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JS moves to probe Gatco's ICD contract

3-member body formed

RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary committee yesterday formed a three-member body to investigate alleged corruption in awarding Global Agro Trade Co (Gatco) a container-handling contract at Dhaka inland container depot (ICD) during the last BNP-Jamaat rule.

Headed by ruling Awami League lawmaker Shamsul Huq Chowdhury, the probe committee was asked to submit its report before the parliamentary standing committee on shipping ministry as soon as possible.

At a meeting yesterday the committee also recommended shifting the ICD from the congested Kamalapur area to Gazipur, committee chairman Noor-e-Alam Chowdhury told reporters after the meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan, who is also a member of the standing committee, informed reporters that the circular water transport around the capital would be inaugurated on a trial basis at Aminbazar on November 22.

Briefing reporters at the Jatiya Sangsad Media Centre, Noor-e-Alam said there are over 8,000 vacant posts for different ranks under the shipping ministry, of which 520 alone are secu-

rity posts at Chittagong Port.

The committee asked the ministry concerned to take immediate steps for recruitment against the vacant posts and bring pace and dynamism in the ministry's activities.

About the alleged graft in awarding container management contract at Dhaka ICD at Kamalapur, the committee chief said, "There are allegations of massive corruption centring the issue. So, we formed a sub-committee to probe the matter."

He said the parliamentary standing committee also asked authorities concerned to cut the term of Dhaka ICD tender and procurement process to three years from the present seven years.

The meeting also discussed further development of seaports, particularly Chittagong Port.

Noor-e-Alam said a joint team of the parliamentary standing committee and the shipping ministry will visit some foreign countries next January to see seaports there so that their experiences can be utilised for further development of seaports in Bangladesh.

The shipping minister said the present government has taken some pragmatic steps to activate the Mongla seaport and make it more profitable.

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Special forces are deployed around the Dhaka Central Jail where all the five condemned in Bangabandhu murder case are kept. Jail authorities have put the highest security alert ahead of tomorrow's verdict.

PHOTO: STAR

TAX DODGING CASE

Jalil asked to appear in court Jan 5

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday again asked former Awami League (AL) general secretary Abdul Jalil to appear before it on January 5 next year in connection with a tax evasion case.

Judge ANM Bashir Ullah of Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after Jalil's lawyer submitted a petition, saying his client could not appear before the court yesterday since he had earlier gone to Singapore for treatment.

On October 26, the same court asked Jalil to appear before it yesterday.

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Capital dredging of rivers soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will soon go for capital dredging in the country's major rivers to prevent saline intrusion due to climate change, Water Resources Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen said at a seminary yesterday.

Institute of Water Modelling (IWM) organised the seminar on Impacts of Climate Change in Bangladesh and Results from Recent Studies at a city hotel with financial assistance from the Danish embassy.

"The government is to start capital dredging soon to restore the navigability of the major rivers to prevent salinity," said the water resources minister replying to reporters' question.

IWM Executive Director Emaduddin Ahmad said a 60-centimetre rise in the sea level is apprehended in Bangladesh coastal zone by the year 2050 that will submerge 18 percent of the country's landmass.

"The existing embankment in Hatia requires 4.5 metres rise in height to tackle the storm surge and sea-level rise due to climate change effect," he said.

Embankments to be erected in future should be two to four

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Kushtia Poly Instt closed after clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Kushtia Polytechnic Institute (KPI) closed yesterday after a bomb attack that severely injured joint secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League, KPI unit.

A group of youths went to Mir Mosarraf Hossain hall around 11:30am and hurled two bombs at Tanzir Alam Tazir when he was alone in his room, police said.

After the incident, the gang disappeared from the spot.

Tazir was rushed to Kushtia General Hospital with severe burns in his chest, hands and face, sources said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

US, China pledge to fight climate change

Obama-Hu talks stress cooperation, but divisions remain

AFP, Beijing

US President Barack Obama and China's Hu Jintao yesterday pledged to apply their joint political might to the world's toughest problems, but friction was evident on Tibet, economics and Iran.

In solemn talks at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, the high point of Obama's debut visit to China, the leaders ploughed through an agenda packed with top world crises, reflecting China's rise as a key global player.

The pair voiced agreement on the need for action on climate change, prodding North Korea back to six-party nuclear talks and a common undertaking to help return the global economy to growth after the dark economic

crisis.

But the leaders' nuanced statements pointed to differences between two competing powers deeply interlinked economically and repeatedly thrust together on diplomatic crises on which they have differing views.

After their talks, they appeared together to read formal statements to several hundred journalists, but spontaneity was stifled by the sterility of official diplomatic translations and the ban on questions by reporters.

While both leaders sought to stress areas of agreement, they did not shirk from subtly hinting at issues where gaps remained.

Both sides said they opposed protectionism in a written joint statement.

Obama, tactfully voicing US worries that

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

DU VC gets another 'threat letter'

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) Vice-chancellor (VC) Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique received another death threat at his office yesterday.

The writers in the letter threatened to kill Prof Arefin tomorrow as the VC sat in a meeting with the leaders of sector commanders' forum on the campus recently.

They said they can't do organisational activities of the Hizb ut-Tahrir Bangladesh at the university since Prof Arefin became the VC.

Earlier on Sunday, Arefin Siddique received death threat through two letters sent by

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Now Majid's Kashmiri identity unearthed

He was linked to Aug 21 attack 11 months into his arrest with small arms

KAILASH SARKAR and CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

After over 11 months of his arrest, Abdul Majid has been identified as an Indian national and a senior leader of Kashmir-based militant organisation Hizbul Mujahedin, a front organisation of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, which works in Kashmir.

Majid's real name is Yusuf Butt who had been staying in the country for years using fake

identity to carry out militant activities.

Meanwhile, Yusuf Butt alias Majid was placed on a four-day remand yesterday after he was taken on five days' remand from November 12 in August 21 grenade attack case. Earlier on November 11 a Dhaka court placed Majid on a five-day remand.

During the interrogation in August 21 grenade attack case, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) investigators have come to

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

OnlinePoll

Do you think the government will be able to stick to its move to cancel all leases on the riverbanks and decision to stop illegal sand trading?

☐ Yes (16.5%)

☐ No (82.2%)

☐ No Comments (1.3%)

Total votes: 943

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think the postponement of BNP's Chittagong city unit council following the intra-party clash will affect its national council slated for Dec 8?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing		
November 18		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	6-05	6-40
Zohr	1-45	2-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-21	6-24
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Taliban blow up another school

BBC ONLINE, AFP, Peshawar

A senior police officer has been injured in a blast in the south-western Pakistani city of Quetta while six others wounded, police said yesterday.

Deputy Inspector General of Police Nizam Shahid Durrani was wounded in the explosion, which took place outside his office on Spini Road, police said.

The attack killed one and wounded six others, including Durrani's driver.

The bomb was planted in a motorbike parked near Durrani's office and was detonated through a remote control, police said.

In a separate blast, Taliban militants blew up a girls' school in Pakistan's Khyber district on Tuesday, the third such attack in the tribal region bordering Afghanistan so far this month, officials said.

An intelligence official in the area said Taliban attacked the government-run school overnight when no one was at the property.

"The girls' middle school was badly damaged because of the explosion, now the school building is almost out of use. The classrooms, desks and chairs were also damaged," Farooq Khan, a local administrative official told AFP.

The incident took place at Yousaf Kely village near Bara town, around 20 south of Peshawar, the capital of North West Frontier Province, which has been hit by five suicide attacks in the last eight days.

Islamist militants have destroyed hundreds of schools,

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