

## Drop Tipai

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Don't get afraid. You (government) are not alone. We (opposition) will be with you if the national interest is upheld. People will also be with you."

Also leader of the opposition in parliament, she was addressing a programme titled 'A presentation on the harmful effects in Bangladesh due to the Tipaimukh project', organised by BNP and held at a city hotel.

Former power secretary ANH Akther Hossain made the presentation while former ministers Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain and Hafizuddin Ahmed, Prof Moniruzzaman Mian, Dr Mahbubullah and Sharif Rafiqul Islam took part in the discussion.

Some prominent persons including Prof Emauddin Ahmed, Prof Yusuf Haider, Prof Abu Ahmed, Rafique-ul Haq, Zafarullah Chowdhury, Hasna Moudud and business leader Abdul Awal Mintoo attended the programme, conducted by BNP Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan. Leaders of BNP and its allies, and environmentalists were also present.

Ruling Awami League leaders, cabinet members, the chairman of parliamentary standing committee on water resources ministry and all MPs from greater Sylhet were also invited to the programme but they did not attend it.

Khaleda said, "We invited all concerned regardless of their political identity as the proposed dam has created apprehension that it would pose a dangerous problem for our country."

Stressing a national consensus to address important national issues, she said it would be tough to face Tipaimukh dam problem

without a national consensus.

The former prime minister said they have heard that the government did not get enough data on Tipaimukh dam.

But BNP has collected data with the help of renowned experts, she said, hoping that this would help the government take a bold decision regarding the Indian project.

"I don't want to criticise them (government). I am urging them to come forward to work together to resolve the national crisis," Khaleda said. Not only on Tipaimukh issue, they want to help the government uphold all national interests, she added.

## ASHRAF'S BRIEFING

Speaking to newsmen after a meeting of the party's council preparation committee at AL president's political office in Dhanmondi, Ashraf urged BNP not to make the Tipaimukh dam a political issue.

He termed the Tipaimukh dam a national problem and said the nation wants to resolve it unitedly.

"If we get divided as a nation, India will take chance and see their interests. United, we will be able to bargain strongly in favour of our interests."

The LGRD minister said the party that led the independence struggle would never allow anything harmful to a mugger by profession.

"Finally my family brought me back two days ago," she said. "Sagar then threatened my father that he would burn us alive."

Local residents, outraged at the news of the two deaths, attacked Sagar's house at Japani Bazar but they found the house abandoned as Sagar had fled with this family.

Officer-in-Charge of Kadamtali police station Nur Hossain said police visited the place soon after the incident. However they did not find clues that any petrol or kerosene was used to set the house on fire.

An electric short circuit might have caused the fire, he said.

## Bapa rallies

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exchanged views with local people.

The leaders led by Bapa General Secretary Abdul Matin also demanded the government removes sludge from the lake to bring it back to its original shape.

They said the lake is the only water body, which is maintaining the bio-diversity of the area. Inhabitants of the area alleged that in spite of frequent requests, authorities concerned did not pay heed to improving drainage and sewerage system of Nikunja Lake.

They also alleged that a vested group is filling up the lake and is constructing building on it.

Bapa leaders said Nikunja area would turn into an uninhabitable place if encroachment goes on.

Bapa leaders demanded setting up of drainage system in the lake area immediately.

## Akbar Ali

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minister to continue evaluating the activities of the ministers every six months," he said and added that quality and efficiency of the ministers are needed in this regard.

He was talking to newsmen after speaking as the chief guest at a workshop on 'Capacity and skills development on competition law and policy in Bangladesh', organised by two organisations - Unnayan Shamannay and CUTS International, at a city hotel yesterday afternoon.

The government called for a UN inquiry after Benazir's party won a general election in February 2008 with her supporters angered by conflicting accounts of how she died and who was responsible.

They cast doubt on a Pakistani probe into her death, criticised authorities for hosing down the scene of the attack within minutes -- allegedly destroying evidence -- and questioning whether she was killed by a gunshot or the blast.

"The responsibility for investigating the crime and prosecuting the perpetrators remains with Pakistani authorities," said Munoz, who is Chile's ambassador to the United Nations.

Earlier while speaking at the function, he stressed the need for enactment of a competition law and establishment of a competition commission for protecting the interest of consumers, preventing unfair competition and ensuring a healthy business environment in the economy.

Mustafa Mohiuddin, additional secretary of the ministry of commerce, said the government is going to enact a competition law to control or regulate anti-competitive activities and maintain a sustainable competitive environment in the economy.

In Barguna, 653 youths and in Kurigram, 1,335 youths would be selected for employment under the programme.

According to the latest labour force survey, the number of unemployed workable males and females between 15 and 29 years is 1.73 crore.

Sources said the recruited youths would be given training through nine modules to enable them to discharge their duties. Their appointment in the National Service would be cancelled if they get any other job at home or abroad.

Professional expertise as well as awareness of the industries would be prime determinants for successful enforcement of the law, he added.

Prof AKM Enamul of United International University, and Udai S Mehta of CUTS International, among others, spoke at the workshop.

Obaidullah's immediate boss and Laskar-e-Taiyeba leader Mansur Ali alias Habibullah, another senior leader and Pakistani national Khurram Khoiyam, and two other leaders of the militant outfit are still holed up in Bangladesh, said sources.

They entered Bangladesh illegally at least three years before Obaidullah intruded into the country, added sources.

## UN probe

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head of the three-member UN commission, told a press conference in Islamabad.

"The mandate does not include a criminal investigation," confirmed Munoz, flanked by Indonesia's Marzuki Darusman and Ireland's Peter Fitzgerald at their first public appearance in Pakistan since opening a six-month inquiry.

Benazir, the first woman to become prime minister of a Muslim country, was killed on December 27, 2007 in a gun and suicide attack after addressing an election rally in Rawalpindi, a garrison city near the capital Islamabad.

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The commission on Friday visited the site of the gun and suicide attack.

Munoz said new leads obtained by the Pakistani authorities would help in their inquiries and appealed for help from the general public.

"We have been informed that Pakistani government has new leads into the investigations... the fresh information will contribute to our task."

The UN official said an email address and telephone number would be provided should anyone wish to come forward and provide information.

"We cannot be fully helpful of the people of Pakistan... We are approaching the work in a transparent and open-minded manner to clearly establish the truth surrounding this tragedy," said Munoz.

Obaidullah had been teaching at Jamiatul Sunnah

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## 2 dead

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Dadan and Sagar's condition remains very critical, while the three others were also badly burnt.

Witnesses said the fire broke out in the tin shed house at Gas Road, in Palashnagar of Kadamtali when all family members were sleeping.

Shurovi's brother Sohag said he woke up in the early hours of the morning to find that the house was on fire. He woke up everyone but the door was locked from outside and they could not get out. Hearing their cries, neighbours came to their rescue.

They rushed the entire family to DMCH, but not in time to save Liza and Rubel.

Family members said Shurovi was married to a vegetable vendor Sagar, 25, of Japani Bazar, also in Kadamtali, only two months ago. After the wedding, the family discovered that Sagar was not a vegetable vendor as he claimed but a mugger.

Since then Sagar had been regularly beating up Shurovi because her family alleged that he was a mugger. Shurovi's father Dadan brought her back to his home two days ago after telling Sagar that his daughter was going to file for a divorce.

At the time Sagar threatened her family and said that he would burn them alive.

Shurovi told The Daily Star from her hospital bed that Sagar beat her because she had come to learn that he was a mugger by profession.

"Finally my family brought me back two days ago," she said. "Sagar then threatened my father that he would burn us alive."

Local residents, outraged at the news of the two deaths, attacked Sagar's house at Japani Bazar but they found the house abandoned as Sagar had fled with this family.

Officer-in-Charge of Kadamtali police station Nur Hossain said police visited the place soon after the incident. However they did not find clues that any petrol or kerosene was used to set the house on fire.

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## BNP presents

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journalists were present.

ANH Akther Hossain, former secretary to the power and energy ministry during the last BNP rule, presented a keynote paper on the Indian river linking projects and Tipaimukh dam and its possible impacts.

He however did not attribute the proper sources of information he shared at the meet.

Later he admitted that the presentation was prepared by some experts based at home and abroad taking information from the internet. He was unable to say much about the issue when a reporter asked him questions.

During the presentation he said the dam will be 161 metres in height and 390 metres in length. Once built, it will submerge an area of 29,150 hectares from where they will produce 412 megawatt of electricity, he informed.

Citing published reports in The Telegraph, he said if the Tipaimukh dam broke Indian Silchar town would be under 7.7 metres of water, Hailakandi under six metres and Karimganj under 5.5 metres of water.

Lakhipur town will suffer the most as it would go under 10 metres of water, he added.

Initially there was confusion whether India is going to make a barrage at Fulertol point or not, he said, adding, "Just yesterday the construction company mentioned in

their website that they would make the barrage as well."

He said India is planning to extract 86 percent of waters from all rivers flowing through their country though they don't need it.

"India is planning to make more than 300 dams in almost all the Himalayan rivers, many of them are under construction," he added.

He criticised the Joint River Commission's activities in Bangladesh saying its office is not a transparent one. The JRC has no accountability and it never publishes some certain data and documents like lean period's water sharing of the Ganges river, he said.

On the water politics of the neighbouring country, he said India applies double standards in Bangladesh and changes their position in line with the change of power in India and jewel fled the house.

Neighbours rushed Jallil to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he is undergoing treatment.

Police said Jewel had a longstanding feud with his divorced wife's family.

## Granny stabbed to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man stabbed his ex-wife's grandmother to death and also injured her uncle in city's Khilgaon area on Friday night.

Police arrested Mohammad Jewel from Jilpar area in Khilgaon the same night and also recovered the knife he used in the attack.

The deceased was identified as Halima Khatun, 65, and the injured Abdul Jalil.

Police said around Jewel arrived at Abdul Jalil's house in Nandipara area at around 11:30pm. On entering the house he attacked both Abdul Jalil and his mother Halima. At one point Halima died dead and Jewel fled the house.

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## Extremism

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held in Chapainawabganj, the four gave important information and said they have yet to fix single leadership as their new offshoot was formed in April.

They claim Selim alias Saifullah is the main organiser but they four altogether equally shared the leadership of the

so far.

Abdur Rahim alias Shahadat was primarily considered for organisational activities, while Selim was looking after operational affairs.

However, a special intelligence team to combat terrorism informed that Islam O Muslim has 10 commanders.

The militant leaders held three meetings to decide about the launch of the new offshoot. First they held a meeting in Raghunathpur in Nakhole and then in Ranibari and Kansat in Shibganj, Chapainawabganj.

As the four sat in a meeting in Kansat for the last time in April, they decided to call the new organisation Islam O Muslim.

Selim brought in arms from India and they decided to use small weaponry for self-defence as the mainstream would be threatened to kill them for "betrayal".

The militants claim they were on the JMB hit list as some of them betrayed the mainstream by misappropriating money. Selim took away around Tk 1.5 lakh from the JMB fund, they add.

The militant leaders had another aim of reorganising the inactive JMB leaders in the region and collecting small weaponry for their cadres. They collected some 16 small firearms and the police have recovered 14 of them.

Senior police officials term the arrest of the four a great relief as the law-enforcement agencies including the Rapid Action Battalion held them at

their primary level.

The police last month arrested four militants in Chapainawabganj followed by the arrest of another three militants including Shahadat.

Later, Rab and BDR jointly arrested Selim in early this month.

## PM briefs

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Nam summit, President's Press Secretary Abdul Awal Howlader told reporters.

The prime minister informed the president that Bangladesh was elected Nam vice-chair for Asian region for the next three years, considered as an achievement of the country.

Sheikh Hasina invited the president for attending today's dinner, being hosted in honour of former Indian president Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, who is due to arrive here today on a three-day visit, he said.

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Md Abdul Karim, Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Abul Kalam Azad, Secretary of the President's Office Mohammad Shahidul Alam and Military Secretary to the President Major General Md Ehtesham Ul Haque were present.

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