAN

In view of the gloomy gas supply scenario, the Power Development Board (PDB) for the first time shifted its focus from gas-fired plants and proposed for six coal-fired power projects -- five of them very large -- totalling 2,625 megawatt to be installed by 2013-2015, sources say.

In addition, PDB in its proposal to the power ministry recommended setting up of three more 100MW dual-fuel power

plants by 2013.

At the same time, PDB sees a power crisis of 1,467MW by this December and recommends setting up of 10 small non-gas rental power projects of 400MW capacity for one-year term to ease the crisis throughout 2010.

The proposal says of the six coal-fired plants, five would be 500MW in capacity each. These would be set up on the basis of partnership between the public and private sectors or as independent power

projects (IPP) like the Meghnaghat plant, having 25 years of contract for each.

The PDB incurs loss from purchasing power from rental and liquid fuel-based private power plants, as their tariffs are higher than PDB's selling price.

PDB's loss is higher for rental power projects. The PDB proposes that the government allocate it subsidy to cover up the losses.

If the ministry in principle approves

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Dhaka rivers demarcation in 4 months

Findings to be sent to PM with recommendations

4 DCs suggest dredging of rivers, making safety tank mandatory for house owners

Wasa tells court no groundwater to be available after 10 years

Tannery shifting must by Feb: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Demarcation of the rivers around the capital will be determined within four months apparently in a last-ditch effort to save the dying rivers from encroachers and polluters.

Rampant pollution and indiscriminate encroachment on the Buriganga, Turag, Balu and Shitalakkhya continued as the government agencies pinned the blame on loopholes in the laws, while the court observed that the government was slow in taking action.

Against this backdrop, a High Court bench on Thursday directed the deputy commission-

ers (DCs) of Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur and Munshiganj to give their opinions on steps to save the rivers.

The DCs told the HC bench of Justice ABM Khairul Haque and Justice Mamtazuddin Ahmed at their court chamber yesterday that they would conduct a survey to demarcate the rivers and identify the encroachers.

The HC bench expressed disappointment over pollution of the rivers and said the government must shift the tanneries in Hazaribagh to Savar by February 28, 2010 as per its earlier direction.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Bumper rice to ease budget burden

SOHEL PARVEZ

Rice is the silver lining around otherwise largely gloomy data for the next fiscal year.

In the current fiscal, rice production is expected to reach the highest level in the history of Bangladesh, thanks to millions of farmers who are enabling the country to ensure the staple for all.

Primary forecasts by different public and private organisations show that rice production will stand at 3.21 crore tonnes by the time the country enters the next fiscal, up more than 8.12 percent from a year ago.

The new height in rice production will be more than the country's total estimated

demand for 3.0 crore tonnes.

Such a surplus has now turned rather problematic for farmers who allocated more of their lands to rice production, encouraged by the staple's high prices in the previous two years.

"It's a clear indication of farmers' response to high prices of rice. They produced more this year, encouraged by the high prices for their produce in the last two years," said Mahabub Hossain, executive director of BRAC.

But the farmers are now hit by a decline in prices. Analysts say low prices might dampen prospects for rice plantation in the next fiscal.

"It appears that there is a surplus supply of rice, and it's dampening the prices. One clear

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Bangladesh's Shakib Al Hasan (in the foreground) leaves the field following his dismissal during the ICC World Twenty 20 match against Ireland at Trent Bridge in Nottingham yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

WORLD TWENTY20 Ireland knock Tigers out

AFP, Nottingham

Trent Johnston and the O'Brien brothers combined to help Ireland send Bangladesh crashing from the World Twenty20 here on Monday.

Johnston, the burly Australian-born seamer, grabbed 3-20 in his opening spell with the new ball to restrict Bangladesh to a modest 137-8 after Ireland elected to bowl under an overcast Trent Bridge.

The O'Brien brothers, Niall and Kevin, ensured the Irish did not falter when it mattered

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

VITAMIN-A CAMPAIGN

Girl dies, 400 fall sick

Govt forms probe body

STAR REPORT

A six-year-old girl of Munshiganj died early yesterday of what the parents claimed the after effect of Vitamin A capsule and deworming tablet.

More than 400 children who were reportedly provided with Vitamin A capsules along

with deworming tablets Saturday sought treatment at different hospitals across the country with diarrhoea, stomach ache and nausea symptoms.

The government has formed a five-member investigation committee to find out whether the children's falling sick was related to the Vitamin

A Plus campaign. The committee headed by Director of Primary Health Care Jahangir Alam will place its report in three days.

Priya Akhter Urmee, daughter of Piar Hossain of Bollal Bari area of the district breathed her last breath at 1:30am. One Habib, 11, of

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Tk 200cr BB fund for solar power, biogas, effluent treatment

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh Bank (BB) has set up a Tk 200 crore revolving fund for banks and financial institutions to give loans at low interest in solar energy, biogas and effluent treatment sectors.

The central bank board of directors at a meeting on Sunday approved the fund.

The BB would soon prepare a scheme in this regard and send guidelines to banks and financial institutions for providing the loans.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

CTG ARMS HAUL CASE

Liakat refuses to give statement to magistrate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former NSI official Major (retd) Liakat Hossain refused to give a statement to a Chittagong magistrate yesterday, though he had earlier disclosed to interrogators vital information regarding the arms and ammunition seizures in Chittagong and Bogra.

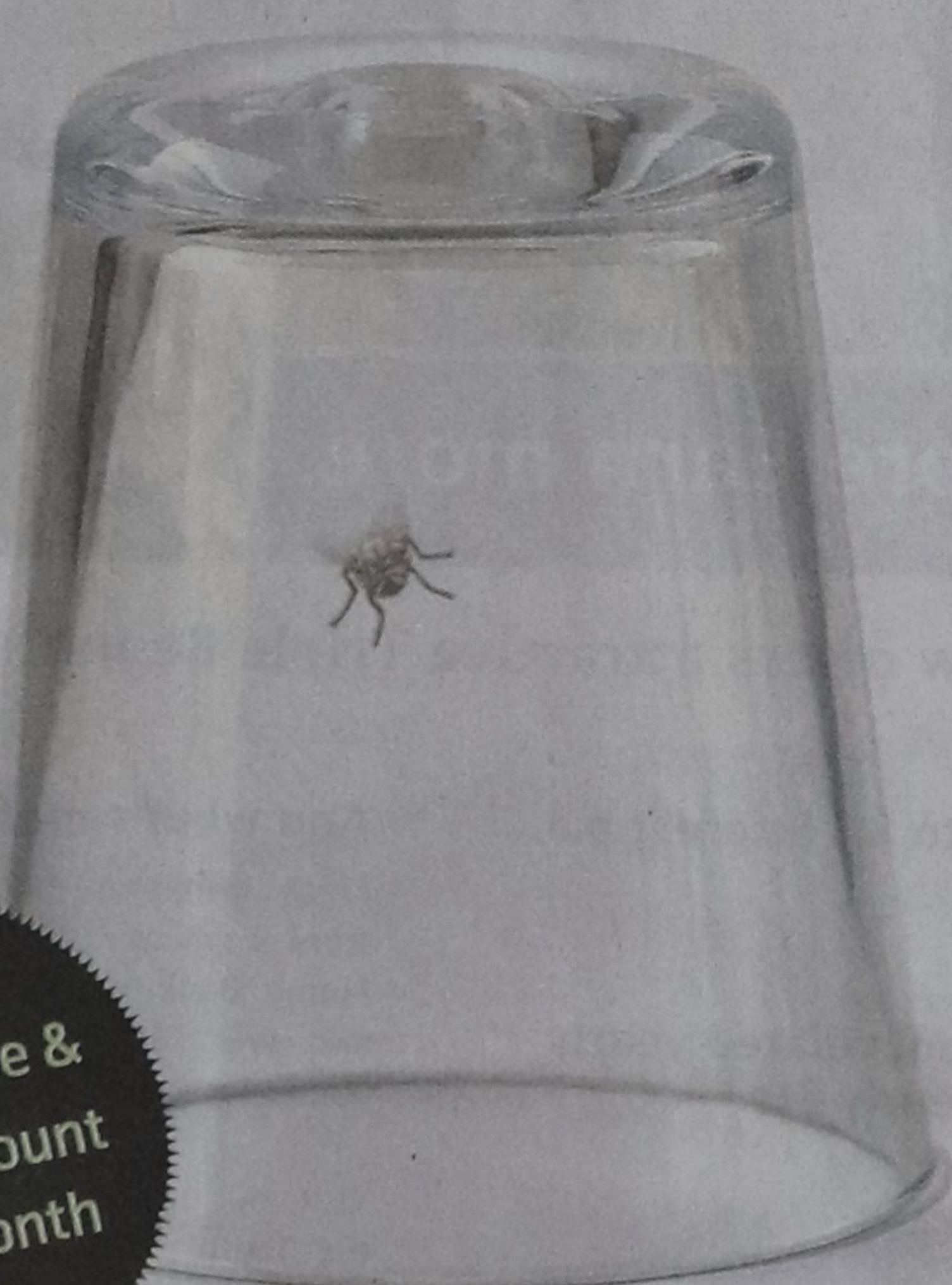
An accused in the much talked-about Chittagong arms haul case, he was taken to

Metropolitan Magistrate Osman Gani's chamber at around 3:30pm.

But after around 25 minutes, he decided not to say anything under section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code, reported our office in the port city.

In interrogations a few days before, Liakat said either or both of ex-NSI director general Brig Gen (retd) Abdur Rahim and ex-director

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



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