

## Asian Highway

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"But we cannot close our doors fearing imaginary bogus bo. We do not believe that India will take everything away," Hasina said.

"Asian Highway is an international network of routes and we cannot be in isolation by shutting our doors," said the premier.

She said if anyone checks with Google it will clear the confusion that the highway will not only connect Bangladesh with India it will also connect it with many other countries like China, and the Middle East and Europe.

After signing the agreement there is a scope for further discussion on the alternative route, she said, adding "It is not that Bangladesh's expectation is everything, ESCAP must have a say about it."

In reply to a supplementary question from a Jatiya Party lawmaker the premier said, "We got our independence through war. Our patriotism is not so fragile that we will not be able to protect the interest of our country."

Replying to a scripted question from AL lawmaker Mahmod-us-Samad Chowdhury, the AL chief said the past alliance government scrapped the proposal of linking Bangladesh with the Asian Highway on the excuse that India will get transit facilities through this highway.

The present government, after assuming power, decided

## Terrorists shifting focus to 'soft' targets

ANI, Washington

Terrorists are aiming for hotels and other easier-to-hit targets as security measures at military and government facilities continue to improve, says STRATFOR, a global intelligence company.

According to STRATFOR, al-Qaeda is changing from a centralized organization with global goals to regional "franchises" with more parochial aims and strong grass-roots support.

Fox News quoted the STRATFOR report as saying that these smaller cells get less training and less money, so they set their sights lower.

According to STRATFOR, the number of attacks on hotels has more than doubled since the 9/11 attacks in 2001 when compared with the eight years before.

Injuries and deaths caused by those attacks have increased six times over the same comparison period.

A hotel is the ultimate soft target for Islamic extremists: a fixed location, lots of human traffic and shallow security perimeters. Hotels also attract many Westerners, giving militants high probabilities of killing or injuring large numbers of them in a single attack, according to the report.

From a terrorist's perspective, the downside to hitting soft targets is that the attacks don't generate as much "political and ideological mileage" as hitting a hard target such as a better guarded government building or military facility, the report says.

## Liberation War

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political leaders who organised Liberation War.

During the question hour, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal lawmaker Mayeen Uddin Khan Badal in a supplementary query asked the state minister whether the government would move to honour politicians as organisers of the war.

Replying to the query, the state minister made the remark that annoyed the lawmakers.

They instantly protested his remark and shouted demands for expunging the remark from the House proceedings.

Deputy Speaker Shawkat Ali, who was in the chair at the time, found it difficult to bring back order.

Prime Minister and Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina, who replied to lawmakers' queries a few minutes ago, was not present in the House at the time.

Deputy Leader of the House Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury requested the lawmakers to cool down.

Many of the lawmakers shouted saying that they participated in the Liberation War under political leadership, not military leadership.

The deputy speaker repeatedly urged the lawmakers to allow the state minister to complete his reply to the query whether the government would honour the political leaders and civilians who organised the liberation war.

The lawmakers finally allowed Tajul to speak, and he corrected his earlier remark on the Liberation War.

He said organisers of the war should have been honoured long ago. However, a high-powered committee could be formed to work out steps to honour them, he added.

## PDB tender

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Bheramara and three 50MW diesel plants in Rajshahi, Thakurgaon and Syedpur, two 100MW plants based on heavy fuel oil (HFO) in Madanganj, Jessore, a 50MW HFO plant in Barisal and a 30MW HFO plant in Jamalpur.

The HFO plants will have to be implemented within 270 days of signing agreements with the PDB while the diesel plants within 120 days.

These projects have been taken up to ease the load shedding situation from next year for a term when the PDB implements four major coal-fired power projects totalling 2,000MW capacity by 2014.

The rental plants are short-term solution to the existing power crisis as these can be dismantled in short notice. The price can be two to three times that of conventional power plants.

A bidder must have experience of developing a 30MW rental or independent power project to qualify for bidding for a 100MW plant.

If the contractor fails to meet the project implementation deadline, it would have to pay a fine of \$500 per megawatt of electricity per day.

The bidders will deposit bid bonds at a rate of \$5,000 per megawatt of electricity.

Between September 2006 and April 2008, previous two governments awarded contracts for four rental power plants totalling 167MW capacity to inexperienced local companies for a 15-year term. Of them, one could not launch its 51MW plant.

Last year, the caretaker government awarded eight more three-year rental power contracts—all but one to local inexperienced companies. Only four of these companies could start operation while four totalling 180MW capacity failed to launch their projects as per schedule.

## Multiple spots

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complicity of the ministries, made the suggestion.

The CPTU has recently sent a letter to secretaries of all the ministries and chairmen of sector corporations in this regard.

A high official of the CPTU told The Daily Star that miscreants posing as Bangladesh Chhatra League leaders and workers have been restraining contractors from submitting tender schedules in different areas. This would impede government work and compromise quality.

The Public Procurement Rules (PPR) has the provision of submitting tender documents at several spots and through post or courier service, he added.

The CPTU in its letter suggested keeping open all these options, as it has been noticed that almost all contractors come to submit their schedules on the last date of submission.

The letter also said there should be a provision to the effect that anyone can drop tender documents in any of the authorised boxes at multiple locations.

## Two jurists

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Hassan Ariff said he should not make submission as amicus curiae, since one of his junior lawyers had earlier appeared on behalf of Jamiruddin Sircar in this case.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam, however, told The Daily Star that Rafique-ul-Huq and Hassan Ariff felt embarrassed as amici curiae due to their personal relationship with Jamiruddin Sircar.

The special vacation HC bench of Justices Tarik ul-Hakim and Borhan Uddin, however, appointed Ajmal Hossain and AFM Mesbahuddin as amici curiae for their expert opinions on this matter.

The bench also adjourned the session, the hearing of the writ petition filed by Sircar challenging the legality of formation a parliamentary committee, till October 14.

Earlier on September 3, the bench appointed five amici curiae—Rafique-ul-Huq, M Zahir, Mahmudul Islam, AF Hassan Ariff and Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan.

Mahmudul Islam and Zahir could not appear before the court yesterday, as they are abroad, while Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan was sick.

On August 17, Sircar filed writ petition to the HC praying for an issuance of a rule upon the government, and to stay the proceedings and recommendations made by the parliamentary committee on the allegations of corruption against him.

## NYT reporter

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Afghan officials over the weekend said about 70 people died when US jets dropped two bombs on the tankers, igniting them in a massive explosion. There were reports that villagers who had come to collect fuel from the tankers were among the dead, and Farrell wanted to interview villagers.

The Times reported that while Farrell and Munadi were interviewing Afghans near the site of the bombing, an old man approached them and warned them to leave. Soon after, gunshots rang out and people shouted that the Taliban were approaching.

Police had warned reporters who travelled to the capital of Kunduz to cover the tanker strike that the village in question was controlled by the Taliban and it would be dangerous to go there.

The Times kept the kidnappings quiet out of concern for the men's safety, and other media outlets, including The Associated Press, did not report the abductions following a request from the Times.

A story posted on the Times' Web site quoted Farrell saying he had been "extracted" by a commando raid carried out by "a lot of soldiers" in a firefight.

British special forces dropped down from helicopters early Wednesday onto the house where the two were being kept, and a gunbattle broke out, Yowar said.

Farrell, 46, a dual Irish-British citizen, told the Times that he saw Munadi step forward shouting "Journalist! Journalist!" but he then fell in a volley of bullets. Farrell said he did not know if the shots came from militants or the rescuing forces. "I dived in a ditch," said Farrell. Moments later, he said he heard British voices and shouted, "British hostage!" The British voices told him to come over. As he did, Farrell said he saw Munadi.

"He was lying in the same position as he fell," Farrell told the Times. "That's all I know. I saw him go down in front of me. He did not move. He's dead. He was so close, he was just two feet in front of me when he dropped."

The British prime minister said the operation was carried out after "extensive planning and consideration," and that those involved knew the high risks they faced. Brown called the mission "breath-taking heroism."

"As we all know, and as last night once again demonstrated, our armed forces have the skill and courage to act. They are truly the finest among us, and all of us in Britain pay tribute to them, and to the families and communities who sustain them in their awesome responsibilities," Brown said.

## Khaleda

**FROM PAGE 16**  
among others, will altogether accompany the BNP chairperson.

Tarique Rahman's wife Zubaida Rahman and daughter Zaima Rahman later will join Khaleda at Saudi Arabia.

Khaleda, also the leader of the opposition in parliament, may go to London later to meet her ailing son Tarique but the source could not confirm it.

Khaleda earlier refused to leave the country for Saudi Arabia several times on what was billed as an exile during the tenure of the caretaker government.

## Aug 21 attack

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wife of President Zillur Rahman, and injured many others by blasting grenades at an AL rally.

They had an intention to assassinate AL President Sheikh Hasina to create a void in the party and there was no alternative to cancellation of their bails granted earlier, the judges said.

On August 12 this year, Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 Judge Masdar Hossain granted them bail saying they were not directly involved in the incident.

The prosecution on August 17 submitted petitions seeking cancellation of the bails.

Earlier, the same court on August 3 ordered a further probe into the cases after the prosecution submitted petitions seeking fresh investigation.

Twenty-three people were

Munadi was first employed by The New York Times in 2002, according to his colleagues. He left the company a few years later to work for a local radio station.

He left Afghanistan last year to study for a master's degree in Germany. He came back to Kabul last month for a holiday and to see his family, and agreed to accompany Farrell to Kunduz on a freelance basis. He was married and had two young sons.

In a New York Times Web blog this month, Munadi wrote that he would never leave Afghanistan permanently and that "being a journalist is not enough; it will not solve the problems of Afghanistan. I want to work for the education of the country, because the majority of people are illiterate."

"And if I leave this country, if other people like me leave this country, who will come to Afghanistan?" he wrote. "Will it be the Taliban who come to govern this country? That is why I want to come back, even if it means cleaning the streets of Kabul. That would be a better job for me, rather than working, for example, in a restaurant in Germany."

Though much of military effort in Afghanistan is focused on the volatile south, Kunduz and some other northern provinces have been increasingly hit by attacks over the past year, and officials say the security situation appears to be deteriorating there.

Farrell joined the Times in 2007 in Baghdad. He has covered both the Afghan and Iraq conflicts for the paper.

He was briefly held hostage with a group of journalists traveling in Iraq in 2004, when he was working for The Times of London. Militants questioned him and the others for about 10 hours before letting them go, he told CNN afterward.

Farrell was the second Times journalist to be kidnapped in Afghanistan in a year.

In June, Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter David Rohde and his Afghan colleague Tahir Ludin escaped from their Taliban captors in northwestern Pakistan. They had been abducted Nov. 10 south of Kabul and were moved across the border.

## No ETP plan

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Against this backdrop, special assistant to the chief adviser of forest and environment ministry on May 6, 2006 held an inter-ministerial meeting which decided that each of the associations will prepare their own schedule for setting up ETP at the factories under their jurisdiction and submit the schedules to the ministries of environment and industries by June 2008.

The state minister's written reply mentioned that no progress was made by the given timeframe either.

Thereafter, the environment ministry extended the deadline till November 15, 2008. The ministry this time also did not get the desired response from the factory owners, said the state minister.

Finally, the last meeting chaired by the state minister for environment was held on April 12, 2009. The meeting decided that each of the factory owners' association would prepare the schedules for setting up ETP and submit those to the ministries of environment and industries and FBCCI by June 2009, but the decision was not implemented, the state minister concluded.

## 74 retired

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"The government is considering reinstating them in the services in the light of recommendations of the committee, and terms and conditions of the armed forces' service," the minister said.

On instructions from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who also holds charge of the defence ministry, the AFD formed the review committee a few months back to examine alleged irregularities in forced retirements, promotions and punitive measures in the armed forces during the last seven years.

The parliamentary standing committee on defence ministry had also urged the government to do justice to the officials who were victimised over this period.

The House body on Sunday last sent 90 applications of armed forces officials to the defence ministry for verifying who were "deprived or harassed or sacked on political grounds" during the period.

**SPECIAL UNIT OF NAVY**  
Replying to a written query from BNP lawmaker Harun Rashid, the planning minister said besides ensuring security of maritime boundary, the naval commando unit will help curb piracy and smuggling in the coastal belt.

Organisational structure of the commando unit is now under consideration at the AFD, he said.

The unit would operate under the Special Warfare and Salvage command.

Training of those to man the commando unit is already going on, the minister said.

## BCS cadre

**FROM PAGE 16**  
from a lawmaker during the prime minister's question hour in parliament.

Awami League lawmaker AKM Rahmatullah in a scripted question wanted to know whether the government is going to constitute primary education cadre to appoint teachers to schools.

Termining primary education as the foundation of education, the premier said the government wants to decentralise the power urgently in some vital sectors including education and health in consultation with the elected local representatives.

About the newly framed education policy, Hasina, also the leader of the House, said she had received a copy of the education policy.

"We want to reorganise the education system in light of the education policy," she said.

In defence of primary education final examination, the prime minister said certificates would be given to the students after they pass a final examination at the end of class V.

They would get admission to the next class on the basis of their certificates, she added.

## BSF kills 1

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entering Bangladesh with their cattle at about 5:00am.

The firing killed Monir on the spot, he said.

BSF took away the body after the incident.

BDR sent letters to its counterpart protesting the killing and demanding immediate return of the body.

## 21 missing

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Mia, Masum and Chandara.

Fifty-one fishermen returned to the Patherghata upazila under Barguna with the help of other trawlers after floating in the sea for eight hours.

They said they fear 21 of their missing fellow might be dead in the capsized.

## Crossfire

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Mahadevpur at about 3:40am where a gang of extremists, led by Anwar, was holding a meeting.

Sensing the presence of law enforcers, the outlaws opened fire forcing them to fire back that triggered a gunfight.

At one stage, the accomplices managed to flee the scene while the body of Anwar was found lying dead on the ground.

Rab recovered one light gun, two bullets, five explosives and two sharp weapons from the spot.

Later police rushed to the spot and recovered the body.

Anwar was accused in six cases including three of murder, police said.

## Climate talks to boost momentum for deal

AFP, United Nations

The one-day UN meeting on climate change in New York later this month is intended to generate political momentum ahead of a landmark climate summit in December, according to a top UN official.

The September 22 talks are "intended to provide political momentum at the highest level to accelerate progress toward a deal in Copenhagen," said Janos Pasztor, director of UN chief Ban Ki-moon's Climate Change Support Team, at a news conference Tuesday.

UN officials said they expect many heads of state at the September meeting, including, in what would be his first time at top-level international climate talks, US President Barack Obama.

Saying that "progress has been much too slow" on negotiations, Pasztor noted there were only 15 more days of negotiations available ahead of Copenhagen.

"The full engagement of world leaders is absolutely essential," Pasztor urged, adding that all 192 member states of the world body are invited to attend the talks.

Although he said the informal talks on the sidelines of the UN's annual general assembly meet would not produce a formal declaration, the momentum should boost movement towards "a fair, effective and ambitious deal" in December.

In Copenhagen, world leaders will try to seal a new accord to fight climate change after the Kyoto Protocol requirements expire in 2012.

Speaking to AFP in Norway earlier this month, the UN secretary general criticised world leaders for often acting in the interests of their own countries.

"Climate change affects everyone. It doesn't respect borders. So political leaders should act as world leaders," Ban said.

## US missile attack

**FROM PAGE 16**  
the area at the time.

Earlier Pakistani troops on Tuesday killed at least 24 alleged militants in the lawless northwest Khyber district near the Afghan border, the military said.

The army launched an offensive in the tribal district, home to the fabled Khyber Pass into neighbouring Afghanistan, eight days ago after a suicide bomber targeted a border post killing 22 policemen.

"Security forces killed at least 24 militants and destroyed two militant headquarters and two hideouts in Bara town of Khyber," a statement from the paramilitary Frontier Corps said.

The current offensive is against fighters with the Lashkar-e-Islam (Army of Islam), a militant group battling the government in Khyber that has some ties to the Pakistan Taliban.

It was the second US missile strike in the North Waziristan tribal region in less than 24 hours. A similar strike targeting a madrasa (Islamic school) and an adjoining house killed at least five people on Monday.

Residents on Tuesday said they had seen the drone hovering in the sky and had been expecting the missile attack.

Washington alleges al-Qaeda and Taliban rebels who fled Afghanistan after the 2001 US-led invasion are holed up in the semi-autonomous tribal belt.

The US military does not, as a rule, confirm drone attacks, but its armed forces and the Central Intelligence Agency operating in neighbouring Afghanistan are the only forces that deploy drones in the region.

Taliban warlord Baitullah Mehsud was killed in a US drone attack on August 5 in neighbouring South Waziristan tribal district.

Pakistan has also carried out airstrikes against Mehsud hideouts and commanders have vowed to hunt down the warlord's militant network in the remote northwest region known as a base for Taliban and al-Qaeda rebels.

Pakistan's previous government accused Mehsud of masterminding the 2007 assassination of ex-prime minister Benazir Bhutto and a string of other attacks that have killed hundreds of people here over the last two years.

Mehsud also allegedly masterminded multiple deadly bombings in the last two years. More than 2,000 people have died in bombings across the country since July 2007, when government forces besieged a radical mosque in Islamabad and Mehsud loyalists claimed responsibility for some of the worst attacks.

Islamabad publicly opposes suspected US missile strikes, saying they violate its territorial sovereignty and deepen resentment among the populace. Since August 2008, around 55 such strikes have killed more than 550 people.

But many analysts and observers believe that the government tacitly supports

the attacks, as it shares the US goal of eliminating Mehsud's network, which is blamed for scores of deadly attacks in nuclear-armed Pakistan.

Pakistan in April launched a punishing military offensive against the Taliban in the northwest, targeting the rebels in the districts of Swat, Buner and Lower Dir after militants advanced closer to the capital Islamabad.

The military claimed to have cleared the area of Taliban and vowed to turn their attention to the mountainous tribal belt along the border where Mehsud and his Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have thrived since 2007.

On Monday, the military had claimed killing 10 militants in Khyber but such tolls are impossible to confirm independently.

Khyber is on the main land and supply route through Pakistan into Afghanistan, where international forces are battling a Taliban insurgency.

## Obama

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formally handed over the invitation letter from the US president to the PM when he paid a call on her at her office yesterday morning.

PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad briefed newsmen after the meeting.

Bangladesh is the second highest contributor to the UN peacekeeping missions with regard to number of peacekeepers while the US secured the number one position in financial contributions to the UN peacekeeping missions.

The US ambassador said President Obama invited Hasina to attend the meeting as the US attaches high value to Bangladesh's enormous experiences in the peacekeeping operations in restoring peace and rebuilding several war-torn regions in the world.

Moriarty said he came to meet the Bangladesh premier to express deep appreciation on behalf of his government on how Hasina herself and her government expressed sympathy at the death of Senator Edward Kennedy.

In reply, Hasina mentioned that she and her party had close relation with Senator Kennedy for long time.

She said Bangladeshi people will always remember Senator Kennedy with great admiration for his invaluable contributions to the war of liberation in 1971.

The prime minister and US ambassador said Bangladesh and the US are enjoying excellent bilateral relations and hoped that the relations will be strengthened further in coming days.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral trade and business between Bangladesh and the US as well as the forthcoming visit of Hasina to that country on the occasion of United Nations General Assembly session 2009.

Acting US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Michael S Owen, PM's adviser for International Affairs Prof Gowher Rizvi, Principal Secretary MA Karim, Office Secretary Molla Waheeduzzaman and ambassador M Ziauddin were present.