

## Action against Matin

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that former adviser Matin awarded the job of container handling of Chittagong Port to Ishak Brothers, and committed corruption in the process," Mohammad Shah Alam, chief of the four-member sub-committee told The Daily Star after a committee meeting.

"The sub-committee thinks there is no necessity to hear the former adviser's version of things, as officials of the ministry concerned, and the chairman of Chittagong Port gave clear evidence of wrongdoings by former adviser Matin," Shah Alam added.

"We will recommend to the main committee that stern legal actions be taken against the former adviser," said the probe body chief.

Meanwhile, Matin denied any irregularity in awarding the contract to Ishak Brothers.

But, Shah Alam yesterday said, "The Chairman of Chittagong Port Authority Reazuddin Ahmed gave evidence to today's sub-committee meeting that Matin forced them to prepare necessary papers for awarding the container handling job to Ishak Brothers, although the company was non-responsive in the tender process."

He also said the sub-committee is likely to submit its recommendations to the main committee which is scheduled to meet on July 30 to finalise the report with the final recommendation.

Ruling Awami League lawmakers Shamsul Haq Chowdhury and Nazrul Islam, and BNP's Mostofa Kamal Pasha are the other members of the probe body.

On June 29, Sheikh Motahar Hossain, the then shipping secretary who is now a member of the Privatisation Commission, Acting Shipping

Secretary Masud Elahi, Senior Assistant Secretary to the Shipping Ministry Sharif Mohammad Masud, and Assistant Traffic Control Officer of Chittagong Port Omar Farukh, alleged to be the sub-committee that Matin committed corruption in awarding the job to Ishak Brothers.

The parliamentary body was also told by Masud Elahi that the erstwhile shipping adviser also unilaterally increased the age limit for shipping pilots to 60 from 57, ignoring government service rules.

## Pak jets kill 13 militants in NW Pakistan

**AFP, Peshawar/ Islamabad**

Pakistani fighter jets pounded militant positions, killing at least 13 rebels and destroying their hideouts in the restive northwest, security officials said yesterday.

The bombardment took place on late Saturday in Lower Dir town, where troops have been carrying out search and clearance operation to hunt down militants.

"At least 13 militants were killed and 15 of their hideouts destroyed in the bombing carried out by fighter jets in Lower Dir," a security official in the area told AFP.

Earlier a local government official confirmed the incident and the militant casualties, saying the death toll might rise as intelligence intercepts revealed that there were some 140 militants holed up in the area.

A radical Islamic cleric who brokered a peace deal with the Taliban in Swat, was arrested Sunday in Peshawar, in Pakistan's restive northwest, an official said.

"The government has arrested Moulana Sufi Mohammad. A formal case against him will be registered soon," Provincial Information Minister Mian Iftikhar Hussein told a press conference.

## Ahmadinejad sacks four ministers

**AFP, Tehran**

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has sacked four ministers just days before he is due to announce his new cabinet line-up, several local news agencies reported yesterday.

Those sacked are Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister Mohammad-Hossein Saffar-Harandi, Labour and Social Affairs Minister Mohammad Jahromi, Health Minister Kamran Baqeri Lankarani and Intelligence Minister Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie, the agencies said. Ejeie was sacked "following a verbal quarrel between the intelligence minister and the president in Wednesday's cabinet meeting over the appointment of (Esfandiar Rahim) Mashaie," the Mehr news agency quoted an informed unnamed source as saying.

The Mehr agency also reported the sacking of the other three ministers.

Rahim Mashaie stepped down as first vice president on Saturday after supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei told Ahmadinejad his decision to appoint his controversial aide as his new deputy would cause "division and frustration."

The sacking of the Saffar-Harandi, Ejeie and Jahromi was reported by state owned English language television station Press TV.

## 10 injured

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The injured BCL men-Iqbal, Monir, Kamal, Shahdaat, Shahjahan, Mamun, Zahir, Shahed and Roni-were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and the university medical centre.

The condition of Iqbal and Kamal was stated to be critical.

## Jojo Miah freed

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On an Awami League rally on Bangabandhu Avenue arrested Jojo during the BNP-led four-party alliance rule. They allegedly forced him to admit his involvement in the attacks that killed 24 AL leaders and activists and injured over 300 others.

The court later acquitted Jojo of the charge, but he was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in another case filed with Sutrapur Police Station.

The High Court recently granted him bail in the case.

Coming out of the jail, Jojo Miah yesterday lamented the loss of the four years from his life.

## Court rejects bail plea of 3 Rab men

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected the bail petitions of three detained Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel in connection with a case filed against them on charges of snatching Tk 10.86 lakh from a man after threatening to kill him.

Metropolitan Magistrate Dilara Alo Chandana passed the order after hearing both sides.

Moving the bail petition, lawyers told the court that their clients were implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy to harass them.

The prosecution opposed the bail petition saying the police had recovered Tk 7 lakh from their possession. Moreover, the case is now at the primary stage of investigation, they said.

Tajul Islam Hiron, marketing manager of Fair Advertising at RK Mission Road in the city, filed a case with Motijheel Police Station on Thursday night alleging that the men had snatched away Tk 10.86 lakh from him.

Police arrested the three Rab personnel -- assistant superintendent of police Shooeb Ahmed and sepoy Sagar Chandra and Shahidul Alam of Rab-3 the same night and recovered around Tk 7 lakh from their possession.

In the case statement, Hiron said that the three Rab personnel picked him up from a bus at Kamalapur at around 8:15pm on July 22. They took him to Doyel Square on Dhaka University Campus, and forcibly took away the money from him.

According to the statement, the Rab men also told him that they had saved his life as otherwise he would have been killed in a 'crossfire.'

## Jubo League man

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the Rifles School and hacked him there, they added.

Hearing Sohag's screaming, locals rushed to the spot and took him to Jessore General Hospital in a critical condition where he succumbed to his injuries at around 1:30am.

## Ex-NBR man's

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bail after he along with lawyers surrendered before the court and sought bail in the case.

Moving the bail petition, lawyers told the court that their client was not aware of the case as well as of the sentence. Their client also did not get any notice or advertisement published in two national dailies asking him to appear before the court for defending the case.

If their client knew about the case, he would have appeared before it for defending the case, the lawyers said.

Lawyers also submitted two more petitions--one for providing the convict with first class division and the other for giving him proper treatment in jail.

The prosecution opposed the bail petition saying that the lower court had no jurisdiction to grant bail at this stage while the prosecution did not oppose the petitions for giving division and treatment in jail if he gets as per the Jail Code.

On May 15 last year, Sarwar was sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment for amassing wealth illegally and concealing wealth information to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). Sarwar was also fined Tk 10 lakh, in default of which he is to stay one more year behind bars.

His wife Nazma Sarwar was jailed for three years for aiding her husband in acquiring illegal wealth. She also was fined Tk 1 lakh, in default of which she is to remain in jail for another six months.

The court also ordered confiscation of his properties worth about Tk 1.50 crore which did not match his sources of income.

On September 20, 2007, another court sentenced Sarwar to eight years' imprisonment in the first ever case against an NBR member in connection with tax evasion.

## Couple held

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at around 2:00 am and also recovered 26 packets of heroin.

Police said the detainees confessed that Baby visits the bordering areas of Chapainawabganj three to four times in a month to collect heroin from a source.

She then takes the drug to her house and her husband Wadud sells it in the capital and other districts, including Comilla.

## Berlin ready

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The departing ambassador, who has been staying in Dhaka for around three and a half years, said German government like the European Union had welcomed the state of emergency promulgated on January 11, 2007 to avert bloody violence on the streets and 'dangerous' political confrontation.

He said generally they do not support any state of emergency, but at that time in Bangladesh his government did not see anything better than that.

"But we wanted the caretaker government to have a roadmap for the elections. And, finally they delivered it," the diplomat said, adding that now is the time for the government and the political parties to strengthen the democratic practices.

"The democratic structural reforms of the last caretaker government and the December 29 polls have opened up the perspectives of a stable democracy and a middle income country for Bangladesh," he said in his written speech on 'Bangladesh-German Relations: The New Paradigms.'

Asked about the arrest of two top leaders--Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia--and the caretaker government's move to minus them from politics, the German ambassador noted that it is an internal matter of the country but political stability of Bangladesh is a matter of international concern.

Welcoming the national councils by the political parties, Meyke said a 27-member

European Union is closely monitoring the current developments of the country after restoration of its democracy.

"Politics of hartal and political confrontation should be a matter of the past. We want to see a strong government and cooperation among parties in parliament," he said.

The ambassador said positive political signals are needed to attract foreign investment.

"Combating corruption, a truly Anti-Corruption Commission and a strong independent Election Commission as well as strong local government and women empowerment would also be positive signals for German investors," Frank Meyke said.

He said despite economic recession Bangladesh's export to Germany has increased by 27.5 percent in the first four months of the current fiscal year. Bilateral trade reached almost 2 billion Euro in 2008.

The diplomat said a promising new field of Bangladesh exports to Germany is ship already over 30 ships worth about 250 million Euro (Tk 2,400 crore) have been given order by German ship owners.

Meyke said Bangladesh has attractive legal framework for foreign investors but its practical implementation is still often cumbersome.

"Administrative processes are complicated and time consuming. In a very competitive international environment this might be a drawback for Bangladesh," the diplomat observes.

DRU President Shamim Ahmad and General Secretary Pathik Saha also spoke.

## New style English

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students got GPA (Grade Point Average)-5 this year compared to 19,108 last year.

The combined pass percentage of eight education boards, the Madrasa Education Board and the Technical Education Board also dropped to 72.78 percent from last year's 76.19, decreasing by 3.41 points.

This year, 70.69 percent students passed from science group, 64.26 percent from humanities and 79.63 percent from commerce.

Chairmen of the boards noted that lack of training of the teachers concerning the changes made in English second paper was also a cause of the students' relatively poor performance in the subject.

Some of them also said that last year they were instructed to assess the answer sheets liberally, but this year they did the job properly.

Contacted, Chairman of Dinajpur board Prof Mohammad Sanaullah said, "Out of 25,000 failed students, 21,000 failed in English. This showed that the newly introduced system of English learning was difficult for the students."

Under this board, HSC exams were held for the first time this year and the pass percentage was 55.9 -- much lower than that of the other boards.

Sanaullah said they would ask the colleges with high rate of failure in English to take special classes in the subject.

Rajshahi Board Chairman Prof Dipakindra Nath Das told The Daily Star, "A sudden shift to a new system (English learning) with questions from grammar puzzled the students. The teachers too had difficulty in understanding the question pattern."

He said the system could be introduced a year or two after giving the teachers required training.

The board secured 70.47 percent pass this year.

Dipakindra further said, "This year the answer sheets were assessed properly. The examiners were a bit liberal in giving marks last year as they were instructed to do so. I hope the results will be better next year."

Chittagong board Chairman Prof Mohammad Yusuf said it is not that HSC exam results are poor this year because five out of the eight boards have done well. "I think quality education has been ensured this year."

He went on, "The slight decline in the pass rate is because of the new system of teaching English second paper. The rural students were affected more as, unlike the urban students, they could not get required guidance from trained teachers."

Training of teachers should be a continuous process because newer systems are introduced every year, Yusuf noted.

This year Chittagong board secured a pass rate of 76.31.

## AL wants end

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In reply to a question, Ashraf said the way Sheikh Hasina and he were elected party president and general secretary uncontested cannot be called completely democratic.

Efforts will be made in the future so that there are more candidates and party leaders are elected through direct votes of party councillors, he said.

Replying to a question, he said the fully-fledged AL Central Working Committee would be formed within the next couple of days.

He said the party activities would be geared up further following the council. "The party and the government will be run separately. The party will monitor the government's activities while the government will implement the party manifesto," said Ashraf.

The LRGD minister said in principle a consensus of all political parties is a must on crucial national issues like the trial of war criminals. "One party will seek trial of the war criminals and another will try to protect them--this cannot go on in the country," he said.

## 1 killed as bomb goes off in C'nawabganj

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj**

One person was killed and at least two were injured in a blast while making bomb on Saturday night.

The incident occurred in a house at Jogandarpura Bagdanga village in Sadar upazila of the district.

The deceased was identified as Nefazul, 30. And the injured are Aminul Islam Ranga, 25, and Suman, 25. All the three are from that village.

Police later recovered some bomb making materials from the spot.

Locals said they heard an explosion around 10:00pm. Immediately afterwards, they saw the injured with blood-stained clothes run away.

Contacted, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Sadar Police Station Ahsanul Haque said the gang was making a bomb at Nefazul's house, and it exploded.

Police later arrested five persons, including injured Aminul and Suman, at Razabari in Rajshahi.

The injured were taken to Chapainawabganj Sadar Hospital, and Suman was later shifted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital as his condition deteriorated.

## Prosecutors

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Earlier, addressing the function the law minister said if necessary, the government would enact a law to prevent software piracy.

He also stressed the extension of science education to establish a democratic and non-communal society.

Star Tek Dream, a research oriented organisation, hosted the function on the occasion of launching a science magazine titled "Telescope" marking the International Astronomy Year 2009.

Presided over by Rabiul Hussain, the meeting was addressed by, among others, Chief Information Commissioner Azizur Rahman, acting secretary to the ministry of Science, Information and Communication Technology AKM Abdul Awal Majumder, Director General of Press Institute of Bangladesh AKM Shamim Chowdhury and Telescope Editor Rusho Taher.

## Tenders

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snatching incident.

Talking to the reporters the DMCH director said, "Measure would be taken if anybody formally files a complaint."

Contacted, Liza Enterprise owner Arman Ali told The Daily Star that he had already informed the DMCH director about it.

Sources said the snatchers, however, returned the schedule of SF Enterprise to its owner but Liza Enterprise's was yet to be returned.

According to DMCH sources, a total of eight other agencies had dropped schedules and the authorities granted seven of them since one was disqualified due to its faulty documents.

Contacted Sub-Inspector Faruqul Islam of Shabbagh Police Station told The Daily Star that they had received the GD copy and were verifying it.

## PM's directive

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facilities so that the industrious Bangladeshis expatriates feel encouraged for making investment in larger volumes in the country," she said.

She also advised them to set up educational institutions in Bangladeshi residential areas abroad by utilising labour welfare fund of the Bangladesh missions in different countries.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith in his speech informed the meeting that a two-day International Investment Conference will be held here on October 21-22 to project the available prospects for trade, business and investment in the country.

Textiles and Jute Minister Abdul Latif Siddiqui, Posts and Telecommunications Minister Razi Uddin Ahmed Razu, Labor and Employment Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Commerce Minister Faruk Khan, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, Finance Adviser to the PM Moshir Rahman, State Minister for Power Shamsul Haque Tuku, secretaries concerned, Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Atur Rahman and FBCCI President Annisul Huq attended the meeting.

## Business leaders

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around the city have become septic tanks and it is time for all to work to address the problem.

In his speech Zafar Osman, president of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries said, government and the business community should discuss the problem in a positive way so that a possible solution may come out.

Salam Murshedy, president of Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said the government should promptly provide long-term soft loan to the industrialists to set up ETPs.

Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association President Fazul Hoque termed the polluter industrialists culprits and demanded that the department of environment officials should monitor their corrupt deeds.

Abdul Hai Sarker, president of Bangladesh Textiles Association, said if the government sets up central ETPs then they could pay for them as they do to other utility service providers.

Referring the HC verdict to

set up ETPs by February 2010, Saiful Islam, secretary of the Leather Goods Manufacturers and Footwear Association and Syed Nasim Manzur, vice president of MCCCI, said the government should discuss with the tannery factory owners to resolve their problem.

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, also spoke at the meet held at MCCCI auditorium, Dhaka.

Emphasising the need for both healthy environment and proper industrialisation, Mahfuz Anam said, "But at the moment we do not have time to wait any more. We need to act now if we want to keep our city livable."

He also suggested that the government should address the problem of businessmen specially those involved in tannery industry so that they can smoothly shift their factories to Savar from Hazaribagh.

Golam Sabur, another member of special parliamentary committee on the forest and environment that is working to find a way to stop river pollution and report to the government, was also present at the occasion.

## Arms seized

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to commit a criminal act.

Sensing presence of the law enforcers, the miscreants, however, fled the scene. Later, the elite crime busters recovered three local LGs and one single barrel gun from the spot.

In another raid, DB police arrested an arms trader and recovered two LGs from his possession from the city's Majhirhat area at around 1:30pm.

The arrestee is Mohammad Ibrahim, 25, son of late Kamal Uddin of Banskhal upazila in the district.

Separate cases were filed with the respective police stations.

## Parliamentary team

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The 11-member delegation comprised of seven lawmakers, one official each from the water resources ministry, foreign affairs ministry, and Joint Rivers Commission, and a water expert from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), will finalise the ambit of its investigation, agenda, and strategy today in a meeting.

Razzaq said they will meet officials of the Indian foreign ministry and energy ministry on July 29, the first day of their visit.

The delegation will also make a courtesy call to the Indian foreign minister and energy minister on July 30.

On July 31, the delegation will fly to Gouhati and go to the Tipaimukh dam site by a helicopter from there. The team will spend the day at the site.

"We are likely to return to Delhi on August 2, and likely to return home the next day," ABM Anwarul Hoque, one of the delegates, told The Daily Star after the briefing.

About the ambit of the delegation's investigation, Razzaq said, "We will try to assess how much damage to our environment the proposed dam is likely to cause. We will ask our expert to assess the matter."

"We will also try to find out whether any structure is already built on the Barak river," he said.

"News reports show a picture of a dam on the Barak River, but we know there is no structure built on that river, therefore we will go and see for ourselves what is the real picture," added Razzaq.

He said the delegation will also try to know the exact nature of the project.

## US, China

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strengthen understanding and cooperation.

The Obama administration says this first meeting also is intended to lay the framework for the Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED) meetings, to be held annually in alternate capitals, and set the stage for future bilateral "cooperative mechanisms."

The S&ED replaces and broadens the Strategic Economic Dialogue established in 2006 by former president George W. Bush's administration and Beijing that had dealt solely with economic affairs.

Obama, who has given China high priority since taking office six months ago, will address the opening of the meeting Monday.

Leading the policy track will be US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Chinese State Councilor Dai Bingguo. US Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner and Chinese Vice Premier Wang Qishan are to chair the economic track.

In addition to the distinct policy and economic talks, the S&ED includes a combined session "to discuss issues of cross-cutting strategic and economic importance," the US Treasury said.

Both sides have indicated that long-standing trade and currency frictions will figure prominently in the discussions.

The massive US trade deficit with China, Washington's second-largest trading partner, swelled to an all-time high of 266.3 billion dollars in 2008 and keeps growing.

US critics accuse Beijing of keeping its yuan currency artificially low to gain a trade

advantage and protect its crucial export sector.

And Washington is pressing China to help end the global economic crisis by further opening its domestic markets and easing currency controls.

Chinese officials, meanwhile, have expressed concern about the value of their massive US bond holdings in the face of a growing US budget deficit as Washington pumps hundreds of billions of dollars into the economy to drag it out of a prolonged recession. China is the largest creditor to the United States, with 763.5 billion dollars invested in Treasury bonds, according to June Treasury data. Some Chinese officials earlier this year floated the idea of replacing the dollar as the world's benchmark unit with a basket of currencies.

"Our message to the Chinese is going to be: If you want to achieve your growth objectives, you're going to have to find a different way of doing it than through export-led growth," a senior US official said ahead of the key meetings.

"US households are raising their savings rates, so this is going to be a less consumption-led recovery than what they're used to."

A senior Chinese official said that China would call on the United States to keep the dollar stable and ensure the safety of Chinese assets.

The Chinese delegation "will make it clear that China hopes the US takes responsible economic policies... to maintain the basic stability of the dollar and ensure the safety of China's assets in the United States," Chinese Assistant Finance Minister Zhu Guangyao told reporters.