

## Chandpur project

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years for hire purchase. The cabinet body at a meeting with Finance Minister AMA Muhith in the chair okayed awarding contract for the power project to China Chenga Engineering Co Ltd.

Previously the deal for this project was won by Chinese company Harbin. But it was cancelled during the caretaker government's tenure when the company wanted to increase the project cost.

Harbin had originally proposed a cost of \$45.20 million (around Tk 315 crore) for the project. But after signing the deal, it sought another \$16 million that led to cancellation of the tender.

The purchase committee in August this year okayed setting up of a 150 MW combined cycle power project in Sylhet by Chinese firm mpynt Shanghai Electric Company at a cost of around Tk 704 crore. The estimated cost of Chandpur project is Tk 300 crore more than that of the Sylhet project.

The committee yesterday approved additional expenditure proposed for purchase of jeeps with AC and other related expenses for upazila chairmen. Earlier, it was decided that 420 jeeps would be bought at a cost of Tk 33.30 lakh each. Now the price has been raised to Tk 35.39 lakh each in addition to Tk 80,000 for registration, Tk 40,000 for AC and Tk 58,000 for gas connection.

It also approved construction of three 16-storey buildings with 60 flats each at

Mohammadpur in the city at a cost of Tk 47.66 crore.

According to the project proposal, the government would construct 1,020 flats (1,000 and 800 sq feet each) at Mohammadpur F-block for sale to small and middle income group people on hire-purchase basis.

Seventeen buildings, each 16-storey, would be constructed on a plot of about 5.51 acres. Initially, a proposal for building three such buildings was placed at yesterday's meeting.

The cabinet body also okayed proposed construction of a building with 78 flats costing Tk 23.67 crore.

The government would construct 182 flats at Lalmatia Housing Estate (1,250 and 1,060 sq feet each) for sale to government officials on hire-purchase basis. Of these, construction of 78 flats was okayed at yesterday's meeting.

Three proposals relating to construction of roads and drainage system at Purbachal housing project costing Tk 102 crore were also approved at the meeting.

A proposal for procurement of 10 railway locomotives for Tk 199 crore was approved yesterday.

And proposed import of one lakh tonnes of wheat at a cost of Tk 151 crore was also okayed.

Moreover, the cabinet committee gave nod to a proposal for government import of 1.5 lakh tonnes of Murate of Potash (MoP) from a Belarus company.

## 55 Rohingyas arrested in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

At least 55 Rohingyas were arrested in different areas of Roangchari upazila in the district yesterday.

Roangchari police during a raid on Betcharabazar Para of the upazila early morning detained some 36 Rohingyas for illegal infiltration. A total of 18 children, 14 women and four men were among the arrestees.

Later in the afternoon, police held 19 more Rohingyas from different parts of the upazila.

A number of male Rohingyas had managed to flee, locals said.

## Bangabandhu

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Fazilatunnesa Mujib saw her husband's dead body she said, "Kill me right here, I will go nowhere else," Advocate Anisul Huq told the court, adding that Begum Mujib tried to save others in the house by sacrificing her own life.

Anisul Huq argued that the appellants assassinated Bangabandhu and his family members without any provocation, which proves that the killings were the result of a conspiracy for murder, not of a conspiracy for mutiny.

It was a conspiracy to murder the erstwhile president of the country, not any ordinary man, to capture the state power, he noted.

He argued if the incidents of August 15, 1975, were a mutiny, the killers would immediately attack and confine the then vice-president Syed Nazrul Islam, and the then prime minister M Mansoor Ali as well. But on that day, they only killed Bangabandhu and his family members, he added.

He said erstwhile minister Abdur Rab Semiat, and the then chief of Awami Juba League Sheikh Fazul Haque Moni, who were also killed on that day, were Bangabandhu's relatives. So, the pattern of the murders proves that they were the result of a conspiracy to murder an entire family, not a conspiracy for a mutiny, he noted again.

The chief state counsel said the killers entered Bangabandhu's house blazing their guns, although there was no resistance from the victims.

Anisul Huq argued, the facts that the killers assembled at Balurghat Parade Ground where condemned convicts Syed Farooqur Rahman and Shariful Haque Dalim briefed the group, and then detachments of them took positions at six points of the capital city prior to the murders, prove that the incidents of that day were the result of a big pre-planned conspiracy for murders.

The five-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Justice Md Tafazzul Islam adjourned the hearing till this morning.

## Tender papers

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Magura Sadar Hospital.

They also snatched the schedule from him and later returned the bank draft attached with the schedule, said HaBibur who came there on behalf of APC Pharmaceuticals.

"As they attacked me in presence of police personnel I was forced to take shelter at the office room of the civil surgeon," he said.

Some cadres allegedly belonging to Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Awami Juba League from the morning took position in front of the CS office and obstructed the contractors to drop schedules.

Some contractors wishing anonymity told this correspondent that to win the bid, pro-BCL and pro-Juba League contractors held a meeting at the conference room of the hospital on Tuesday night. At one stage, two rival groups of contractors were locked in a scuffle. After a while, they took a unanimous decision to prevent general contractors from dropping schedules to win the bid.

When contacted, Civil Surgeon Dr AKM Mahfuz Kabir expressed his ignorance about holding of any meeting by any quarter.

He, however, said he heard about the attack and assured the contractor of taking necessary action if anybody submits a written complaint in this connection.

The contractors said they bought 47 schedules to take part in the bid and yesterday was the last date of tender dropping. But when asked, the civil surgeon could not confirm the number of schedules sold and dropped.

## Latif's JS outburst

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expunction against a minister is an unprecedented act.

The speaker on October 11 expressed disappointment over absence of ministers and senior lawmakers who sit in the front row, which forced postponement of the scheduled discussion on a draft of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).

At that time, Prime Minister and Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina alone was present in the front row.

Later, the speaker expressed annoyance at some lawmakers' making noise by engaging in conversation during the disposal of call attention notices on that day.

The speaker uttered 'fish market' amid the noisy environment in the House.

On the following day, on October 12, the jute and textile minister made a statement under section 300 of the rules of procedure of parliament and criticised the speaker for using the word 'fish market'.

Siddiqui, also ruling AL presidium member, criticised the speaker for his comment over the absence of the ministers in the House.

While the jute and textile

minister was making the statement, Deputy Speaker Shawkat Ali was presiding over the sitting and he said the speaker certainly will reply to the minister's statement.

The speaker yesterday came up with his response and found the minister's statement was violation of the rules of procedure.

In defence of his ruling, the speaker said a minister has right to make statement under section 300 of the rules of procedure on a specific issue related to public interest or any other important issue.

"But a minister cannot raise any other irrelevant issue while making statement under section 300," Hamid, also a seasoned parliamentarian, said.

On using the two words he said he used the two words to bring the atmosphere in the House in order.

"It was symbolic and I regret for this. I expunged the two words from the parliament proceedings," the speaker said but he did not utter the two words he used.

The minister was not present in the House when the speaker gave his ruling.

## Matia

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achieve a goal.

"It is the WB that takes long time to release the funds and then they pin the blame on the government for the slow pace and say the government is embedded in corruption," she said at a discussion on "Use of genetic engineering in developing stress-tolerant crops".

There are many restrictions on getting money from the donors, Matia Chowdhury said, calling upon the scientists of the country to be sincere and to conduct researches amid constraints that help develop crop varieties to help the country face the adverse impact of climate change.

The Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology of Dhaka University organised the programme at the Centre of Excellence Auditorium of the university.

Addressing the discussion as the chief guest, she said she was not very happy about the National Agriculture Technology Project (NATP), an over Tk 600 crore project, where the WB is providing a chunk of the fund for research and extension works.

"I have doubt about how it wants to patronise research and development," Matia Chowdhury said.

Once there was opposition to the use of genetic engineering, but that mindset is gone now. "Without genetic engineering, so much development in cotton sector could not have been possible," she said.

Bangladesh very badly needs to develop high level saline-tolerant crop varieties to be grown in the coastal districts, as salinity is gradually increasing in the areas. Scientists also need to develop drought-tolerant crops for the northern districts where desertification is obvious, she said.

"Please put as much importance to bioscience as it is given to the IT (information technology) nowadays. There will be no problems for money," the agriculture minister told scientists.

Professor Zeba Islam Seraj of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in a presentation said besides conventional breeding methods, genetic engineering is important to develop crop varieties tolerant to drought, cold, salinity and submergence.

A good progress has already been made in this regard, she said, adding that they were about to complete pushing saline tolerant genes in BR-11 and BRRI-28 varieties, which will be soon tested, she said.

Once the tests are completed, these will have a revolutionary effect in the country's agriculture.

Professor Haseena Khan said genetic engineering in jute could also revolutionise production by developing cold and salinity-tolerant varieties, but state patronisation would be greatly required for it.

Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Professor AAMS Arefin Siddique and chief of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology also spoke.

## Final ODI today

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the home team confirmed it by winning the low-scoring fourth game by six wickets at the same venue Tuesday, but still the Tigers will try to make it 4-1 as they promised after a five-wicket loss in the first game at Mirpur.

It will be the last international commitment for the Tigers this year, which is marked by one-day and Test series victories in West Indies as well as three one-day series wins against the bottom-ranked Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe batsmen succumbed to slow bowlers in the last game to be bundled out for 44 runs as the track offered a lot of spin and movement. The last game will not be played on the same track but everybody will look forward to see how the new one behaves especially in the morning session.

Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan will definitely want to win the toss this time to take the same advantage as there is hardly any chance of stand-in Zimbabwe skipper Hamilton Masakadza making the same mistake.

It's unlikely that Bangladesh will make any changes in the winning combination although there have been talks to bring in pacer Shahadat Hossain, who is yet to play a game in the series.

On the other hand Zimbabwe have no chance to get back their skipper Prosper Uteya and experienced wicketkeeper Tatenda Taibu for the last game as both are yet to recover from their injuries.

The match will start at 9:30am with state-run Bangladesh Television (BTV) beaming live coverage from the port city ground.

## US envoy holds rare talks with Suu Kyi

AFP, Yangon

The most senior US official to visit Myanmar for 14 years held talks with pro-democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday after the ruling junta granted the Nobel laureate a rare break from detention.

Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell also met Myanmar's prime minister as the administration of President Barack Obama seeks a new era of engagement with the military regime.

Suu Kyi met Campbell at a luxury hotel in Yangon, the first time she had appeared in front of the media other than at her home or in prison since the current period of her house arrest began in 2003.

Dressed in a pink and maroon traditional outfit, the 64-year-old opposition leader smiled but did not speak as she headed into the talks with the US diplomat and his deputy Scot Marciel.

"Am I beautiful when I smile?" Suu Kyi joked later with the media when the talks ended after two hours.

Earlier this year journalists saw her in prison at her trial for harbouring an American man who swam to her house, but they were not allowed to take pictures and the only images were released on state television.

The junta extended her house arrest by another 18 months in August after she was found guilty, effectively ruling her out of elections due in 2010 that critics say are a sham.

Suu Kyi has spent most of the last two decades in detention. The most recent period of her house arrest began in 2003 after pro-junta forces launched a deadly attack on her convoy during a political campaign.

Campbell and Marciel earlier Wednesday held talks with Prime Minister Thein Sein in the remote administrative capital Naypyidaw, Myanmar officials said on condition of anonymity, without giving details.

Myanmar officials said the US delegation was not expected to meet exclusive junta leader Than Shwe. State media said that when the US envoys arrived he was in southern Myanmar inspecting aid efforts after last year's Cyclone Nargis.

Campbell is the highest ranking US official to travel to

## Modern airport

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project, he added.

The new airport will be the fourth international airport in the country besides Chittagong and Sylhet, which mostly remain unused due to inadequate infrastructure.

Of them, Osmani International Airport in Sylhet lacks refuelling facilities, which discourage carriers to operate direct international flights.

"We will take measures to create refuelling facilities at Osmani," said CAAB Chairman Sakeb Iqbal Khan Majlis.

A Tk 302 crore project has also been taken in hand to expand the runway of Cox's Bazar airport. Projects for upgrading ZIA and Barisal airport are also underway, said Mehdi.

He said a feasibility study regarding construction of Khan Jahan Ali Airport is also on.

Myanmar -- formerly known as Burma -- since Madeleine Albright went as US ambassador to the United Nations in 1995 during Bill Clinton's presidency.

He was due to meet leaders of Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy and give a press conference before leaving Yangon on Wednesday evening for Bangkok.

The two-day trip is a follow-up to discussions in New York in September between US and Myanmar officials, the highest-level US contact with the regime in nearly a decade.

The Obama administration in September announced a dramatic change in US policy because isolating Myanmar had failed, but said it would not ease sanctions without progress on democracy and human rights.

## Thaksin

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almost two weeks after Hun Sen first fled Thailand by offering safe haven to Thaksin, who was ousted in a coup in 2006 and is living abroad to avoid a jail term for corruption.

"Thaksin has already been appointed by royal decree... as personal adviser to Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen and the adviser to the Cambodian government in charge of economy," said a government statement read on television.

"Allowing Thaksin to stay in Cambodia is virtuous behaviour... good friends need to help each other in difficult circumstances," it added.

The statement went on to call charges against Thaksin "politically motivated" and vowed not to extradite him if he "decides to stay in Cambodia or travels in and out of Cambodia in order to fulfill his duties".

## Rejoinder

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The Daily Star correspondent visited the spot twice on the day and found that the repair work remained suspended. He talked to workers, owner of the construction firm and some residents of the hall, all of whom said Mohiuddin's followers stopped the work.

The construction firm owner and his cousin alleged that Mohiuddin demanded Tk 5 lakh toll from them. The hall provost also admitted that the incident of extortion was behind suspension of the repair work.

Besides, the report clearly quoted Mohiuddin who refuted the allegation and said repair work was going on. But, the work resumed the next day.

We stand by our report.

## Nizami

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election commissioner of the party, will administer the oath.

The election commission held the election process from October 1 to 25 with the direct votes of Rukn from 78 district units and the central unit of the party. On November 1-3, it completed counting votes.

The commission in a meeting yesterday declared Nizami as the elected ameer for the term 2010 to 2012.

## 30 more insurgents

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Saragroha shot to infamy within the tribal belt as the operational centre of former Tehreek-e-Taliban warlord Baitullah Mehsud, who was killed in a US drone attack in August.

The military provides the only regular information coming from the frontlines. None of the details can be verified because communication lines are down and journalists and aid workers barred from the area.

Earlier two women school teachers were killed yesterday when armed Islamist militants ambushed their car in Pakistan's troubled tribal region bordering Afghanistan, local officials said.

The women were travelling from the school they taught at in Khar -- the main town in the northwestern tribal district of Bajaur -- when insurgents bearing automatic weapons sprayed the vehicle with bullets.

Approximately 10 militants hid on both sides of a rural road and sprayed the van with automatic weapons as it went past, said local official Adalat Khan. The fighters then fled on motorcycles.

"Two women teachers were killed and two men were injured in the firing by militants," administration official Adalat

Khan told AFP. Tribal police confirmed the incident.

Islamist insurgents who oppose the education of girls have bombed and destroyed hundreds of northwestern schools in recent years.

## PPA Act

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consideration past performance, production capacity or financial capability for awarding a public work contract worth up to Tk 2 crore.

The House, however, accepted recommendations of a parliamentary body during passage of the bill.

Scrutinising the bill, the parliamentary standing committee on planning ministry in its report recommended that the procuring entities would prepare and preserve list of contractors including their past experiences.

But deciding the qualification of a contractor to get the public work contract worth up to Tk 2 crore will not be applicable.

The Public Procurement Act was enacted in 2006 to ensure transparency in the government purchase.

Planning Minister Air Vice Marshall (ret'd) AK Khandker yesterday proposed the passage of the bill as recommended by the parliamentary body.

## No power crisis

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underway to set up another rental power plant with the capacity of generating extra 970 MW of power."

Hasina also spoke about the feasibility study for setting up coal-based power plants in Chittagong, Khulna, Shariatpur and Meghnaghat by 2014 with a capacity of generating 2,000-2,600 MW.

The government has taken up plans to set up wind power units and solar power plants to generate 280 MW of power by 2013, she added.

### NEW FLATS

Hasina said a total of 52,512 flats would be built in the capital in the next five years to resolve accommodation problems. Besides, the national housing authority will construct 17,677 more flats across the country in the same period.

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha has planned to build 600-square-feet and 1,000-square-feet flats in the city for low- and mid-income group people, Hasina said while replying to lawmakers' queries.

She said the Prime Minister's Office and the land ministry have taken up separate projects to address the accommodation problems of landless and homeless people.

In response to a query on

## BNP

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expelled BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan to float a new political party.

BNP standing committee will sit soon, and might take decisions in this regard, sources said.

Asked about the allegation against him last night, ZA Khan declined to make any comment.

### DELWARAT SRAMIK

DAL RALLY Protesting the prime minister's statement in parliament, BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain said yesterday it is not BNP but Awami League (AL) which started politics of killing in the country.

"They [AL] killed many innocent people including freedom fighters using the so-called Rakkhibahini after the Liberation War," he said while addressing a rally in front of the party central office at Nayapalton, organised by Jatiyatbadi Sramik Dal.

Delwar alleged that the prime minister was telling lies against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in parliament. She is doing so just to make the House ineffective, he said.

BNP leaders Abdullah al Noman, Selima Rahman and Zaful Hasan, among others, were present at the rally chaired by Nazrul Islam Khan.

Earlier in the afternoon, Delwar attended a meeting of the party's national committee for observing the 'national revolution and solidarity day' on November 7 at the party office.

BNP observes the day every year, and had declared public holiday on November 7 when it was in power.

But the ruling Awami League will observe the day as 'freedom fighter killing day'.

Delwar alleged that AL intends to destroy the significance of November 7.

employment generation, the premier said her government has taken steps to generate employment for the young generation. "Unemployment rate will be reduced to 15 per cent from the existing 40 per cent by 2021," she said.

Hasina described various steps including setting up of training centres, technical centres, and institutes of marine technology to generate employment.

She also informed the House that several countries including some in the Middle East have shown interest to employ a large number of Bangladeshi workers.

## Climate change

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nine-member delegation of the British Parliament's International Development Committee (IDC) headed by its Chairman Malcolm Bruce, MP when they called on her at the ministry yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed different issues like democracy, development and human rights, trade and economic partnership, and climate change.

The foreign minister thanked the British government, parliamentarians and its people for their steadfast support for Bangladesh's advancement toward return to democracy including elections, support for voter identity card project and election observation.

Dipu Moni also expressed satisfaction over the two countries' cooperation on major international issues including UN peacekeeping, achieving millennium development goals and climate change.

She told the IDC delegation that poverty alleviation is one of the priorities of the present government besides food and energy security, infrastructural development, industrialisation and employment generation. She thanked the Department for International Development to increase assistance from the current year's £135 million.

## Prothom Alo

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pledges of bringing change from the citizens.

Thousands of people gathered at Rabindra Sarobar for the celebration. The programme started with Baul Samrat Shah Abdul Karim's song 'agey ki shundordind kataitam'.

Congratulating Prothom Alo's staff on the founding anniversary Prof Anisuzzaman in a brief discussion said, "Besides professional duties, Prothom Alo has been doing things that bring good to the society."

Prof Muzaffer Ahmad urged people not to do anything harmful to the environment and asked them to be aware so that nobody can grab the Dhanmendi playground.

Former adviser to the caretaker government Rasheda K Chowdhury, JTB Trustee Board Chairman M Hafizuddin Khan, FBCCI President Anisul Huq, The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam, Syed Abul Moksud, economist Salma Khan, Mohit Kamal, Asif Nazrul and Prothom Alo Deputy Editor Anisul Haque, among others, spoke at the discussion.