

TIPAIMUKH DAM

JS team returning empty-handed: BNP

Hafiz calls for JRC meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Vice President Maj (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed yesterday asked the government to take initiatives for holding a meeting of Bangladesh-India Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) to discuss Tipaimukh Dam issue as the parliamentary delegation is returning home today empty-handed.

"The government should call a JRC meeting immediately to raise the people's concern over the proposed dam as it is the only forum which includes experts from both the countries," said Hafiz who was also former water resources minister.

While talking to reporters at his Banani residence, Hafiz said the parliamentary delegation went to India without any technical experts and returned home without visiting the site of the dam at Tipaimukh.

He said the parliamentary team could go to Tipaimukh by

road, but they had chosen helicopter to avoid the protests by the people of Manipur.

"They could have wait a few more days and visit the site, I do not understand why they have returned empty-handed."

"Bangladesh has been asking for data on Tipaimukh project for three decades but India has never heeded to the demand and now the parliamentary team has returned without visiting the site," he added.

Hafiz said the government had sent the team to allay fears of millions of people but the team has failed in its mission.

"India will never provide the parliamentary team with data on the dam. If that country had any good intention, it could have placed them at the JRC meeting," he asserted.

The former minister said it is a highly technical issue and as such experts should have been included in the team, but the government did not respond to their call and sent

the parliamentary team which has failed to defuse the accumulated tension and concern of people.

"BNP had repeatedly sought information about the project. On May 18, 1992 Bangladesh asked for data and again the BNP-led coalition government had twice objected to the project at the JRC meetings. But the Indian government did not provide us with the data," he alleged.

When asked about the comment of lawmaker Salauddin Quader Chowdhury that BNP reformists will face tough consequence in party council, Hafiz, a top leader of party's defunct reformists' faction, said, "I will not make any comment. Only chairperson and secretary general can speak on it. He [Chowdhury] is my friend and I don't want to make any comment about him."

Youths urged to take lead in war crimes trial process

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar at Jahangirnagar University yesterday demanded immediate punishment to war criminals, urging the young generation to take the lead in the process.

Department of International Relations organised the seminar styled 'War crimes tribunal and responsibilities of the new generation'.

Speaking as the chief guest, Vice Chancellor Dr Sharif Enamul Kabir said people gave their mandate to the present government to try the war criminals.

The young generation must take the lead to bring the war criminals to justice, he added.

Dr Md Abdul Mannan Chowdhury said the liberation war in 1971 was a battle for survival which was against the Pakistani soldiers. Those who rallied behind the Pakistani soldiers and aided them to perpetrate the heinous atrocities are war criminals. They are well-identified individuals.

Abdullah Kafi, chairman of the department, also spoke.

Officers' Club executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Md Shahjahan Majumder, MA Razeq and Khandaker Rashidul Haque have been elected vice-chairmen and Abu Alam Md Shaheed Khan has been elected general secretary of the Officers' Club, Dhaka for 2009-11, says a press release.

The election of the club's executive committee was held on July 31. Other office-bearers are joint secretaries -- M Khalid Mahmud, Azmal Kabir and Abdul Mannan; treasurer -- MA Kader Sarker and members -- Subarna Chowdhury, Ansar Ali Khan, Prof Kabir Uddin Ahmad Majumder, Mustakim Billah Faruqi, KM Mozammel Haque, Mabbul Hossain Paik, Prof Iffat Ara Nargis, Mahfuzur Rahman Sarker, Ashrafunnessa Khan Rozi, Dr Monilal Aich Litu, Bazul Kabir Bhuyan, MA Mazid, Ruhul Matin and Dr Imdadul Haque.

The meeting expressed grave resentment over the authorities' negligence in publishing the BADC's annual report as well as the audit report.

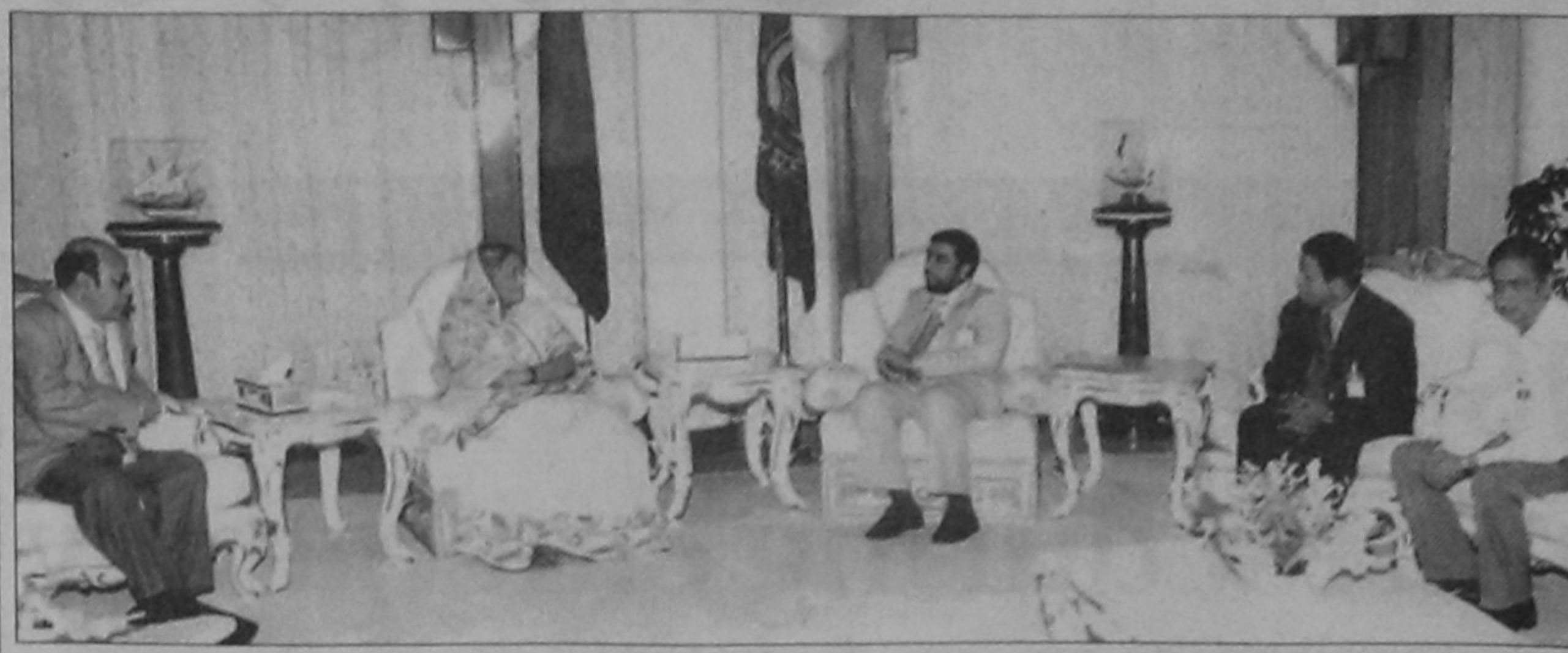
"The BADC has no audit report done since 2003. It also failed to publish its annual report since 2004-05," Alamgir, also a ruling Awami League lawmaker, said asking the organisation for updating the report to ensure accountability.

The committee observed that BADC had many a success in distributing seeds and fertiliser among farmers across the country. Now its activities have

been shifted in course of time.

"Now BADC needs appointment of experts to identify in which diversified fields it should work for the betterment of the agriculture sector, a lifeline of the country's economy," added the committee chief.

Lawmakers TIM Fazle Rabbi Chowdhury, Khaledur Rahman Titu, Biren Sikder, Dharendra Chandra Debnath, Moyeen Uddin Khan Badal, Bazul Haq Harun and SK Abu Bakr were also present.



A delegation of Bangladesh Judicial Service Association meets Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence Jamuna in the city yesterday.

SALE OF BADC PROPERTIES

JS body asks ministry to identify those responsible

RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary body yesterday asked the agriculture ministry to identify persons responsible for sale of huge properties of state-owned Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) at throw-away prices to different private parties during the regimes of the last BNP-Jamaat and caretaker government.

"We have asked the agriculture ministry to identify the persons involved in the sale of the properties at nominal prices through misusing their authority," Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, chairman of the parliamentary committee on public undertakings, told reporters after a meeting at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

The parliamentary body asked the ministry to submit its report before the committee within next one month.

It also asked the ministry for measures to appoint as many as 35,000 employees against its vacant positions at different levels of the organisation.

The committee observed that BADC had 40,000 employees across the country that has come down to only 5,000 massively hampering its activities.

It also asked the authorities to implement its 38-ongoing project quickly.

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publishing the BADC's annual report as well as the audit report.

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On the other hand Amin's son also proposed Jharna to marry her, sources said, adding that Amin got enraged and made the attack when he came to know that the victims disclosed Amin's proposal to his son.

The injured were rushed to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital where they were undergoing treatment, police said.

Jharna's brother Sohel has filed a case against Amin in this regard.

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Celebrating Life Festival begins in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Celebrating Life Festival, jointly organised by The Daily Star and Standard Chartered Bank, began in the hilly town of Rangamati yesterday.

The festival features a concert and screening of films.

A daylong screening of films and documentaries, which won prizes in the Celebrating Life-2008, a composite competition, was held at Rangamati Government College.

The concert featuring patriotic songs and others popular numbers will be held at the auditorium of Rangamati Tribal Culture Institute (TCI) at 7:00pm today.

Singer Samina Chowdhury will perform in the concert.

A roundtable on culture and heritage will also be held at the conference room of the District Sports Association today.

Editor and Publisher of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam, Chief of Chakma Circle Raja Devasish Roy and Chairman of CHT Regional Council Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Shantu Larma are expected to attend the roundtable.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK

Today is the 10th death anniversary of Prof Mohammad Faruque, former chairman and head of Bengali Department of Jahangirnagar University (JU) and Karachi University, says a press release.

To mark the occasion, Qurankhwani, milad mahfil and special munajat will be held at the mosque. Cooked foods will be distributed in the orphanages and among the destitute.

Relatives, friends, admirers and students have been requested to pray for salvation of his departed soul.



Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid speaks at a 'Meet-the-Reporters' programme on 'Education system of Bangladesh' organised by Dhaka Reporters' Unity at its auditorium in the city yesterday.

China energy efficiency improves

AFP, Beijing

China cut its average energy consumption by 3.53 percent in the first half of 2009 from a year ago, helped by massive stimulus spending on green projects, the government said yesterday.

The figure compared with a decline of 2.89 percent in the first quarter of the year, the National Development and Reform Commission said in a statement on its website.

At the end of 2008, China unveiled a four-trillion-yuan (580-billion-dollar) fiscal package aimed at mitigating the impact of the global crisis, with part of the money meant to be spent on improved energy efficiency.

China has set a goal of reducing average energy consumption by 20 percent from 2006 to 2010.



JUJA executives

METRO DESK

Rezaul Haq Kawshik of Daily Amar Desh and Mukimul Ahsan Himel of the Daily Ittefaq were elected president and general secretary of Jahangirnagar University Journalists' Association (JUJA) for 2009-10, says a press release.

Other-office bearers are Vice-President Sajjad Biplob of Daily Bangla Bazar, Joint Secretary: Polas Mahmud of the Daily Inqilab, Treasurer: Emon Rahman of the Daily Amader Sohmoye and Office and Publicity Secretary: Drubo of Daily Jugantar.

Executive committee members are Mashrequl Islam Rahat of The Daily Independent, Mosaddek Bashir of Financial Express, Md Imanur Shahrar of the Daily Destiny.

Dr Abdul Mannan Chowdhury conducted the election as the chief election commissioner.

Govt to frame modern labour law

Minister says at workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is working to frame a modern labour law amending the existing law of 2006 to ensure rights and welfare of the workers, said Labour and Employment Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday.

"A tripartite committee has already started working on it," he said at the inaugural session of a workshop titled 'Review of Labour Law 2006' organised by the National Coordination Committee for Worker Education (NCCWE) with the support of International Labour Organisation at a city hotel.

The minister said the present government is always labour-friendly and working for their welfare.

Good relationship between the workers and employers is very important for better productivity, he noted.

State Minister for Labour and Employment Monnujan Sufian said beside workers, the government has also the responsibility for looking the interests of the employers, says a handout of the Press Information Department.

"But the previous government ignored the interests of both the workers and the industrialists by closing many mills, including the Adamjee Jute Mills," she said.

Initiatives will be taken to reopen the closed and sick industries, Sufian added.

NCCWE President Abdul Matin Master and ILO representative Nurunnabi Khan also spoke on the occasion.

Chinese cops arrest 319 more in Xinjiang probe

AFP, Beijing

Police in the northwest Chinese region of Xinjiang have arrested hundreds of people in connection with disturbances that left at least 197 people dead, state media reported yesterday.

Citing a police announcement in Urumqi, the regional capital that was the epicentre of the unrest on July 5, the Xinhua news agency said 319 people had been detained.

Police have previously confirmed the detentions of over 1,600 people, according to earlier state media reports.

Urumqi Public Security Bureau said the detentions came "after information was received from the public or obtained through the police investigation," Xinhua said.

The arrests were made "in Urumqi or in other parts of Xinjiang," the statement said, adding "suspects would face charges in connection with the riot that left 197 people dead," according to Xinhua.

On Thursday, Urumqi police issued photographs of 15 suspects still at large and promised leniency for those who turned themselves in. Those who did not would be "punished severely," the police said.

Uighurs say the unrest was touched off when Urumqi security forces responded violently to peaceful protests over a brawl at a factory in southern China. State media said the factory clash left two Uighurs dead.

The government says Uighurs, most of whom are Muslim, went on a rampage in Urumqi against members of China's dominant Han ethnic group.



Mass Communication and Journalism Department of Dhaka University brings out a procession from in front of Aparajeyo Bangla on the campus yesterday to mark the Department Day.

Coal fires up India's farmers against new power plants

AFP, Poinad

Rajni Ramakan Patil has a message for the energy companies that want to build coal-based power stations on the land that she and two generations of her family have farmed for more than 50 years.

"Even if you give us gold, we won't leave this place. This is our land," she said.

Rajni and five other families from the village of Poinad cultivate a small parcel of land on the flat and fertile plains near the coastal town of Alibag, about 130 kilometres (80 miles) south of the western city of Mumbai.

The land, used for sowing rice crops and growing vegetables like okra and white onions, is among 8,500 acres (3,400 hectares) earmarked for the construction of four giant thermal powerplants.

Activists opposed to the development fear it could destroy the livelihoods of thousands of people in the area, pollute the clean air and soil and create health problems among the poor farmers and their families.

"They only know how to sow, how to manage fields, how to harvest, how to fish," said

Satish Londhe, who is spearheading the villagers' fight against the proposals.

The situation in the lush foothills of the Western Ghats mountain range embodies the problem facing India: how does it meet the increasing demand for energy as the country's population explodes and economic growth continues.

According to the International Energy Agency, more than half of the world's energy demands by 2030 will come from India and its fellow emerging economic powerhouse China.

But while China was reportedly building two new power stations per week, India's energy infrastructure has struggled to keep pace with rapid growth.

Some 400 million people currently lack regular electricity and even where it is available power cuts can be daily occurrences.

Maharashtra Energy Generation Ltd, a unit of India's largest private utility firm Reliance Energy Ltd, Tata Power and the other companies involved in the proposed plants say the 7,700 megawatts produced will ease supply

problems. The villagers and environmentalists supporting them accept the need for more electricity but question whether coal is the answer.

With concern about high levels of greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of fossil fuels, they want renewable energy, which currently supplies about 25 percent of India's electricity, to be given greater priority.

According to Greenpeace India, wind, solar and tidal power could provide up to 35 percent of the country's power by 2030, with less environmental damage and social consequences.

"People don't want the project," said Vishnu Mhatre, a medical doctor who runs a clinic near the proposed power plant sites. "They want change but they don't want pollution."

"They want electricity but electricity can be provided by wind or other renewables."

But India -- the world's third-biggest producer of electricity from fossil fuel -- appears set on coal, which at present provides just under 55 percent of the country's power.

The ministry overseeing the industry maintains that coal will continue to take "centre stage of India's energy scenario" in the years to come, calling it a "unique ecofriendly fuel service to (the) domestic energy market".

Retired Admiral L Ramdas, a former chief of the Indian naval staff, lives in Alibag with his wife, Lalita, who sits on the board of directors of Greenpeace International.

He called for more use of wind power and energy storage and described the potential displacement of thousands of farmers at a time of chronic food shortages in some parts of rural India as a "crazy, crazy situation."

The fight between India's fabled "common man" and at least two of its biggest corporate beasts might seem unevenly matched, but there is a precedent for a victory against the odds.

Proposals for another power plant in the southern state of Karnataka were shelved after popular protests.

"Even a project delayed is a limited victory," said Ramdas. "We will carry on. We will wear them out. They won't wear us out."



Moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at many places over all the six divisions with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

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

The sun sets in the capital at 7:40pm today and rises at 6:29am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 35.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and Satkhira while lowest 25.2 degrees Celsius at Cox's Bazar and Sandwip.

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	34.3	25.6	92	75
Chittagong	32.3	26.0	78	86
Rajshahi	35.2	27.0	87	70
Khulna	34.0	27.3	81	86
Barisal	34.0	27.5	76	81
Sylhet	34.3	26.5	77	77