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China offers \$1b for 5 projects

But favours hard loans; wants to pick bidders for their projects; unhappy with slow project implementation

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

China at a state-level meeting has primarily expressed its interest to finance five projects involving more than \$1 billion as Bangladesh sought \$5.14 billion assistance for 28 projects.

China also offers its assistance in a mix of buyer's credit and concessional loans, which have hard terms, against Bangladesh's request for soft loans.

Since 1975, China has given Bangladesh \$1.5 billion finance, of which \$978 million had been hard type loans.

The country also said in future Bangladesh should submit feasibility study reports to it for all its proposed projects, and then China would have its own feasibility study before deciding

which schemes to finance.

China also expressed its unhappiness about Bangladesh's poor project implementation under Chinese fund.

The Chinese side also said the contractors for the projects to be assisted by China have to be selected from China which is an internationally accepted process.

China conveyed these suggestions earlier this month following a meeting of the Bangladesh-China Joint Economic Commission (JEC) held in Beijing on July 28.

Economic Relations Division (ERD) Secretary Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan headed a nine-member Bangladesh team at the meeting, while Vice-minister Chen Jian led a nine-member Chinese delega-

tion. The last JEC meeting was held in Dhaka in May 2005.

Bangladesh team sources say China primarily expressed its interest in the projects of Seventh Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge on the Arial Khan river in Kazirtek, Madaripur, Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Centre, Shahjalal Fertiliser Factory, digital telecommunications networks at the metropolises and Pagla-Keraniganj Water Treatment Plant.

Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan told The Daily Star the JEC meeting has been successful, but its final success would depend on active implementation of the meeting decisions.

He said ERD in this regard has already

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BDR MUTINY

No problem in trial under military law

Rafique, Mahbub tell SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two amici curiae--barrister Rafique-Ul Huq and advocate Khandaker Mahbubuddin Ahmed--yesterday told the Supreme Court that the BDR personnel accused of various offences during the February 25-26 BDR mutiny can be tried under military law.

The BDR mutineers could be tried under the Army Act 1952 through issuing separate notifications regarding the trial, they told the Supreme Court just a day after another amicus curiae (friend of court) opposed the idea.

On Tuesday, advocate TH Khan told the court that the offences committed during the bloody mutiny at the BDR headquarters cannot be tried

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Eva drifts to death

Death toll from Rid's paracetamol intake climbs to 28

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Four-year-old girl Eva of Asadnagar village in Comilla finally gave in to acute renal failure yesterday following intake of Rid Pharma's banned paracetamol suspension.

A total of 28 children have died of renal failure since June after having Rid's banned drug, which is still available in market despite the government's July 22 directive to withdraw it.

Eva was admitted to Dhaka Shishu Hospital on Sunday with acute renal failure after taking Rid's paracetamol suspension prescribed by a village quack.

"It was the government's duty to file unnatural death cases regarding the demise of some 28 children but it lodged



This photo taken on August 24 shows four-year-old Eva fighting acute renal failure at Dhaka Shishu Hospital. She passed away yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

only four cases with the Drug Court. Even no autopsy was done to find out the exact cause of the deaths," said Prof Rashid E Mahbub, president of Health Rights Movement.

A Dhaka court on August 11

issued an arrest warrant against the managing director of Rid Pharma and its four employees. But none of them has been arrested.

Although the Drug

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No room for JS probe body at Nagar Bhaban

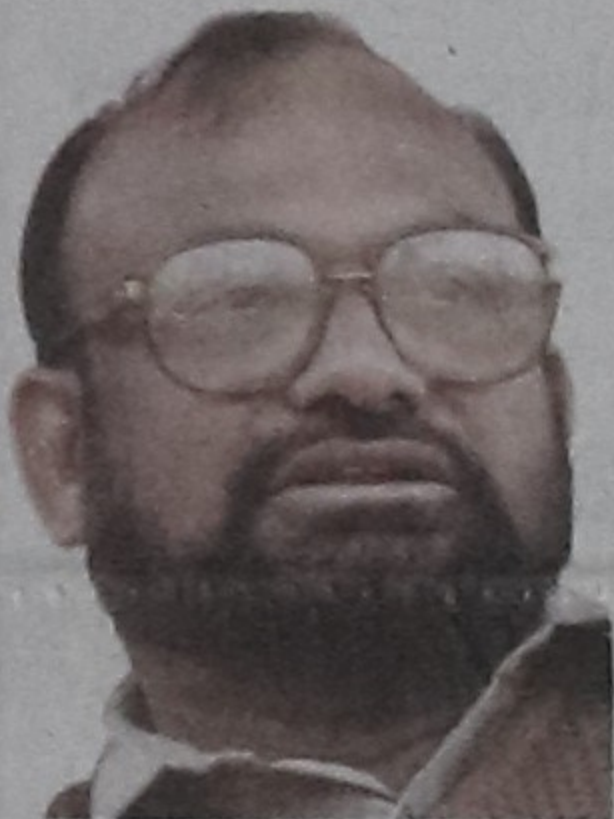
Mayor Khoka claims no corruption in DCC

RASHIDUL HASAN and SHAKHAWAT LITON

Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka denied a parliamentary probe body temporary office space in Nagar Bhaban for investigating widespread allegation of corruption and irregularities in DCC during the last seven years.

In a letter to the parliamentary standing committee on LGRD and cooperatives ministry Tuesday, Khoka, who was elected mayor in early 2002 and mired in controversy for alleged widespread corruption, claimed that there is no record of corruption in DCC activities.

The mayor said fresh move to probe the alleged corruption by setting up an office in Nagar Bhaban would hamper implementation of the ongoing DCC projects, its service to people and undermine the image of the local government body before donor agencies.



Annoyed by this, the parliamentary standing committee, which formed the probe body, accused the mayor yesterday of creating obstruction to the parliament's overseeing expenditure of public money and activities of the public organisation.

It, however, decided to go ahead with the investigation as the parliamentary body claimed that it had received widespread allegations of corruption against the mayor.

If necessary, the committee will summon the mayor, councillors and officials of the local government body to appear before it with required documents, Rahmat Ali, chief of the standing committee said.

"People will be shocked if they know about the unbridled corruption of the mayor. We are certain that corruption involving crores of taka took place in the DCC. We will make the probe

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22 more tested swine flu positive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-two more people, mostly from urban areas, have been diagnosed with swine flu yesterday, bringing the total number of the H1N1 infected in the country to 139.

The swine flu cases were mostly imported from outside of the country, but the trend has just reversed as one fourth of the cases now are secondary cases (infected from another person inside the country), said Professor Mahmudur Rahman, director of Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR).

Earlier, Prof Mahmud cautioned that the number of swine flu cases in the country could multiply manifold within the next three to four months while the government officials confirmed that all the cases appear to be mild, except the case of a three-month-old child.

Only the baby was admitted to a hospital and rest are undergoing treatment at home though the IEDCR keeps an eye on them.

He also said under a training programme to handle the swine flu cases, the government had started to provide training to the physicians and employees of eight private medical college hospitals.

The government will also provide the medicines to the private hospitals as required to treat the swine flu cases, he added.

He said that the government is assessing the situation and probabilities, to ensure adequate medicine, doctors and hospital

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Shopping time relaxed further

Till 10pm upto 15th Ramadan, then no restriction

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave businessmen permission to keep shopping malls and marketplaces open till 10:00pm up to the 15th of Ramadan and thereafter go doing business as long as they like till the Eid-ul-Fitr festival.

She gave her consent when a delegation of Bangladesh Shop Owners' Association met her at the PM's office and requested her to allow them to do evening business for a longer time than the present shopping hours till 8:00pm.

The shop owners reciprocated her goodwill by making several promises to the premier, mainly relating to make doing with the limited supply

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Local businesses want power pie

Seek favourable terms, low interest rate, no-experience criterion for power projects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Influential local investors, seeking power project contracts, are putting tremendous pressure on the Power Development Board (PDB) to relax implementation timelines for rental power projects.

Such projects are supposed to be the fastest but costliest way of setting up power plants for meeting short-term and emergency power requirements of a country.

At a meeting with PDB yesterday, prominent local investors including Salman F Rahman, Annisul Huq, and Moazzem Hossain dished out a list of complaints regarding implementation of power projects in the country saying it is 'impossible' to set up a rental power plant within a timeline of three or six months.

"They are mainly seeking rental power project prices, but an implementation timeline equivalent to the timeline for more common barge mount power projects. They are also demanding power rental contracts for 15 years instead of three," said a source present at the meeting. Rental power prices are the highest in the sector.

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Senator Ted Kennedy no more

AFP, Washington

US Senator Ted Kennedy, the last of the storied band of brothers who appeared born to rule, has died after losing a battle with brain cancer, his family said Wednesday. He was 77.

Edward M. Kennedy, regarded as the "liberal lion" of the Senate who was once tipped to succeed his assassinated brother John as president, died late Tuesday at his home in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts.

"We've lost the irreplaceable

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MORE STORY, ARTICLE ON PAGE 11, 3

An old friend lost

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

The then US senator Edward M Kennedy took a bold stance against the genocide committed by Pakistan during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971 despite the US government's opposition to Bangladesh's struggle for independence.

The Pakistan military administration under General Yahya Khan tried to suppress information regarding the genocide in Bangladesh after its launching on the night of March 25, 1971.

But Edward Kennedy, like a number of foreign journalists,

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This 1971 file photo shows the then US Senator Edward Kennedy visiting refugee camps in Kolkata, India. Over one crore Bangladeshis took refuge in India during the Liberation War.

PHOTO: AFP

10 drown as 2 boats capsize

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

At least 10 people drowned while two remained missing in separate boat capsize incidents in Habiganj and Sunamganj districts on Tuesday.

In Habiganj, eight people drowned as a motorboat with around 25 passengers overturned in the swirling waters of Bala haor (water-body) in Baniachang upazila on Tuesday night.

The bodies recovered till 4:00pm yesterday had been identified as Biswahari Das, 48, his granddaughters--Toma Rani of nine months and Lima Rani, 6, Anandamayee Das, 83, Uma Tara, 55, Amiya Chowdhury, 87, Usha Rani, 55, her granddaughter Monika Das, 7.

All the deceased hailed from Noabag village of the upazila. Witnesses said the boat, carrying Biswahari Das along with his family members and other villagers were returning home from Ikram Akhara temple after offering special prayers.

The boat faced inclement weather on its way back home at about 9:00pm and capsized in the Bala haor.

Hearing the screaming of the passengers, the locals rushed to the spot and recovered the bodies of three children on Tuesday

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