US official holds talks in Syria amid thaw in ties

AFP, Damascus

US State Department official William Burns met Syrian President Bashar al-Assad vesterday a day after Washington named its first ambassador to Damascus in five years in a bid to engage a former foe.

Burns, the US under secretary for political affairs, met the Syrian leader against a barrage of domestic opposition to the engagement of one of Israel's bitterest enemies.

But he described the appointment of a new ambassador as a positive signal of intent by the administration of President Barack Obama.

"This is a clear sign after between Arabs and Israelis," five years without an ambassador in Damascus of America's readiness to improve relations and to and comprehensive peace

Dalai Lama

Obama meet

the Dalai Lama headed yester-

day for the United States and a

long-awaited meeting with

President Barack Obama that

For the 74-year-old Dalai

Lama -- vilified by Beijing as a

"wolf in monk's robes" -- recog-

nition by the White House is

crucial to maintaining a critical

international spotlight on

Chinese treatment of his

has stressed that the president is

receiving the Dalai Lama as a

spiritual rather than political

leader, and the meeting will take

place in the White House Map

nuances will do little to dampen

the Tibetan's enthusiasm and

are not expected to mollify

"The most important thing is

that the meeting is taking

spokesman Tenzin Taklha said

Chinese anger.

Buddhist leader.

01 Ministry/Division

But such diplomatic

Room and not the Oval Office.

The Obama administration

has infuriated China.

Himalayan homeland.

heads for

AFP, New Delhi



Handout picture shows Syrian President Bashar al-Assad (L) meeting US Undersecretary for Political Affairs William Burns in Damascus on Wednesday. Burns met the Syrian leader a day after Washington named its first ambassador to Damascus in five years in a bid to engage the former foe.

said Burns.

The White House was keen to "make progress on all tracks in the peace process cooperate to pursue a just and to pursue regional peace and stability," the US diplo-

mat told reporters after meeting Assad.

"There are challenges on the road but my meeting with President Assad leaves me progress together in the inter-

est of both our countries.

"I had quite productive and extensive discussions with President Assad. We talked about areas on which we disagree but also we found areas of common ground on which we can build," Burns

Washington's ties with Damascus had been strained by Syria's three-decade-old alliance with Iran and US allegations of meddling in the affairs of its eastern neighbour Iraq.

Career diplomat Robert Ford will be the first US ambassador to Damascus since Washington recalled its envoy after Lebanon's former prime minister Rafiq Hariri was killed in February 2005 in a bombing blamed on Syria.

"Ambassador Ford is a highly accomplished diplomat with many years of experience in the Middle East," hopeful that we can make said White House spokesman Robert Gibbs.

Mossad in hot seat over Hamas man's murder

AFP, Jerusalem

The Mossad was in the hot seat yesterday over the murder of a top Hamas man in Dubai, as at least seven Israelis said their identities were stolen by the assassins, widely thought to be agents of the Jewish state's infamous secret service.

The killing of top Hamas militant Mahmud al-Mabhuh while on a weapons purchasing trip to Dubai last month has widely been blamed on the Mossad, although no evidence has yet linked the agency, which in keeping with tradition has kept mum on the affair.

But suspicions deepened after Dubai this week released the photos and names of the 11 European passport holders -- six from Britain, three from Ireland, one from Germany and one from France -- alleged to have been members of the hit squad.

Shortly afterwards, Britain, France and Ireland said that the passports used in the operation were faked and at least seven of the "assassins" turned out to be dual national Israelis whose passports appeared to have been stolen.

Khamenei slams Hillary for spreading 'lies'

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei lashed out at US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton yesterday, saying she had spread "lies" against the Islamic republic during a tour of the Gulf.

"Those who have turned the Persian Gulf into an arms depot in order to milk regional countries for money have now dispatched their official to go around the Persian Gulf and spread lies against Iran," Khamenei said referring to Clinton at a meeting with visitors from the northwestern city of Tabriz.

Clinton wrapped up her visit on Tuesday to the Gulf where she drummed up support for new round of UN sanctions against Tehran for pressing ahead with its sensitive uranium enrichment programme in defiance of repeated Security Council ultimatums.

During her trip, Clinton said that Iran was moving towards a 'military dictatorship" and that there was no "evidence" to support Tehran's claim that its nuclear programme was entirely peaceful.

Clinton's tour of Qatar and Saudi Arabia aimed to isolate Iran from its Arab neighbours and to put pressure on Tehran's ally Beijing to drop its resistance to UN sanctions targeting mainly Iran's Revolutionary Guards.

Last week, Iran began enriching uranium to 20 percent purity, which Washington and other world powers say adds to evidence it is seeking a nuclear weapon.

Tehran denies the charge, insisting its goal is peaceful nuclear energy and research.

On Tuesday, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad adopted a twin-track approach warning world powers against imposing sanctions but suggesting that Iran could suspend its enrichment of uranium to 20 percent purity.

"If anybody seeks to create problems for Iran, our response will not be like before. Something in response will be done which will make them (the world powers) regret" their move, Ahmadinejad told a Tehran news conference.



PHOTO: AFP The face of Pharaoh

Tutankhamun is displayed in a climate-controlled case at his tomb in the Valley of the Kings, close to Luxor, 500km south of Cairo, in this November 4, 2007 file photo.

Tutankhamun died from broken leg, malaria

AP, Cairo

Egypt's most famous pharaoh, King Tutankhamun, was a frail boy who suffered from a cleft palate and club foot. He died of complications from a broken leg exacerbated by malaria and his parents were most likely brother and sister.

Two years of DNA testing and CT scans on Tut's 3,300year-old mummy and 15 others are helping end many of the myths surrounding the boy king. While a comparatively minor ruler, he has captivated the public since the 1922 discovery of his tomb, which was filled with a stunning array of jewels and artefacts, including a golden funeral mask.

The study, which will be published Wednesday in the Journal of the American Medical Association, provides the firmest family tree yet for Tut. The tests pointed to Pharaoh Akhenaten, who tried to revolutionise ancient Egyptian religion to worship one god, as Tut's father. His mother was one of Akhenaten's sisters, it said.

Tut, who became pharaoh at age 10 in 1333 BC, ruled for just nine years at a pivotal time in Egypt's history. Speculation has long swirled over his death at 19.

তারিখঃ ১৫/০২/২০১০

Astronauts unveil 'Haiti quake far more destructive than 2004 tsunami'

AFP, Port-Au-Prince Tibet's exiled spiritual leader

> The scale of devastation in Haiti is far worse than in Asia after the 2004 tsunami, a study has said, estimating the cost of last month's earthquake at up to 14 billion dollars.

> The report released Tuesday from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) raised the possibility that the quake could be the most destructive disaster in modern history.

> Its stark assessment comes with Port-au-Prince still lying in ruins more than one month on, while the bodies of more than 200,000 dead pile up in mass graves outside the capital. The study's release coincided with what would normally be

> Haiti's annual carnival, an explosion of pulsing music and colourful parades. But this year, the events have been cancelled as no one is in the mood to party. The preliminary IDB report estimated the damage a

> between eight and 14 billion dollars in what was already the poorest country in the Americas before the catastrophe. Factoring in Haiti's population and economic output, the upper estimate would make it the most destructive natural

> disaster in modern history, the bank said. "Indeed, in this respect the Haiti earthquake was vastly more destructive than the Indonesian tsunami of 2004 and the

cyclone that hit Myanmar in 2008," an IDB statement said. "It caused five times more deaths per million inhabitants than the second-ranking natural killer, the 1972 earthquake in

Nicaragua." place," the Dalai Lama's Haiti officials say more than 217,000 people were killed in the quake, or about 2.4 percent of the country's population of nine

Local Government Rural Development & Co-operative

before leaving India with the million.

Office of the Executive Engineer Drainage (E&M) Division Dhaka WASA, Segunbagicha

Invitation for Tender

Memo No:-TA/22/24/09-10/Dr(E&M)Div

Brief description of works

to accept or reject all tenders

Lot

WASA-PI-133/2010

GD-787

Brief description of related services. Not applicable

Identification of Lot

Date: 14/02/2010

Dhaka-1000

UI	WILLIST A DIVISION	Local Government Rural Development & Co-operative.
02	Agency	Dhaka WASA
03	Procuring entity name	Executive Engineer, Drainage (E&M) Division, Dhaka WASA, Segunbagicha, Dhaka-1000.
04	Procuring entity code	
05	Procuring entity district	Dhaka
06	Invitation for	Providing fitting-fixing, repairing & painting of MS Grill strainer, platform & steel structure at Kallayanpur Storm Water Pumping Station, Dhaka.
07	Invitation Ref No.	Memo No:-TA/22/24/09-10/Dr (E&M) Div
08	Date	Date: 14/02/2010
KEYI	NFORMATION	*
09	Procurement method	Open tendering method.
FUND	ING INFORMATION	
10	Budget and source of funds	Dhaka WASA Revenue Budget.
11	Development partners (if applicable)	
PART	ICULAR INFORMATION	
12	Project/programme code (if applicable)	N/A
13	Project/programme name (if applicable)	N/A
14	Tender package No.	
15	Tender package name	
16	Tender publication date	
17	Tender last selling date	07/03/2010 (During office hour).
18	Tender closing date and time	08/03/2010 at 12.00 noon
19	Tender opening date and time	08/03/2010 at 1.00pm
20	Name & address of the office(s)	i.
	-Selling tender document (principal)	Janata Bank, Kawran Bazar Corporate Branch, Dhaka.
	-Selling tender document (others)	Agrani Bank, WASA Branch, Dhaka.
	-Receiving tender document	Office of the Executive Engineer, Drainage (E&M) Division, Dhaka WASA, Segunbagicha, Dhaka-1000.
	Opening tender document	Office of the Executive Engineer, Drainage (E&M) Division, Dhaka WASA, Segunbagicha, Dhaka-1000.
21	Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting (optional)	Not applicable.
	RMATION FOR TENDERER	
22	Eligibility of tenderer	i) The required average annual turnover shall be minimum Tk 35

tender security time in document weeks/mon amount (Tk) 500/-20,000/ 45 (forty-Providing fitting-fixing repairing & Kallayanpur, painting of MS grill, strainer, Dhaka five) days platform & steel structure at Kallayanpur Storm Water Pumping Station, Dhaka PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS Name of official inviting tender Mirza Golam Kibria. Designation of official inviting tender Executive Engineer. Executive Engineer, Drainage (E&M) Division, Dhaka WASA, Segunbagicha, Dhaka-1000. 28 Address of official inviting tender Telephone No. 9553033 Contact details of official inviting tender 30 The procuring entity reserves the right

If the quoted rate (rate quoted by the tenderer) exceeds 5% above or below of the official estimate, the tender

Station, Dhaka.

Location

lac in last 5 (five) years

ii) Contractor's shall have 1st class civil/electro-mechanical license

and experience in similar work completed during last 5 years shall be two nos. in which each contract value not less than Tk 7 lac

iii) The minimum amount of liquid assets and/or credit facilities shall

be Tk 5.00 lac (supporting documents should not be before 15

Providing fitting-fixing, repairing & painting of MS grill, strainer

platform & steel structure at Kallayanpur Storm Water Pumping

Price of

days back from the date of advertisement

will be cancelled. The procuring entity reserves the right to reject or accept all tenders. Mirza Golam Kibria **Executive Engineer** Drainage (E&M) Division Dhaka WASA

Tender

Completion

phenomenal new window on world AP, Cape Canaveral

In a highly anticipated grand finale to their mission, astronauts opened the shutters on the International Space Station's new observation deck yesterday and were humbled by "absolutely spectacular" views of Earth from inside the elaborate atrium of windows.

The \$27 million lookout opened each of its seven eyes one window at a time as the crews of the station and shuttle Endeavour carried out their third and final spacewalk.

It was the moment everyone had been waiting for: The round central window the largest ever flown in space was the first exposed as astronauts inside cranked open the shutter as they sailed 220 miles above the South Pacific.



Demonstrators stage a protest holding placards reading "Help" and "Super Powers don't end poverty, Political will does...Now or Never" during the informal meeting of development ministers on Wednesday in La Granja, near Segovia in Spain. Ministers and secretaries of state from the European Union member countries attend the meeting organised by the Spanish rotating Presidency of the EU to prepare for the New York meeting on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) schedule for September 2010.

BJP leadership meet begins amid tight security

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Indore

The Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) national executive met here yesterday amid tight security in the wake of the weekend Pune bombing that killed 11 people.

The party's top and second-rung leaders gathered in a tented accommodation called Kushabhau Thakre Nagar. The first to speak was outgoing president Rajnath Singh. Attending the conclave are star leader and former deputy

prime minister LK Advani, Chief Ministers Narendra Modi of Gujarat and Raman Singh of Gujarat and former presidents Murli Manohar Joshi and MVenkaiah Naidu.

All of them are staying in specially designed eco-friendly tents. Some 1,300 tents and 25 VVIP tents have been put up. About 5,000 delegates from all over the country are at the BJP meet.

AL, allies to campaign

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and allied student organisation Islami Chhatra Shibir.

AL leaders will also soon start their own countrywide tours where they will formally demand banning of religion-based politics, said party insiders.

Awami Jubo League, youth front of AL, at its central executive committee meeting yesterday demanded that the government bans the politics of Jamaat-Shibir, and take stern actions against the killers of a Rajshahi University unit Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activist.

Claiming that BNP, Jamaat, and Shibir have plans to destabilise the country, the meeting decided to launch a series of countrywide protest programmes which will be launched in the capital on February 23 to continue till March 3. On February 24 and March 1, Jubo League will hold protest programmes in all upazilas and districts. The series will end in the capital as well.

AL backed BCL General Secretary Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Roton said they will launch united agitation programmes along with all major student organisations to press homethedemandfortheban. BCL and allied student

organisations will carry out the programmes together and separately in educational institutions across the country with special emphasis on a demand for imposing the ban on the campuses.

"We will hold rallies in all constituencies of the capital to create public opinion against the politics of Jamaat-Shibir. We want a ban on Jamaat-Shibir

politics," Dhaka City AL General Secretary Mofazzzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya told The Daily Starvesterday.

He said the city unit of 14party recently took a unanimous decision to that end.

Key leaders of the alliance including Workers Party President Rahsed Khan Menon, and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) President Hasanul Haque Inu already made the demand publicly.

Meanwhile, State Minister for Home Shamsul Hoque Tuku told The Daily Star, "If the demand comes from all segments of the society, it will be easier for the government to concede."

He also noted that opinions on major university and college campuses are very important prior to taking any initiative in that regard. "If university authorities think that Shibir is a threat to the country's sovereignty, and responsible for destroying congenial atmosphere in educational institutions, then the authorities could ban Shibir," he said. The Communist Party of

Bangladesh backed Bangladesh Chhatra Union President Manavendra Dev said Shibir should be banned and boycotted politically, socially, and culturally. The movement against Jamaat-Shibir should also be a united one, added Manay who is also the convener of Progotisheel Chhatra Jote, an alliance of left leaning student organisations.

JSD backed Bangladesh Chhatra League President Hossain Ahmed Tafsir told The Daily Star that a united movement against the fundamentalist forces should be launched immediately.

JAPANESE SALES EXECUTIVE

We are looking for a Japanese national (Male) for our Dhaka office Post: Sales Executive. Quality: Japanese nationality, graduate form any discipline, fluency in Japanese, English & Bengali language. Date: 22 - 25 February' 2010. Time: 11 am to 03:30 pm at our office, please attend walk-in-interview with complete CV at undermentioned address: The Bengal Tours Ltd. House- 45, Road- 27, Block- A, Banani, Dhaka- 1213, Bangladesh. E-mail: info@bengaltours.com

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়

শাখা-১৯

স্মারক নং-শিম/শাঃ১৯/১-৮/(মনবুকাগাকাশো)/২০০৫/৬০৭

বিষয়ঃ জাপান সরকার প্রদত্ত স্কুল শিক্ষকদের জন্য মনবুকাগাকাশো (Monbukagakusho) বৃত্তি ২০১০।

২০১০ শিক্ষাবর্ষে জাপান সরকার প্রদত্ত স্কুল শিক্ষকদের জন্য মনবুকাগাকাশো (Monbukagakusho) বৃত্তি (০৭টি) প্রদানের জন্য প্রার্থী মনোনয়নের উদ্দেশ্যে বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট থেকে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছেঃ ০১। Field of Study:

The training is composed of (A) general courses and (B) an advanced program in the specialised fields indicated in advance that take advantage of each university's distinct features. Educational administration (such as educational administration and finance, school management), educational methods (ex. classroom teaching, learning system theory, curriculum and educational assessment), specialised subject research (ex. mathematics, physics, chemistry, gymnastics), and observational tours and practice (ex. class observations,

participation in special educational activities and tours of educational research facilities). ox | Applicants must be under 35 years of age as of April 1, 2010 (i.e applicants must be born on or after April 2, 1975).

oo | Applicants must be willing to learn Japanese and receive research guidance in Japanese. Applicants must also have the ability to do research in Japanese and adapt to living in Japan. ০৪। নিম্নলিখিত শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা থাকতে হবে;

Applicants must be graduates of universities or a teacher-training colleges who work as a teachers in primary or secondary schools or as academic staffs at teacher training institutions who have at least five years of experience in their terms of service.

০৫। সাদা কাগজে পূর্ণ বিবরণীসহ ইংরেজিতে নিমুরূপ ছকে আবেদন দাখিল করতে হবে; Application for Japanese Government (Monbukagakusho) Scholarship-2010 for

Bangladeshi School Teacher: Name of the field:

1. Name:

2. Father's name: 3. Mother's name:

4. Present address: Permanent address:

6. Date of birth: 7. Age:

8. Nationality:

জিডি-৭৮৮

Particulars of examination passed:

Name of Examination Secured Grade/class/division Institution & year of passing

০৬। আবেদনপত্রের সাথে প্রার্থীদের নিম্নলিখিত ডকুমেন্টসসমূহ দাখিল করতে হবেঃ

a) Passport size photographs (4.5 X 3.5 cm, upper half of body, full-faced, hatless) taken within the past 6 months (3 copies).

b) Certified grade transcript for each academic year and the diploma from the last university attended (issued by that university, 2 copies).

c) Recommendation from the present employer (any form will be accepted, 1 original, 1 copy).

d) Certificate of employment (issued by the present place of employment, 1 original, 1 copy). e) Medical certificate on the prescribed form (1 original, 1 copy).

০৭। আবেদনপত্র নিমুস্বাক্ষরকারীর ঠিকানায় সরাসরি অথবা ডাকযোগে আগামী ২৩.০২.২০১০ তারিখের মধ্যে পৌছাতে হবে।

০৮। শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক মনোনীত প্রার্থীদের জাপান দৃতাবাস কর্তৃক আয়োজিত লিখিত ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষায়

অংশগ্রহণ করতে হবে। বিজ্ঞপ্তিটি শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের ওয়েবসাইটে (www.moedu.gov.bd) প্রচার করা আছে।

হোসনে আরা বেগম

উপ-সচিব ফোনঃ ৭১৬৫০৩২