

# Musharraf hints at returning to Pakistan

ANI, London

Amid the ongoing tussle between the executive and the judiciary in Pakistan, former President Pervez Musharraf has hinted that he will re-enter the country's politics.

Addressing the Chatham House think-tank here, Musharraf said he would do anything for Pakistan, but added that it was for the people of Pakistan to decide whether they want him back or not.

"I love my country and I would do anything for Pakistan. However, it is for the people of Pakistan who need to decide," The Daily Times quoted Musharraf, assaying.

"I have to come through the political process, through the process of elections. But I think it's very good, it's very good because I think I will have that legitimacy which I never had," Musharraf said.

Musharraf, however, did not comment on whether he is ready to face trial for 'illegal' detention of judges of superior judiciary after imposing an emergency in the country in 2007.

President Asif Ali Zardari's decision to elevate the Lahore High Court chief justice as a Supreme Court judge, sidelining Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry's recommendation has once again infuriated the higher judiciary, which has threatened to launch a massive campaign against the Presidency.

Musharraf, who is currently living in London on a self-announced exile, has expressed his desire to return back to Pakistan on several occasions. However, his close aides have advised him to delay his return, as the situation is not conducive.

Many believe that Musharraf is eyeing another stint in the country's politics, and may launch a new party of his own.

Observers believe that the autocratic ruler is waiting for the right opportunity to announce his come back, but speculations are that he may never return, as he fears being put on trial for announcing an emergency in the state and disregarding the country's constitution by dismissing the top judiciary in November 2007.

It may be noted that the Pakistan Supreme Court has held Musharraf an 'equal beneficiary' of the now defunct amnesty law, the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO).

The apex court had also called Musharraf to be held accountable for giving shape to the controversial law.

# Govt pledges

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Mashur Rahman, Economic Relations Division Secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) Country Director also Co-chair of Local Consultative Group Chris Austin spoke at the briefing as well.

In different sessions in the last two days the government projected that it requires billions of dollars for implementing development programmes in various sectors.

Muhith yesterday said the development partners will continue their current assistance to Bangladesh, and hoped that the assistance will increase in future.

For quick availability of donor assistance and proper use of the money, a joint cooperation strategy is being worked out, which will be finalised by June, he added.

Muhith said, for expediting development activities, and to make sure that services reach the people, the local government system will be strengthened further, and a new civil service act will also be formulated.

The finance minister said \$9.5 billion will be required for generating 7,000 megawatt of power by the year 2013, and the donors assured the government that they will provide more assistance for the purpose. Investments from public and private sectors will also be sought to meet the fund requirement of the power sector, he added.

He said the development partners urged the government to 'adjust' the prices of power, gas, and coal to attract foreign investment in energy and power sectors. But he did not elaborate on the matter. When inquired repeatedly by reporters, he said the prices might go up, but the government has not taken any such decision yet. The government will pursue a balanced

# Bangladesh

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Bangladesh, however, held Tajikistan to a 1-1 draw in the World Cup pre-qualifier at home in 2007.

The great triumph against Tajikistan gave Bangladesh an advantage on way to their semifinal berths before facing Myanmar (February 18) and hosts Sri Lanka (February 20) at the same venue.

Bangladesh, who emerged unbeaten champions in the recently concluded South Asian Games, carried their SA Games performance into the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers and held Tajikistan to a goalless draw before Abahani striker Enamul, who was included in the squad in the eleventh hour, struck his ninth international goal in 13 matches to put Bangladesh ahead in the 68th minute.

The joy, however, lasted only two minutes when Yusuf Rabeiev equalised the margin in the 70th minute. Abahani defender Mishu sealed the match 11 minutes from time to give Bangladesh their first ever victory over Tajikistan.

# BCL leader stabbed to death in Keraniganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A local Chhatra League leader was stabbed to death in Suvadda of Keraniganj last night.

The deceased, Razzakur Rahman Swapan, 35, was assistant organising secretary of Keraniganj BCL and a cloth trader.

Police said a gang of unidentified youths stabbed him at around 11:00pm at Pashchim Para of Suvadda and fled the scene immediately.

Swapan was returning home from his Islampur shop.

Locals rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead around midnight.

Nil Utpal Dey, officer-in-charge of South Keraniganj Police Station, told The Daily Star they could not yet know anything about the motive for the killing.

# Ansar man

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In an SMS to the Ansar-VDP director general on Sunday, Azim wrote, "If the demands of the Ansar-VDP members were not met, an incident like BDR Pikhana carnage will take place during the February 28 national parade at Shafipur Ansar Academy in Gazipur."

Police produced him before a metropolitan magistrate's court, seeking five days' remand. But the court granted two days'.

Investigation Officer Zakir Hossain told The Daily Star that in primary interrogation Azim had admitted sending the threat message.

# Rice OMS

**FROM PAGE 16**  
The same day Abdur Razaque said at a press briefing at the food ministry conference room that the government had no problem to run the OMS and continue selling rice under the card system for three months as it had a stock of 8.67 lakh tonnes of rice.

At the yesterday's seminar, the food minister said Canada can help Bangladesh ensure food security by supplying more wheat and pulses at low cost that can fill Bangladesh's production shortage of those items.

An official press release of the food ministry quoted the minister as saying that Canada is a very important development partner of Bangladesh and gives Bangladesh assistance of around \$7 crore annually.

Bangladesh faces more challenges than ever in agriculture owing to climate change, and Canada can help the country in conducting researches on saline and drought tolerant crop varieties, he added.

Canadian High Commissioner to Dhaka Robert McDougall and officials and business leaders of Canada also spoke at the seminar.

# Climate change

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recently agreed to donate Bangladesh \$60 million, but it was reported in a UK newspaper that Bangladesh refused to take the fund blaming the WB's authority in administering it.

Many local newspapers published the news yesterday, the second and final day of the BDF meeting and it became a hot topic for the reporters to ask both the government high-ups and the development partners about it.

Earlier, after the discussion on the environment and climate change at morning session, State Minister for Environment Dr Hasan Mahmud briefed journalists that they (government and development partners) have differences in opinion with administering the fund.

"We want the fund, no doubt. But the difference is how it will be managed," Mahmud said. "We are trying to reach a consensus and it may take two weeks."

The state minister, however, categorically said the development partners had agreed that the ownership of the fund would be in Bangladesh's hand.

Chris Austin, country head of the Department for International Development also admitted the difference in opinion.

"We are trying to bridge the gap," he said.

He termed the news published in a UK newspaper "not right".

"The WB will take just one percent of the fund for providing the technical assistance," said the DFID country representative.

# Agri input cards

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be considered final identity for the farmers.

Under the scheme, first-ever such agriculture-welfare agenda in the history of Bangladesh, some 10 million Boro farmers will be given money through banks as direct subsidy on diesel used for irrigating croplands for the dry-season rice farming.

Marginal farmers will get Tk 800 and big farmers Tk 1000 as cash incentives.

The prime minister also pledged proper distribution of khas land and providing homeless people with houses for free under the people's welfare agenda.

Hasina in her address hoped that such banking facilities would be used for further facilitating the farmers in future.

"Money transactions at the grassroots level, moneysaving by farmers will bring a revolutionary change in the rural economy," she said.

Hasina gave directives to officials and field-level workers under the ministry concerned to take necessary steps so the farmers don't have to face harassment in getting the assistance card.

"Any sort of corruption and irregularity in this sector, like in other spheres, will not be tolerated," the PM said.

She said if any government official is found guilty of neglecting farmers, they will have to face stern punitive action.

She ordered the authorities concerned to ensure timely supply of quality seeds and fertilisers to the farmers for smooth farming.

"It is the responsibility of the government to take best care of the farmers who provide us with food," Hasina said.

She also assured the farmers

of maintaining smooth electricity supply for irrigation during the paddy season.

"Though setting up new power plants takes time, we have been successful in establishing efficient management in the power sector and already we have opened another new power plant in Siddhirganj," she told her audience.

About irrigation, the PM stressed the need for increasing use of surface water for agricultural activities to reduce pressure on groundwater resources.

In this regard, she said the government will dredge the river Brahmaputra and other major rivers of the country to increase their capacity for water preservation by removing silts.

Hasina deplored that her previous government had increased total power generation to 4,300 megawatts from 1,600 MWs, but the subsequent BNP-Jamaat government could not add even a single megawatt of electricity to the grid.

"If the BNP-Jamaat government could increase power generation in line with the national demand, the nation would not face the present crisis. However, hold patience; we are putting our best effort in removing the power crisis," she said.

Hasina pointed out that her government, just after assuming office, reduced the food and fertilisers prices. "Now the farmers do not run after fertiliser rather fertilisers run after the farmers," she said.

A farmers' representative and a FAO representative also spoke on the occasion.

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, Manjur Kader Koraisi MP, Agriculture Secretary CQK Mustaq Ahmed, among others, addressed the function.

# Rangamati BDR verdict on May 2

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The BDR special court-4 yesterday fixed May 2 for the verdict on Rajanagar 12 Rifle Battalion mutiny case.

The prosecution started at 8:30 am at Mechanical Transport Shed at BDR sector headquarters. The three-member special court adjourned at 1:00 pm.

The accused jawans of Bangladesh Rifles claimed themselves innocent and pleaded with the court for acquitting them of the charges. After hearing the statements of the accused and the arguments of the prosecutors the court fixed the date for the verdict.

The nine jawans accused in the mutiny case are habildars Sibbir Ahmed, Sohrab Hossain, and Md Shamsul Haque, sepoy Md Abul Kalam Azad, Md Sakawat Hossain, Md Rassel Kabir, Md Zahir Uddin and Md Sarwar Kamal and signalman Abdur Rahman.

The court also took deposition of only one witness in connection with the trial of

75 alleged BDR mutineers of 9 Rifle Battalion of Marishya under Baghaichhari upazila.

Plaintiff of the case Naik Subedar Rezaur Rahman gave his statement before the court.

The mutiny in Rangamati took place at three of the sector's five battalions. They are 12 Rifle Battalion at Rajanagar in Longudu, 9 Rifle Battalion at Marishya in Baghaichhari and 18 Rifle Battalion at Chhotohorina in Barkal upazila.

# 28 Bangladeshi

**FROM PAGE 16**  
A Thai charity is bearing the airfare for the 28 Bangladeshis while the International Organisation for Migration through its offices in Bangkok and Dhaka are providing the logistic supports for their safe return.

These people, all from Cox's Bazar and Chittagong, were on their way to Malaysia by engine boats through Thai waters from Cox's Bazar in search of jobs in December 2008 and January 2009.

Earlier, the Thai Navy chased away an engine boat carrying a few Bangladeshis and Rohingyas from their territory. Later, the Andaman Islands coastguards rescued them from the Indian Sea and repatriated to Bangladesh. All the rescued hailed from various parts of Cox's Bazar and Chittagong.

An earlier investigation of The Daily Star found that there is a strong syndicate in Cox's Bazar who promise poor Rohingyas and Bangladeshis lucrative jobs in Malaysia at cheap rates.

Once the money is collected, the jobseekers are started on engine boats from certain points of the beaches or islands in Cox's Bazar at night, especially during winter when the sea is comparatively calm.

Some can arrive in Malaysia while some fail and get caught either by the Thai Navy or the Andaman Islands coastguards. Cases of starvation and deaths in the boats are also common.

# Young writers

**FROM PAGE 16**  
published in the fair last week.

Alongside publishers, the new writers take mental preparation for the fair, Soma said adding that her title has remained on top of the list of best selling book at the stall of Katha Publication for last six days.

Another young writer Jewel Mustafiz, whose new title--Bhater Bhugol--has been published from the Oitijyo Publication, said the fair plays a positive role for preparing a platform of new writers.

"We are very serious about the fair and fortunately, we are receiving good responses from readers of all ages," Jewel added.

Publishers said besides books of famous and popular writers, visitors are interested in the copies of young writers. They termed it as a good sign for flourishing Bangla literature and encouraging young writers.

Meanwhile, a total of 92 new titles hit the fair yesterday which included--Rupa by Humayun Ahmed, Ninad by Syed Shamsul Haque, Tottabodhayak Sorkerer Daebhar by Muhammad Habibur Rahman, Nil Tunir Bandhu by Selina Hossain, Panchar Banur Nakshee Katha by Hasnatul Haque.

The fair yesterday saw a good crowd while most of the stalls witnessed good sale.

A discussion and a cultural session were held on the premises in the afternoon.

# Govt combats

**FROM PAGE 1**  
her at her official residence Jamuna.

David Borrow MP led the delegation. Other members of the delegation are: John Austin MP, Collin Challen MP, Harry Cohen MP, Fraser Kemp MP, Baroness Scott of Needham Market, Bob Spink MP, David Wilshire MP, Derek Wyatt MP and Andrew Tuggey MP.

Briefing reporters, PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad said the prime minister told the delegation that Bangladesh is a place where religious harmony prevails at its highest level.

Describing her various steps to tackle terrorism and extremism, the PM said she herself came under grenade attack on August 21, 2004 while she was addressing a rally organised to protest the grenade attack on former British High Commissioner Anwar Chowdhury.

During the meeting, they also discussed cooperation at parliamentary level and human rights among the CPA member countries.

The CPA delegation lauded the role of the PM regarding climate change and its adverse effect.

Hasina said that democracy in the country has been restored after free, fair and acceptable election held on December 29, 2008.

# RU syndicate

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Hafizur Rahman was found dead in Chapainawabganj a few days after the violence.

Golap, Mobarak and Hafizur were in regular contact with the six coordinators. This was revealed after investigators looked into their mobile phone call records.

The three police personnel in Rajshahi told this to The Daily Star after gleaning information from Rajshahi Jamaat Ameer Ataur Rahman and 45 others. Ataur and 17 others were sent to jail yesterday after their five-day remand ended.

According to investigators, Ataur during interrogation claimed that he went to bed around 12:00am on February 9 and he was not aware of anything until the next morning when TV bulletins said Faruk was killed.

When police produced his mobile phone call records of the night before him, Ataur turned pale and fell sick, forcing police to call in a doctor.

The records showed that he had over 30 calls with Golap, Mobarak and Hafizur between 12:00am and 6:00am. The attack was made between 1:30am and 3:30am.

The call records also had the phone numbers of some Jamaat-Shibir leaders of Dhaka, said police declining to give more details.

Ataur was being interrogated in the presence of a doctor following a court order, said police.

The February 9 violence led to the killing of Faruk Hossain, a mathematics student of Rajshahi University and an activist of Chhatra League Rajshahi University unit. At

She said the country could achieve development only through democracy.

On global recession, Hasina told the delegation that due to timely and effective measures of the government, the worldwide recession could not make any adverse impact on Bangladesh economy.

She said the government reduced the prices of fertilisers, maintained a smooth supply of power and diesel that are essential for irrigation.

The PM also mentioned that the foreign policy of the present government is friendship to all and malice to none.

"We are trying hard to create a strong base of democracy in the country," she said, adding that her government formed 44 parliamentary standing committees. Of them, members of other parties head seven parliamentary standing committees.

Hasina said that equal participation of women in development activities is vital.

She said that highest numbers of women lawmakers from her party, including 19 are elected directly. Besides, 45 lawmakers are from reserved seats in the Parliament.

The PM said arrangements have been made to recruit women in all occupations, including police and armed forces.

# BCL activities

**FROM PAGE 16**  
suspended activists are Liton, Dano, Lenin and Kusum.

The admission process for the honours course in the college resumed yesterday. The college authorities have published the first merit list and asked the qualified candidates to appear in the viva voce. A small number of candidates appeared in yesterday's viva voce, sources said.

Prof Hasanuzzaman, principal of the college, said candidates in the merit list would be able to face their viva voce till February 18, deadline fixed by the National University.

However, if the vacant seats are not filled by this time the college authorities would publish a second merit list and arrange another viva voce under the direction of the National University, a member of the college admission committee said.

Additional police forces have been deployed on the campus. The college authorities also restricted entrance of outsiders into the campus through a notice.

Earlier on Monday, Chhatra League and Jubo League activists locked in a clash on the campus over admission of their own candidates. They beat up two journalists who were there to cover the event.

Police arrested six Chhatra League activists of the college

# Malaysia to hire

**FROM PAGE 16**  
visas for Nepali workers. These workers will get entry in six months.

This is far more than roughly estimated 25,000 visas that Nepal used to get in the past, said Kumud Khanal, co-coordinator of Nepalese manpower agencies.

Nepalese manpower agencies have brought down the migration cost to around Rs 40,000 from Rs 80,000 in a bid to send more workers, a recent report of Republica, a Nepalese online newspaper, said quoted him assaying.

Bangladesh's recruiting agencies have expressed grievances over such a decision by Malaysia.

"Sideline 55,000 Bangladeshi workers is inhuman," said Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA) President Ghulam Mustafa, adding that the workers who had spent a good amount for visas have been in trouble for long.

He said he still expects that Malaysia will consider the case of Bangladeshis as those 55,000 workers did nothing wrong for which they have to suffer.

Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Secretary Elias Ahmed, however, said the government has yet to learn about the details of

unit in this connection and produced them before court yesterday. The arrestees are Abu Tayeb Badsha, president of Kushtia sadar unit Chhatra League, Babu, Sohag, Imon, Tutul and Koyel.

Kushtia judicial magistrate's court sent them to jail. On February 1, Chhatra League activists hindered the admission process for the first time by locking up several rooms of the college as soon as the viva voce started. They were demanding enrolment of some 200 candidates who did not make to the merit list.

# Schoolboy

**FROM PAGE 1**  
truck ran over Pappu in front of the old college building at 7:30am when he was going to coaching class by bicycle, leaving him dead on the spot.

The driver, however, managed to flee the scene leaving the truck on the road soon after the accident.

Outraged by the accident, local people and students vandalised the truck and set fire to it.

The angry mob also put barricade on Banani Matidhala road and damaged some 15-20 roadside makeshift illegal establishments, which made the road narrow.

On information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control around 11:30am.

Malaysia's hiring of workers from Nepal.

"If that is the case then why Malaysia shouldn't recruit workers from Bangladesh," he told The Daily Star, adding: "We will soon contact our mission in Kuala Lumpur."

Baira President Ghulam Mustafa said if there were any mistakes or misunderstanding all the parties -- Malaysian government, Bangladesh government and the agencies involved in the total labour recruitment process in Malaysia -- will have to fix it.

Workers should not be punished for that, he added.

Bangladesh started sending workers to Malaysia from late 2006. Since then involvement of too many manpower brokers and their dubious roles and hiring of excessive workers have put thousands of workers in trouble.

These workers were low-paid and sometimes unemployed. A section of them were not even paid after works which drew the attention of the global media.

Malaysia, home to around five lakh Bangladeshi workers, had imposed bans several times since 2006 but only to lift them later. It again slapped a ban on hiring Bangladeshi workers in March last year saying their economy was hard-hit by the global economic recession.

least 100 others were injured and four of them were maimed with their tendons cut by Shibir men.

Police sources said after Nizami's meeting, Shibir leaders on February 7 had a meeting in Islamia College of Binodpur and decided to go on with the plan to get vengeance on the murder of former RU Shibir general secretary Sharifuzzaman Nomani on March 13, 2009.

Around 200 Shibir cadres who went to Rajshahi from across the country to Nizami's meeting took part in the attack. They stayed at different students' messes around RU campus, police personnel said.

Shibir's primary target was Asaduzzaman but he escaped with critical injuries at Bangabandhu Hall. Even though Shibir never accused Asaduzzaman in the Nomani murder case, they hold him responsible for the murder, said police.

Meanwhile, police received Abdul Latif Hall Shibir unit president Hasmat Ali on another five-day remand Monday.

Police arrested seven more yesterday in connection with the February 9 violence. Among them Shibir cadre Abdul Gaffar was placed on a three-day remand.

Hasmat told police that Shibir never engages in any activity without Jamaat's knowledge and this standard was followed accordingly during the February 9 violence.

Police officials said they are digging for more information.

# US-Pakistan raid

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Taliban spokesman Yousuf Ahmadi told AFP by telephone from an undisclosed location.

"He is currently in Afghanistan, where he is leading all jihadi activities... The sole goal of such baseless reporting and propaganda is to make up for the failure in Marjah."

Officials from Pakistan's military, which controls the country's premier spy agency, were not available for comment. The US embassy in Islamabad and senior police in Karachi said they had no information.

Baradar is in charge of the Taliban's military operations and leadership council, and was a close associate of al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden before the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, the New York Times said.

The details of Baradar's apparent capture were unclear, but the New York Times said Pakistan's Directorate carried it out for Inter-Services Intelligence and US Central Intelligence Agency operatives.

US television channel ABC also cited a senior official as saying Baradar was captured several days ago, calling it "a very big deal".

"If he were taken off the battlefield, it would deal a major setback to the Afghan Taliban and be a personal blow to Mullah Omar, who has relied heavily on him for years," another unnamed counter-terrorism official told the station.

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