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PM'S INDIA VISIT Deals likely on power, railway infrastructure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and India may sign two deals on the purchase of electricity from India and developing Bangladesh's railway and roads with Indian funding when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visits New Delhi this month.

Bangladesh foreign ministry officials said Dhaka would emphasise signing a deal on sharing the water of the Teesta during Hasina's visit. Bangladesh is also expected to put forward a draft of the deal. But it is still not sure whether any deal will be inked during the visit since the matter is to be settled at the highest political level.

On Wednesday, the two countries at the end of home secretary-level talks in New Delhi finalised the drafts of three deals--Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance on Criminal Matters, Transfer of Sentenced Persons and Combating International Terrorism, Organised Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking.

"Two more deals are in the pipeline," Indian High

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The shiny tin roofs along the shoreline are of new houses built in the past couple of weeks, eating up the Gulshan Lake. This aerial photograph shows gradual encroachment on the water body by the residents of Korail slum in the capital.

PHOTO:
SK ENAMUL HAQ

Arrested Ulfa chief 'taken to Delhi'

Indian media
reports say

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indian separatist group United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) chairman Arabinda Rajkhowa has been taken to Delhi from Tripura where he surrendered to the security forces, report BBC News and Indian media.

Rajkhowa's wife Kaberi Kachari and their two sons were put under house arrest in Dhaka, the media reports add.

Indian daily the Hindustan Times reports that the Ulfa chief was pushed back on Wednesday by the Bangladesh authorities into Tripura and later flown to New Delhi yesterday evening.

Two other top Ulfa leaders - Chitrabon Hazarika and Sasha Choudhury -- were detained in Bangladesh last month and subsequently handed over to India, while Ulfa general secretary Anup Chetia is confined in Bangladesh jail since 1998.

BBC News Online adds: There are unconfirmed reports that the two other

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SAFF football championship kicks off today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh is all set to host the Bangabandhu sixth SAFF Championship with two matches taking place on the opening day at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

This is the second time Bangladesh are playing hosts to the regional football extravaganza after they staged the second edition of SAFF Championship in 2003; where they broke their long jinx to emerge champions on home soil.

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Huji founder makes startling confession

Details his role to magistrate; reveals involvement of
top politicians, officials in Aug 21 grenade attack

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER and
KAILASH SARKAR

Founder of banned Islamist outfit Harkat-ul-Jihad al Islami (Huji) Sheikh Abdus Salam yesterday confessed to his involvement in the August 21, 2004 grenade attack on an Awami League rally.

In a statement given to a Dhaka court, Salam also disclosed the names of a number of top administrative officials and politicians as involved in the gruesome attack.

After his statement was recorded by Metropolitan Magistrate Moazzem Hossain,

Salam, also chief of Islamic Democratic Party, was sent to jail.

Another metropolitan magistrate's court yesterday sent Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) member Abdul Majid Butt alias Abu Yusuf Butt on a two-day fresh remand.

In his confessional statement, which came after 15 days' remand by the Criminal Investigation Department in phases, Salam narrated the planning and implementation of the grenade attack that left 24 persons killed and 300 injured.

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Govt issues gazette on new pay scale

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday published the gazette notification of the new pay scale for the public servants and fixed the highest salary at Tk 40,000 and the minimum at Tk 4,100.

However, the government servants including the principal secretary, cabinet secretary and other same level officials will get additional Tk 5,000 per month.

The increased salaries will be paid from July this year. However, new house rent and others benefits will be

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AL asked to amend its charter again

EC declines to compromise on RPO violation

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The ruling Awami League (AL) will have to further amend its constitution in line with the Representation of the People Order (RPO) as the Election Commission (EC) has declined to compromise on the issue with any political party.

The EC at a meeting with an AL delegation yesterday asked them to amend the party constitution again to drop provisions which run counter to the RPO, meeting sources said.

AL constitution does not allow amending any of its provisions without holding council. The party delegation informed the EC about this difficulty.

The AL held its council on July 24, ratified the provisional changes in its constitution to get registered with the EC before the ninth parliamentary election, and submitted a copy of those to it.

The EC found two provisions in the ratified AL constitution inconsistent with the RPO, and asked the party on November 22 to further amend it.

"We asked Awami League to amend its constitution and submit it to the commission as soon as possible," Election Commissioner Muhammed Sohul Hussain told journalists following yesterday's meeting with the two-member AL delegation.

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Gazette on Information Commission rules soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed said yesterday the government will soon issue a gazette notification containing rules for making the Information Commission effective.

The government has enacted the Right to Information (RTI) Act and constituted the commission to ensure people's access to

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Notice

This week's Star magazine will not come out today due to the Eid holidays which coincided with the magazine's working days. We regret the inconvenience to our readers.



Information Minister of Trinidad and Tobago Neil Parsanal bids farewell to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as she departs on Wednesday after attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2009 in the country's capital Port of Spain.

PHOTO: PID

LAUNCH CAPSIZE 1 more body found after salvage operations end

Compensation for victims raised

STAR REPORT

One more body was recovered by local fishermen about two hours after the five-day rescue operation of the Bhola launch capsized yesterday.

Lalmohon Upazila Nirbahi Officer Babar Ali Mir declared the end of the rescue operation around 11:00am. He said officials and divers of both the rescue ships -- Rustam and Hamza -- ensured that no more body was inside the capsized vessel.

Our Patuakhali correspondent reports: the fishermen recovered the body floating on the Tentulia river about one kilometre to the north of the accident site around 1:00pm. They handed it over to police.

Later, relatives received the body by identifying the victim as Yaqub, 10, son of Kalu Mian of Cachra village under Tojumoddin upazila in Bhola. The death toll now rose to 85.

Meanwhile, both the rescue ships left the site at noon. They had failed to lift the Coco-4 fully from under water, as the weight

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Delwar slates implicating Tarique, Koko

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday condemned the filing of case against Tarique Rahman and Arafat Rahman in connection with the recent launch capsizing in Bhola.

"It is clear that the case was filed under direct influence of the government to distract the mind of people, to tarnish the image of Zia family and to achieve some political gain," he said in a statement.

"Tarique and Arafat -- both of them are abroad, so the intention behind the inclusion of their names in the case is clear to everyone," he also said.

Delwar demanded withdrawal of the false case against Tarique and Arafat saying "We are deeply shocked at the

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COPENHAGEN CONFERENCE Dhaka to seek Tk 70,000cr for climate battle

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will seek Tk 70,000 crore from the international community at the Copenhagen conference to deal with the impacts of climate change, said the chief of a parliamentary committee yesterday.

The parliamentary standing committee on environment and forest ministry at a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban discussed the preparation for raising demands at the conference as Bangladesh will be one of the worst victims of climate change.

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UDICHI BLAST Mufti Hannan remanded

A CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

A Jessore court yesterday granted a seven-day remand for Harkatul Jihad al Islami (Huji) leader Mufti Abdul Hannan in Udichi blast case.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Mostafizur Rahman issued the remand order around 10:30am after Detective Branch ASP Abdul Kayum Sikder, also investigation officer of the case, had produced the Huji leader before court seeking a seven-day remand for him.

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BNP NATIONAL COUNCIL

Intense pressure to create Tarique's post

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

In the run-up to BNP's national council, all eyes are focused on what position Tarique Rahman is about to get in the party, while its rank and file are mounting pressure on the leadership to create a whole new post just for him, said party insiders.

They said a post of co-chairperson or senior vice-president might be created for Chairperson Khaleda Zia's elder son Tarique, who was arrested during the immediate past caretaker regime on charges of corruption, and

now staying in London.

Standing Committee Member Dr RA Gani however told The Daily Star last evening that there has been a plan to create a post of co-chairperson, but till now the matter has not come to the committee as a formal proposal.

Meanwhile, papers of candidacy submitted by Khaleda Zia, the lone candidate for the post of chairperson, was declared valid yesterday by the party's election commission formed for BNP Chairperson Election 2009.

Khandaker Delwar Hossain, the incumbent

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2 outlaws killed in 'shootout'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushitia

Two top leaders of banned outfit Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-ML) were killed in a "shootout" between their cohorts and law enforcers at Kedarganj in Chuadanga district early yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Jamal alias Robi alias Nuruzzaman Sumon, 39, general secretary, and Sunnat Ali, 45, second-in-command of PBCP-ML.

Two personnel of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) -- Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Aminul Islam Amin and Constable Manik -- were also injured in the incident. They received treatment at Chuadanga sadar hospital, Rab said.

Acting on a tip off, a joint team of Rab-6 and Chuadanga sadar police raided a mango garden behind Kedarganj Girls' College. A

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