

## Samakal editor

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Publisher AK Azad on October 14, Sarwar also alleged that the GD was filed aiming to taint the image of the paper and cause harm to it.

In his GD Sarwar said he has been in journalism for quite a long time and had earlier served as editor of the daily Jugantor and the news editor of daily Ittefaq.

He said a news item under the headline "trial of Sabir killing and bribery case is going to be started" was published in the front page of daily Samakal on October 10, highlighting the investigation of the brutal killing of a promising young engineer and bribery.

The news also focused on the involvement of Bashundhara Group chairman and one of his sons and the present state of the case.

He also mentioned in the GD that another lead news titled "Bashundhara's land encroachment in Keraniganj" was published in the Samakal on October 13 elaborately focusing on grabbing of hundreds of bigas of land of Keraniganj locals and their agony. The news mentioned

the allegation of land grabbing against Bashundhara Group.

Being overwrought by the two news items, a GD was filed on behalf of Bashundhara Group against him and Samakal publisher AK Azad bringing worthless, false and motivated charge of arson in the Bashundhara City Shopping Complex that took place on March 13, Sarwar said.

The GD says that this arson incident is now under investigation at the Criminal Investigation Department. It also mentioned that a report submitted by a high-powered committee after investigation precisely accused Bashundhara Group of non-cooperation.

Besides, as the matter is under investigation Bashundhara Group is supposed to submit any information or allegation relating to the incident to the investigating authority.

"But surprisingly enough Bashundhara authorities breaking the rules filed a GD with Tejaon Police Station citing their fictitious investigation 213 days after the incident," the GD reads.

## Drive against

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about Tk 1,32,500 at the Mohammadpur Krishi Market for selling and storing banned poly bags, said DoF officials.

It also confiscated a large amount of poly bags.

"We have been facing problems conducting drives through mobile courts after the separation of the judiciary," said Jamshed.

He said the existing provision does not allow the department to have a magistrate to conduct regular drives. They have to request the deputy commissioner's office to provide them with magistrates.

Executive magistrates lost judicial powers following the separation of the judiciary from the executive on Nov 1, 2007. The Mobile Court Act 2009 allows metropolitan and district magistrates to operate mobile courts.

"Fresh drives will be carried out routinely from now on to stop the sale and use of banned poly bags. But it would not be possible unless we refrain from using them," he added.

The government on January 1, 2002 imposed a ban on production, marketing and use of polythene (below 100 micron) in Dhaka city. A nationwide ban on polythene followed from April 8 the same year as polythene being a non-biodegradable causes environmental hazard.

However, an exception to the ban was made for packaging of 14 items. They include biscuit, chana-chur, bread, salt, vermicelli, medicine, flour, naphthalene, fertiliser, chocolate and milk powder.

But poly bags for packaging these items must be above 100 micron.

Maximum penalty under the Environment Conservation Act 1995 for manufacturing and marketing polythene shopping bag is 10 years' rigorous imprisonment, or a maximum fine of Tk 10 lakh, or both. Only environment court has the authority to sentence anyone for the offences.

The fine for using poly bags for purposes other than export is Tk 500.

However, production, marketing and use of poly bags continue despite the ban on them.

## PM flies

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secretary will join the premier in Qatar.

Hasina will attend the European Development Days 2009 on October 22 and on the same day she will meet with Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, President of European Commission Jose Manuel, Swedish Minister for Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson and speaker and MPs of Swedish parliament.

The next day the premier will hold a meeting with President of European Parliament Jerzy Buzek and attend a community reception at Hallunda Folkethus.

Ericsson President Carl Henric Svanberg and SIDA Director General Andres Novdstrom will call on the prime minister, said Azad.

On October 24, Hasina will attend the plenary on climate change: The Road to Copenhagen and Beyond in Stockholm. The next day the prime minister will leave Stockholm for Doha.

She will hold a bilateral meeting with Amir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani at Doha Amiri.

The premier will return on October 27.

Jahangir Alam of the daily Prothom Alo and Abdullah Al Mamun of the daily Jugantor will be, among others, the entourage during her visits.

## AL, Jubo League

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said they resorted to baton charge to ensure the situation did not go out of control.

He said the contractors could submit tenders without trouble because of the security measures taken by the police.

## HC appoints

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with two writ petitions challenged the legality of the CHT peace accord and its provisions.

The HC following the writ petitions had issued separate rules asking the government to explain why the CHT peace deal and its provisions should not be declared illegal and unconstitutional.

The matters yesterday came up on the cause list for hearing. Tajul Islam yesterday told The Daily Star that the High Court appointed amici curiae for expert opinions, as important constitutional and legal points are involved in this matter.

On December 2, 1997, the previous Awami League government led by then prime minister Sheikh Hasina signed the peace accord with Parbatya Chattagram Jano Sanhati Samiti (PCJSS) leader Jyotindra Bodhipriya Lama, also known as Santu Lama, ending an over two-decade-old insurgency.

## Service age

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extension of service age, prime minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad told the reporters after the cabinet meeting held at the prime minister's office.

The retirement age of other professionals would remain as before.

The meeting also approved in principle the Private University (amendment) Act 2009 to determine and develop the standard of higher education.

In the bill, a provision has been kept for setting up a National Independent and Unique Accreditation Council like other countries in a bid to determine the quality and standard of higher education.

It has also kept another provision that necessary rules would be formulated to bring the foreign university campuses or their branches in Bangladesh and setting up of admission or coaching centres under the law.

It also proposed formulating of student fees and proper salary structure in accordance with the country's socio-economic condition

and taking permission from the University Grants Commission to this end.

As per the bill, the government can cancel the permission of any university if it fails to acquire renewal certificate within stipulated timeframe.

The bill includes provision that anyone seeking to set up a private university in Dhaka and Chittagong must have reserve fund of Tk 5 crore and Tk 3 crore for other divisional areas. Moreover, a private university must have one acre of land in Dhaka and Chittagong metropolis and two acres in other areas to get permanent certificate from the government.

The cabinet also gave final approval to three other bills; Post Office (amendment) Bill 2009, Bangladesh Labour (amendment) Bill 2009 and Gas Bill 2009.

Under the new labour bill, there is a provision for keeping unions each for the industrial owners and workers.

Members of the cabinet, advisers to the prime minister and state ministers and secretaries concerned attended the meeting.

## Metro rail project

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indicate how costly such a project would be or how long it will take to complete, it is generally understood that it is a multi-billion dollar project, which can take decades to complete.

In the alternative proposal the ministry said as the government has already completed Strategic Transport Plan (STP) for Dhaka city at a cost of Tk 14 crore, no separate study is required in this regard. The process of pre-qualifying the bidders may be done through taking investment proposals from investors, who would be free to conduct their own feasibility studies.

The technical evaluation committee will make the final selection after taking technical and financial proposals from them on the basis of single stage two-envelope system.

The ministry also submitted a proposal for constructing an Elevated Expressway in the capital, dropping some procedures, before the cabinet committee today to speed up the completion of the project.

But again, the ministry promoted doing such a costly project without any feasibility study.

The ministry noted that conducting a feasibility study for Dhaka Elevated Expressway through appointing a consultant would take a long time. So, without study, proposals can be invited from international investors interested in the project and investor pre-qualification process may be started.

The communications ministry in the proposal said the prime minister has been apprised of the detailed plan for Metro Rail and Elevated Expressway and the proposal has been sent following her directives.

The communications ministry proposals also said that after the present government came to power several steps have been taken to ease traffic jams in Dhaka city but it did not ease. So construction of Metro Rail and Elevated Expressway on an emergency basis is required.

The ministry also recommended formation of a Regulatory Body (Mass Rapid Transit Authority) for coordination and monitoring of all activities for quick implementation of Metro Rail and Elevated Expressway projects.

## Hasina, 3 others

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After scrutinising the case docket and other documents submitted by the ACC, Judge ANM Bashir Ullah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court accepted the final report and cleared them of the charges.

The three others in the case are former state minister Obaidul Quader, former joint secretary of cultural ministry Asaduzzaman Bhuiyan and architect Iqbal Habib of M/s Bhitti Shoptobirinda Limited.

The case was filed accusing them of embezzling Tk 41.84 lakh from a project to construct a complex at the grave of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara in Gopalganj.

Monjur Morshed, official of now defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption, filed the case with Ramna Police Station against Hasina and three others on July 3, 2004.

The complainant accused Hasina of approving a proposal to appoint Bhitti Shoptobirinda on December 15, 1998 as the lone consultant

### CONTECH BACKGROUND

In 2002, Bangladesh Railway floated tender for constructing Mono Rail on the basis of Build, Operate, Transfer (BOT) and Contech Ltd and another company participated in the bidding.

After examining their quotations the government expert committee said, "None of the bidders are eligible to qualify for second stage of bidding for the project." The tender committee cited different inconsistencies in the tenders submitted. One of the inconsistencies was that none of the bidders had any experience of doing such job in the past. Another fault was that they did not provide many of the documents related to the proposal.

The expert committee observed that Contech is registered as an engineering consultant and construction firm based in Dhaka.

Contech stated that it would engage BUET experts as consultants for geo-technical, structural, transportation and environmental engineering. But the committee noted that it is not clear if BUET had any experience in designing and construction supervision of underground metro rail system.

Contech had also proposed to set up the rail system wholly financed by the government, which deviates from the concept of BOT or Build, Own, Operate or Private Public Partnership.

During the BNP rule in May 2006, the government approved the Contech proposal. Today's meeting of the committee has been informed that according to Bangladesh Private Sector Infrastructure Guidelines, Contech Ltd re-submitted all relevant information and proposal regarding capital investment. After completing necessary formalities the then cabinet committee approved the proposal as unsolicited proposal. The company was informed that the firm would be considered as pre-qualified bidder for participation in the final tender.

During the caretaker government regime, in June 2008, the Bangladesh Railway Division in a letter told Contech it would be allowed to participate in the final bidding as a pre-qualified bidder in the future.

for construction of the complex without floating any tender and bypassing the memorandum of the Economic Relations Division.

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council on November 25, 1998 approved the project to be implemented at a cost of about Tk 15.54 crore.

Earlier, the government on August 17 this year withdrew Paltan Killings Case filed against Hasina and 44 others in October 2006.

It had also withdrawn a Tk 2.99 crore extortion case against Hasina, her sister Sheikh Rehana, and their cousin Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim on May 17 following complainant Azam J Chowdhury's submission of an application to the home ministry.

Moreover, the government had earlier decided to withdraw 12 other cases filed against Hasina during the tenures of the previous BNP-led government and the last caretaker government.

## BSF kills 1

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead a Bangladeshi cattle trader at Goshpur border in Jibonnagar upazila in Chuadanga on Sunday night.

The dead was identified as Tipu Sultan, 40, son of Wahab Mondol of Goshpur village.

According to BDR 35 Rifle Battalion in Chuadanga, BSF troops from 12-Tangi camp in Krishnagar Thana in Nadia district of West Bengal opened fire on six Bangladeshis when they were returning to Bangladesh with cattle around 11:30pm.

BDR said the BSF fired six shots at them while they were crossing the border. Tipu died on the spot. BSF took away his body.

BDR formally protested the incident sending a letter and asked its counterpart to sit in a flag meeting. The BSF did not reply till filing of this report yesterday evening.

## Rid Pharma

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Judge's Court with bail prayer and said the Sessions Court shall consider the prayer for a regular bail.

Besides, the HC directed law enforcement agencies not to arrest or harass Mizanur and granted a six-month bail to Sheuly Rahman.

Following the order, Mizanur surrendered before the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka on October 12 seeking bail in the case. But the court fixed evidence for a desperate and dangerous conspiracy.

Earlier on September 16, the Drug court ordered OC of Brahmanbaria Police Station to attach property of five accused and report by October 14. As the police failed to carry out the orders, they were again directed to submit report by November 15.

One of the directors and two pharmacists accused in the case have yet to appear before any court seeking bail.

On July 22, the Drug Administration sealed off Rid's factory following the children's deaths.

The government also formed a seven-member probe committee to investigate the incident. On July 29, the probe committee placed its report that found presence of poisonous diethylene glycol in paracetamol syrups of the company.

Rid Pharma used diethylene glycol, meant for tannery and rubber industries, as a substitute for propylene glycol, as diethylene glycol costs Tk 200 per litre while propylene glycol Tk 1,100.

Later, the government banned two drugs of Rid Pharma—Ridaplex (vitamin B-complex syrup) and Temset (paracetamol suspension)—for their low standard.

Sources at Drug Administration said Rid Pharma received drug-manufacturing licence in 2006 and started marketing 12 drugs. It started producing paracetamol syrup though it had permission only for paracetamol suspension.

## Pak troops

**FROM PAGE 16**  
the battleground sealed off to journalists and all communications in the area shut down.

The army and the Taliban have each claimed early victories in South Waziristan, a mountainous tribal region that Islamist extremists use as a base to plot attacks on the Pakistani state, Western troops in Afghanistan and targets in the West.

The fighting took place as US Central Command chief David Petraeus met Pakistan's prime minister and army chief in the capital. US Sen John Kerry also met political and military leaders to try and ease tensions over an American aid bill that has caused a rift between the army and Pakistan's civilian government.

The offensive in South Waziristan is seen as Pakistan's most crucial yet against militants that are in control of a large swath of its northwest close to the Afghan border. The insurgents have beaten back troops there three times since 2004.

Intelligence officials said fighting was going on Monday close to Jandola, Razmak and Wana, three towns where the army had bases. Jets were making bombing runs in the Ladhia and Makeen areas, the officials said on condition of anonymity because they were not allowed to brief the media on the record.

The army said Sunday that 60 militants and six soldiers have been killed since the offensive began Saturday.

Intelligence officials said eight more militants were killed Monday as they advanced on troops in the Khaisur area.

## Transcom chief

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incident to throttle the independent voice of the newspaper.

The GDs were filed with the Gulshan, Tejgaon and Shabbagh police stations Sunday night.

It was mentioned in the diaries that Prothom Alo ran a story headlined "State machinery desperate to save Bashundhara" and a news analysis titled "Allegations of yellow journalism, the chief justice has no comment" on October 12 and 13 this year.

Displeased by the news items, Bashundhara published false and defamatory advertisements in different newspapers between October 13 and October 18. It also circulated posters and leaflets.

In the GD filed with Tejgaon Police Station, the Prothom Alo editor said the subjects of the two reports were upholding the rule of law, the context of which was the bails given in contradiction to rules to the Bashundhara chairman, his wife and their three children.

In an affidavit to the High Court on July 5, 2009, the government mentioned that the Bashundhara owners are convicted in a tax-dodging case and are fugitives under the law.

The GD also said that the mentioned events that followed the publication of the reports in Prothom Alo provide evidence for a desperate and dangerous conspiracy.

"Besides the hateful and aggressive attitude and unholy activities of the Bashundhara owners are not unknown to the conscious citizens of the society," the GD said. There are clear records of their activities that breached the law.

It is also widely known that Bashundhara Group is facing charges of its involvement in the much-talked-about Sabir Murder Case.

"In this context, I am deeply disturbed by the malicious advertisement and false allegations and court cases," said Matur Rahman, the editor of Prothom Alo, in the GD.

In any civilised society, there is a universally recog-

nised way to challenge or differ with any published report, but Bashundhara did not follow it, according to the GD.

"We cannot but be deeply concerned by the disturbing incidents created one after another by Bashundhara Group in a show of their wealth and power," Matur Rahman said.

The advertisement run by Bashundhara in different newspapers -- after filing charges in a GD against specific people -- only shows their limitless disrespect for the rule of law, Matur Rahman added.

Another GD was filed with Gulshan Police Station on behalf of Transcom Group Chairman Latifur Rahman by the company's head of legal affairs Md Fakhruzzaman on Sunday.

In his GD, Latifur Rahman said: "The allegations filed in a GD on October 14 linking us to the Bashundhara blaze are completely false, trumped-up, baseless, motivated and certainly planned and conspiratorial."

Latifur Rahman added: "Circumstances have forced us to fear that Bashundhara Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan (popularly known as Shah Alam) or any member of his family may implicate me or any member of my family in any false case or threaten our lives."

In the GD, Latifur Rahman also expressed his fear that Shah Alam or any member of his family may try to hurt his businesses or harm his employees by any means.

Mizanur Rahman Khan, who wrote those reports, filed a GD with Shabbagh Police Station on Sunday night. The GD mentioned the arrival of four unnamed young men by motorcycle in search of Khan at the Supreme Court premises on October 14. One of the motorcyclists misbehaved with Mizanur Rahman Khan's driver, according to the report.

## SC reprimands

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The counsel repeatedly argued about the contradictions in the statements of prosecution witnesses during the 11th day's hearing yesterday in the Bangabandhu assassination case.

He said his client Bazul Huda was conspiratorially implicated in the case and should be given the benefit of doubt.

Expressing annoyance, the court asked Mamun to make legal points rather than repeating the same arguments.

The five-member bench further said it never heard the kind of arguments Mamun had placed and doubted whether the counsel had gone through the evidence in the case.

The court said it would hear arguments from any senior lawyer for the accused from tomorrow, if Mamun does not complete arguments today.

Mamun was asked not to make repetition but was not barred from placing arguments, it said.

The SC said it had earlier told him to be cautious while making comments to the media about the court but Mamun made wrong comments about it.

It advised Mamun to be fully prepared before presenting arguments. "You should not present such statements before the apex court," it said.

When Mamun claimed that his client Bazul Huda was conspiratorially implicated in the case the court said his arguments were not sufficient to prove that.

"You will have to know the related regulations of Evidence Act to present deliberations on

the matter. Perhaps, you have not studied the evidence. The less you speak the better for us," the court said.

The counsel argued that the trial court verdict was not right as the statement of security guard Nuruddin, who was on duty at Bangabandhu's house on August 14 night, 1975, was not recorded.

Trials should have been held separately for separate incidents of killings on August 15, 1975 in line with the criminal law, he said.

The court said no leave to appeal was granted on the ground that the verdict was not right.

It adjourned the hearing till 9:30 am today.

## Reform body

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Replying to another question, the finance minister said the final announcement of the national pay commission would come next month.

Muhtith said he had discussion with the Japanese ambassador on different bilateral issues. The ambassador however expressed dissatisfaction over delay in implementation of different projects financed by JICA.

The minister said bureaucratic tangles and inefficiency were responsible for delay in project implementation. He said the government is taking action in this regard.

He added the prime minister might visit Japan in the beginning of next year. He expressed the hope the visit would strengthen more the relations between the two countries.

## Iran blames

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Mohammad Ali Jafari, said Monday that an Iranian delegation would head to Pakistan to deliver "proof" that Islamabad is supporting Rigi.

"The delegation will ask for him (Rigi) to be handed over," Jafari was quoted as saying by ISNA news agency.

Jafari also charged that Rigi takes orders from the intelligence services of Britain, Pakistan and the United States.

"The group of Rigi has direct contact with the American and British intelligence services and unfortunately the Pakistani intelligence service," Jafari said.

"He is supported by them and without doubt he is acting under their orders and plans."

General Mohammad Pakpour, the head of Guards' ground forces and whose deputy was killed in the powerful blast, on the same theme said Washington and London were backing those who carried out the attack against

Iran's prestigious military force.

"The terrorists were trained in the neighbouring country (Pakistan) by the Americans and British. The enemies of the Islamic Republic of Iran are unable to tolerate the unity in the country," Pakpour said on state television.

Iran's first deputy speaker Mohammad Hassan Abutorabi rammed home the point, telling parliament on Monday that "the horrible crime in Sistan-Baluchestan was carried out with the direct support of criminal America and its mercenaries."

Hours after the attack, Ahmadinejad charged that the assault was plotted in Pakistan.

"We became aware that some of agents in Pakistan were cooperating with the main elements of today's terrorist incident and we consider it to be our right to demand the rendition of these criminals," Fars quoted Ahmadinejad as saying.

## NCTB warehouse

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an incident of arson.

"Printing 19 crore books and distributing those on time have been a big challenge for us, and the fire which caused an extensive damage undoubtedly has been a big blow, but we will face the challenge," he said.

He added that the government is determined and will try its best to distribute the books to students on time.

"It might have been an act of sabotage," he said adding that the investigation committee started its work yesterday.

NCTB formed a three-member enquiry committee headed by its Member (Finance) Zahurul Alam, who is also a joint secretary.

The committee will ascertain the cause of the fire and estimate the extent of the damage, and submit a preliminary report within three days.

"We have started the investigation today and will try to file the report within the deadline," said Alam.

The fire broke out Sunday morning on the ground floor of the warehouse in the capital's Tejaon industrial area.

The stockpiles of paper in the warehouse were for printing books for the secondary and Ibtidai classes.

The firefighters yesterday had to toil throughout the day to remove stacks of printing papers to reach the centre of the fire.

The fire located at the northwest corner of the warehouse suddenly started to spread, as the paper stacks were gradually being removed, said Maj Shahjalal, director of operations of the Fire Service and Civil Defence, around 6:30 in the evening.

"But it could not spread fast, as heavy stacks of paper were piled very tightly," he added.

Around 50 firemen were working round the clock in shifts. NCTB hired 70 labourers in the morning to help remove the stockpiles, said Ratan Siddique, a member of the National Committee for Correcting Wrong Information on the Liberation War History in NCTB books.

A six-member team of the army engineering corps led by Maj Imran arrived at the scene at noon to help in the operation.

Fork lifts and other equipment were brought in to expedite the removal. Army engineers and navy divers backed the firefighters on Sunday as well.

**CURRENT PRINTING, DISTRIBUTION STATUS**  
NCTB's deadline was October