NEWS

Greece heads for further general strike

AFP, Athens

Greek tax and garbage collectors walked off their jobs for a second day yesterday as the country braced for a second general strike against government austerity measures.

Over a million civil servants, workers and private sector staff have been called upon to strike Thursday by the country's two main unions and attend street protests.

The general strike, the second in two weeks, is likely to paralyse much of daily life across the country with ministries, public services, banks and schools shut down and hospitals running on reduced staff.

Flights to and from Greece also will be grounded throughout Thursday as the air traffic controllers' union announced it would join the protest.

"We will participate in the unions. There will therefore be no flights going to or coming from Greece from midnight (2200 GMT) Wednesday to midnight Thursday," a spokesman for the Air Traffic Controllers' Association of Greece (EEKE) told AFP Tuesday.

Greece's Aegean Airlines previously announced in a statement it would cancel all its flights Thursday, and moved forward the times of several Wednesday evening flights.

A support strike by sailors will tie up ships at harbour. Rail transport is also likely to be disrupted. The unions are outraged by a

wave of state spending cuts and tax hikes intended to cut this year's deficit of 12.7 percent of output and to get to grips with the country's debt of nearly 300 billion euros (410 billion euros).

"The government's mea-

Prothom Alo

on February 14. It spoke of the probe body and its report on granting of bails by an HC bench on November 23 and 24

The petitioner stated that the Prothom Alo report has arnished the dignity and image of the HC and its judges. Advocate Mostafa Golam Kibria appeared for the peti-

superintendent of police of

Mymensingh Kohinoor

opened fire on people at a

polling centre in Nandail in

2004 without any provocation.

Achargaon High School poll-

ing centre in Nandail during

the municipality elections on

May 9, 2004 left Abu Taher and

Following the probe report,

the home ministry issued a

show-cause notice upon

Kohinoor in newspapers

asking him to defend himself.

Earlier, a show-cause notice

was issued to his address to

which he did not reply, sources

show-cause notice within the

specified time, charges will be

pressed against him and he

will lose his job, the sources

drawing salaries, the IGP

could not say for sure.

However, an official at the

police headquarters said he

official at the police headquar-

ters maintained the internal

enquiry report had said con-

troversial police officer

Kohinoor Mian, now on the

run, sought to prove through

forged documents that

Sujan's father and Taher's wife

signed affidavits claiming that

they were not killed in police

denied before the enquiry

committee that they had ever

signed any affidavits.

committee findings, Taher's

wife told The Daily Star

recently that she had never

Sujan's father Mohammad

Ali, however, said he filed a

petition with a Mymensingh

court about 15 days after the

killing of his son in which he

mentioned that he could not

identify the killers and would

committee to investigate the

police firing at Nandail was

formed in June last year. The

committee submitted its

report to the police headquar-

ters on November 6 last year,

The three-member enquiry

accuse none for the murder.

signed any affidavit.

The official said both

Seeking anonymity an

Asked whether Kahinoor is

If he fails to respond to the

in the home ministry said.

Sujan of the area dead.

The police action at

FROM PAGE 1

SP Kohinoor

sures pile further misery on the lowest wages in Europe, leading to prolonged recession and unemployment," the civil servants' union Adedy said in its strike call.

The spending cuts -- including an unprecedented reduction in paid holiday allowances -- constitute an effective salary reduction of between 20 and 30 percent for civil servants, the union said.

A new poll late Monday found that 65.3 percent of Greeks believe the austerity measures to be 'unfair'.

The Greek economy, which is mired in a recession, ran into more trouble on Tuesday when the national statistics agency reported the annual inflation rate jumped by four points to 2.8 percent in February.

Unemployment currently stands at over 10 percent.

Greek Prime Minister 24-hour strike decided by the George Papandreou, currently on an international tour to muster support for Greece's debt-cutting efforts, was scheduled to meet with US President Barack Obama later Tuesday.

Papandreou has urged the United States to crack down on currency speculators amid reports that some US funds have placed big bearish bets against the euro.

Kibria killing

for Mithu, who had allegedly hurled grenade at Kibria, former finance minister and Awami League lawmaker.

The court fixed today for hearing the petition.

In his petition, the investigation officer of the case said Mithu has admitted his involvement in the killing. He should be interrogated further, as his name came up also in the statement of his coaccused Badrul Alam Mizan.

Rafiqul told The Daily Star, "We are expecting major headway in the investigation."

Rapid Action Battalion arrested Mithu at Habiganj on Saturday night. He was later handed over to Habiganj police, who produced him before the court yesterday. The CID had Babar on a

six-day remand on February 12 in the same case. He was sent back to jail on February

"After thorough enquiry we

have submitted the report to

the police headquarters about

20 days back," Deputy

Inspector General of CID

Nazmul Haq, who led the

three-member team, told The

Daily Star on November 25.

Two other members of the

committee are Dhaka District

SP Iqbal Bahar and Deputy

Commissioner of Detective

Branch of Police Monirul

The enquiry report said

chairman, who was present

there during the incident, said

he along with some local

Awami League leaders pro-

tested sub-Inspector

Mosharraf Hossain's action

after about 10 female voters

alleged that police had forced

them to return home without

minutes later he returned with

some other policemen and

started clubbing people, he

Kohinoor Mian appeared and

as Mosharraf told him some-

thing, he beckoned me and

some other local Awami

League leaders," Shafiqul said,

adding that as soon as they

went to Kohinoor he started

Shafiqul was arrested and

taken to a room from where he

see who fired but before police

took me away I saw a revolver

in the hand of Kohinoor who

asked me to go away, other-

wise he would shoot me,"

duty magistrate at Nandail

municipality elections, told

The Daily Star he did not order

police to open fire and said the

situation on that day did not

make any further comment

but said he had given his

version in his statement sub-

mitted to the government at

Rezaul Islam declined to

call for police firing.

that time.

Rezaul Islam, who was on-

Shafiqul told The Daily Star.

punching them.

Substantiating the probe heard two gunshots. "I did not

"In the blink of an eye

SI Mosharraf left and a few

casting votes around noon.

Seed sellers

FROM PAGE 1 Conference Centre in the capital.

Referring to a company that sold low quality seed this Boro season, Matia said, "If this happens again I will make its name public so that farmers no more buy seed from that company."

Calling upon the private companies to invest on research and development of genetically engineered crops, the agriculture minister said, "It is you who will make profit once you develop high quality seeds."

Matia said regional cooperation in sharing seeds could greatly help ensure food security. It is imperative that the South Asian nations consider the issue from the farmers perspective to feed the people of the region, which frequently suffers from floods, drought and salinity.

The government is trying to strike a balance between farmers' fair price and consumers' purchasing capacity, she said, adding that commodity prices doubled after the Awami League government's tenure in 2001, but none could bring it down.

"We have done it," she claimed.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni said it was of immense importance that the south Asian nations work together to strengthen food security. Ensuring quality seeds through regional cooperation could greatly help achieve the goal. Making Saarc Food Bank

effective is very important too. she observed.

Additional Secretary of the agriculture ministry Anwar Faruque in his keynote presentation said only up to 30 percent seed in South Asia is of standard quality, while it is below 18 percent in Bangladesh.

"We can ensure adequate production of crops by making sure that 60 percent seed is of standard quality," he said.

Saarc Seed Forum

An ad hoc Saarc Seed Forum was constituted with Anwar Faruque as its convener. It will work to establish a full-fledged autonomous Saarc Seed Forum to promote sustainable development of seed system in the region so that farmers of one country can reap the benefit from the innovation of other countries.

Director of Saarc Agriculture Centre Rafiqul Islam Mondal proclaimed the purpose of the forum at the programme.

Agriculture Secretary CQK Mustag, Food and Agriculture Organisation Bangladesh Representative Ad Spijkers, Malavika Dadlani, head of India's Division of Seed Science and Technology and BSA President Mahboob Anam also spoke at the programme.

Dhaka hosts

It is an initiative on the way to the COP-16 to keep the momentum of the activities to deal with climate change impacts, said Ambassador Stefan Frowein, head of delegation of the EU to Bangladesh.

police opened fire during the Replying to a question, municipality election without Stefan, who was present at the the slightest provocation. It meeting, said tha also accused Kohinoor of Bangladesh's multi-donor misusing power and neglitrust fund for climate change gence in discharging his duty. is likely to get operational in Nandail upazila vicenext couple of days.

The donor fund is mean for both adaptation and mitigation actions to cope with the changing climate. The entire fund is a grant.

It is by and large finalised that the fund will be operated under the authority and leadership of Bangladesh, said the

minister. However, the World Bank will provide technical assistance, he added.

WB's involvement in the fund is temporary, said Stefan adding that Bangladesh will operate it independently later

The United Kingdom has committed to contribute 60 million pounds as a grant to Bangladesh's multi-donor trust fund on climate change.

While the EU is supposed to contribute 8.5 million euros and Denmark will give 10 million Danish Kroners to the trust fund.

The funds will be released in phases over next five years.

This is just the start, said Stefan adding that if the fund works well, it will draw more finance. Yesterday's meeting was to

reflect on how to make the COP16 a success in the light of achievements and unfulfilled aspirations at the COP15 in Copenhagen, said the state minister.

Bangladesh government has kept an allocation of Tk700 crore in the development budget of the current fiscal from its own resource to combat climate change.

Padma Bridge

FROM PAGE 1

in particular the communications ministry, and Bangladesh Bridge Authority for moving expeditiously with the preparatory work for the tender, and reiterated the donors' firm commitment for providing assistance.

Communications Minister Sved Abul Hossain told The Daily Star on Monday that the document containing bidders' pre-qualification criteria will be sent to WB for final clearance within this week.

"We are hoping to float the tender any time now," he said.

The World Bank is now waiting for receiving the minutes of a meeting between the donors and the finance ministry where key decisions were taken regarding the design of the bridge, and the procurement methods for its construction.

The decisions include that the proposed Padma Bridge will comprise rail and road ways; the rail track and related viaducts, and other facilities will be built linked with a project for extending the

railway to the country's southwest region; and the contract for constructing the main bridge will be awarded through a single international competitive bidding.

There will be two stages to the bidding process, with a limited first stage based on the design prepared by design consultants. According to the commu-

nications ministry's proposal, the bridge will be 6.15 km long, and will be constructed by December 2013. The bridge will connect 19 districts of the south-western part of the country with the eastern part including the capital, and it will be linked with the Asian Highway.

Of the \$2.4 billion financing, different development partners have agreed to cofinance about \$2.2 billion, of which the WB will provide \$1.2 billion, Asian Development Bank \$550 million, Islamic Development Bank \$130 million, Japan International Cooperation Agency \$300 million, and Abudhabi Fund \$31.4 million.

Pro-people projects FROM PAGE 1

for offering them health

In reply, Hasina said mobile phone services have become widely available in Bangladesh now as her previous government had opened the market for cell phone

companies. The WHO top official said she strongly believes that health situation of Bangladesh will improve to a significant level under the visionary leadership of Hasina.

She also hailed the government for giving importance to the improvement of nursing services in the country.

Hasina, in reply, said the Awami League government during its first tenure started some health development projects to bring modern medical treatment to the doorsteps of the village peo-

One of such projects, she mentioned, was setting up 18,000 community health clinics, of which 11,000 clinics across the country were started, but the next BNP-Jamaat government had closed the clinics and the whole project on political ground.

However, the present Azadwere present.

government has taken steps to re-establish all the community health clinics for greater interest of the people, the PM

Bangladesh is now on the right track of achieving the targeted growth, Dr Chan said.

The WHO chief also lauded Hasina and her government for taking effective steps to implement the Women Development Policy. The premier said her gov-

ernment has also undertaken a policy not to let one inch of land remain uncultivated in order to increase food production of the country. She said steps are being

taken to implement 'one farm one homestead' policy to make the rural people economically self-reliant and also to produce organic foods. During the meeting, they

also discussed solar energy and solar panel as an alternative to increasing power generation.

Health Minister Dr AFM Ruhal Huq, Health Adviser to the Prime Minister Prof Syed Modasser Ali, Secretary to the PM's office Mollah Waheeduzzaman and PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam

Revised budget

FROM PAGE 16

statement informing the House about the progress in implementation of the budget, the sources added.

According to the subsections-2 and -3 of section-12 of the Public Money and Budget Management Act, 2009, the finance ministry is supposed to place a revised budget in parliament for every financial year in March, following articles 87, 88, 89, 90

and 91 of the constitution. The section-12 (2) of the law contradicts with the articles 87, 88, 89, 90 and 91 of the constitution. Therefore, revised budget cannot be placed in parliament in March," Rahmat Ali, a member of the Business Advisory Committee, told The Daily Star yesterday at his office in

parliament. The constitution does not allow placing such budget in the middle of a financial year and such practice is not seen in other parliaments including the House of Commons in the UK and the Lok Sabha in India, he added.

The provision should be amended to make it conform with the constitution," he said. He said the provision in fact is automatically void as it contradicts with the constitution, the supreme law of the

He said the finance minister would make a statement in this session after March 11 on the progress of implementation of the budget for this fiscal year, income and expenditure, and the overall economic situation. According to section-15 (4)

of the Public Money and Budget Management Act, 2009, the finance minister is supposed to issue a statement in parliament every quarter specifying the progress of implementation of budget and other issues. But the finance minister

did not make any statement in last eight months since the beginning of this 2009-10 fiscal year.

The last caretaker government enacted Public Money and Budget Management Act, 2009, through promulgation report.

of an ordinance. The ordinance ceased to have effect on February 25, 2009. The Awami League led government placed a bill in parliament and enacted the law in last July.

Mig-29 case

petitioner in the first informa tion report and the charge sheet of the MiG-29 corruption case.

So, framing charge by the trial court against the petitioner in this case was illegal, it also observed.

The Bac filed the case with Tejgaon police station on December 11, 2001 on charges of causing a loss of Tk 700 crore to the state exchequer by purchasing eight MiG-29 fighter planes. The case was later shifted to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

The trial court on August 20, 2008, framed charges against Hasina in her absence.

Following a writ filed by Hasina, the HC on September 18, 2008, stayed the trial proceedings against her, and issued a rule on the government, the ACC and the trial court to explain why framing charges against Hasina in her absence should not be declared illegal.

Hasına FROM PAGE 16

topped the list.

eighth in the list.

India's PepsiCo Chief Executive Indra Nooyi scored the second position followed by Congress Chief Sonia Gandhi. Among others, Singapore

in the December 29 parliamengovernment-owned investtary elections from ment company Temasek Chief Executive Ho Ching was placed fourth, India's ICICI two upazilas. Bank Head Chanda Kochhar fifth, South Korean Conglomerate Hyundai vacant and his son Nazmul Chairperson Hyun Jeong-eun seventh and Indonesian Finance Minister Sri Indrawati

"As the world celebrates its 100th International Women's Day, we take a look at the key women who are shaping Asia's political and economic The past caretaker government landscape," CNN said in a increased the fund's amount to Tk1crorefromTk50lakh.

BNP MPs

FROM PAGE 1

Moudud Ahmed took the floor and bitterly criticised the government for this move.

"The government is out to erase the name of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman instead of taking steps to improve law and order, arrest price hike of essentials and ensure supply of power and gas to reduce people's sufferings," Moudud said.

The former law minister further said, "Inshallah, we will sit in the treasury bench after the next election. And we will amend the law to name Barisal University again after Ziaur Rahman ... We are now walking out of parliament protesting the bill." In response, the education

minister said the BNP government passed the law concerning the university but did nothing to establish it. "I visited Barisal. People

there demanded that the

government rename the

university as Barisal

University. We are just honouring their desire," Nahid said. The opposition lawmakers then staged the walkout at 3:50pm and returned to the

House at 4:05 pm. The bill was sent to the parliamentary standing committee on education ministry for scrutiny.

Interestingly, BNP lawmak-

ers delayed their walkout for a few minutes in response to a call from the speaker. Speaker Abdul Hamid asked them to hear the educa-

tion minister's response to Moudud's speech. And they Fresh drive

FROM PAGE 16 A mosque on the list of the

eviction was given a period of seven days to remove. BIWTA Deputy Director

(port) Alamgir Kabir said all the structures were in Laxman Kutubpur mouja under Rupganj. Eviction of river encroachers will only help

restore the river to how it was

in the recent past," said

Alamgir. BIWTA with two tugboats, Agrajatra and Agrabahak, two workboats and around 200 labourers carried out the drive. The drive will resume next Monday.

Earlier, the district administration has identified a total of 320 structures on Shitalakhhya, Balu and Buriganga rivers under the district's jurisdiction as per Revisional Survey records.

Deputy Commissioner of Narayangani Shamsur Rahman said most of the encroachers had taken out lease on the rivers from BIWTA. Sources said a total of 1158

acres of river area of the three rivers have been occupied by around 3010 illegal structures that has reduced the width of the rivers. Following a High Court order on June 25 last year, Narayanganj district adminis-

tration submitted a report on

the status of river encroach ment as per RS and Cadastra Survey records to the court in December. The authorities carried out an eviction drive in June the same year for 11 days and demolished 134 illegal struc-

tures including makeshift

ones on the rivers.

FROM PAGE 16 educational institutions from January 2009 to February 2010 Of these, 23 institutions, mostly madrasas, are situated in Kuliarchar and Bhairab upazilas, according to a list revealed in parliament yester-

Replying to a query of BNP lawmaker Nazim Uddin Ahmed, Planning Minister Air-Vice Marshal (retd) AK Khandker, who is also in charge of the president's office in parliamentary business, revealed the list. According to the list, the

president donated Tk 62.03 lakh to 1,134 individuals in the last 14 months. Of them, 120 individuals hailed from the two upazilas. The president also donated

Tk 17.75 lakh to 343 individuals in last two months and 79 of them are from Bhairab and Kuliarchar. Zillur was elected lawmaker

Kishoreganj-6 constituency, which is constituted by these On his election to the office of the president, the seat fell

Hasan was elected MP in a byelection. The president donates the money from his discretionary fund in line with the policy circulated by the Cabinet Division on March 20, 1978.

Grabbing lands

FROM PAGE 1

Faruq alleged in the complaint. But instead of taking back the supplied fertiliser, Mizan started to threaten Faruq with 'crossfire' if the latter did not pay a demanded sum of Tk 25 lakh for the goods, the written complaint says, adding that Mizan also claimed he was a relative of the prime minister, he was very powerful, and could do anything he wanted.

Finally fearing for his own life, Faruq deposited three cheques of a total Tk 11.5 lakh to Mizan's bank account, until which the SP had been harassing Faruq using police forces of different districts, according to the complaint. Mizan even had Faruq tortured in Bagerhat Sadar police station, alleges the written complaint. "When Mizanur Rahman

was the SP of Faridpur in April last year, his factory manager filed a false case against me with Jatrabari police in Dhaka accusing me of cheating. Jatrabari police came to Chittagong, arrested me from my Double Mooring residence, and took me to Dhaka," Omar Faruq told The Daily Star yesterday adding, "When, he was the SP of Bagerhat, another case was filed against me by one of Mizan's junior police officers, with the Sadar police station, accusing me of fertiliser black market-

"After the Bagerhat case was filed, police again picked me up from my Chittagong residence and took me to Bagerhat. Mizan threatened me with crossfire, if

BDR-BSF

FROM PAGE 16 Agreed Minutes began imme-

diately after visiting BDR Director General Mainul Islam led the Bangladeshi side at the four-hour talks with the Indian team headed by BSF chief Raman Srivastava on Monday. Sources said that the draft

would be made public tomor-During the talks, India

agreed to take care of Bangladesh's protests against alleged intrusion by BSF and civilians near Jainta Hills along the border with Sylhet. Bangladesh, on the other

hand, assured continued cooperation in apprehending north-eastern Indian insurgents, a major security concern of India. The Agreed Minutes would

stress maintaining status quo and exercising restraint by both BDR and BSF in their moves in the adverse possession of enclaves.

Sources said there is recognition in both sides that the resolve at the highest level of leaderships of the two countries should percolate down to the field level in order to avoid the impression of a communication gap and lack of coordination.

Frequent outage

Noorjahan, a resident of Gendaria, said, "We are already facing around six power cuts almost every day. "God knows what will

summer.' Arif, a resident of Kalabagan, said, "Load shedding occurred about seven

happen in the upcoming

times on Monday. "This increased the sufferings caused by mosquito

On Monday the Power Development Board generated 3,927 MW power against the demand of 5,100 MW during the evening peak hour.

A drop in gas pressure in

the national grid and other

problems in power plants has

caused a daily power load shedding of 1,000 MW to 1,500 MW throughout the country. Managing Director of Dhaka Power Distribution Company (DPDC) Md Ataul Masud said there is a gap

During the peak hours, the gap is around 300 MW and in the off-peak hours the gap is between 140 MW to 160 MW.

between the demand and

supply of electricity.

Masud said that if the PDB can run full generators, there will be less power outages during summer than there are currently. He added, "Around 1,500

MW power has been going out of Dhaka for irrigation. When the rains start in a month the electricity will no longer be required for irrigation." Masud added that Ulan

Sub Station of Power Grid Company trips automatically when the frequency lowers, which is why the areas of Khilgaon, Rampura and Banasri have faced severe power outages. He said a letter will be sent

to use a low frequency.

to the power grid company on Tuesday requesting them not

wouldn't pay him 25 lakh taka as the price for the fertiliser he had supplied me, although the actual price of the supplied

goods was 2 lakh 80 thousand taka," Faruq said. Faruq also said he waited so long to file the complaint in fear of Mizan's power, and found the courage to file it only after pre-

against the alleged bad cop. IGP Noor Mohammad confirmed that he received Faruq's complaint, adding that he received various other alle-

liminary action had been taken

gations against the SP as well. "We already told the home ministry that he should be suspended after the Police Headquarters found proof of his various irregularities including abuse of power," the IGP told The Daily Star yesterday about the police department's posi-

Wadud, Jamaat

FROM PAGE 16 "They were aided and abetted by Pakistani intelligence

tion regarding Mizan.

agency ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence)," he added. The parliamentary committee also questioned the

ABM Fazle Karim Chowdhury, a member of the committee, said they have discussed the activities of some NGOs whose role was not clear enough.

The local administration has already been asked to examine the NGO activities. Meanwhile, Wadud

avoid arrest, has rejected the accusation. Talking to The Daily Star via phone, he said the parliamentary committee has accused him to hide the government's

Bhuiyan, now on the run to

order in CHT areas. 'How come I was involved in the incidents when I have been denied entry to my constituency (Khagrachhari) for last four years?" he asked.

About the allegations,

Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary

failure to maintain law and

General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed told The Daily Star last night that "blaming Jamaat is nothing but a government strategy to

cover up the real matter". "This government is suffering from a Jamaat-Shibir

mania," he added. "Our stance is clear. We want safety of both the hills people and the Bangalees living there."

250 tolas gold

robbers pointed guns at my head and ordered me not to move or shout. One of them held me tightly, one guarded the entrance and the other three gathered the ornaments

and put them in bag." Ripon Sheikh, owner of a nearby jewellery shop, said he saw the robbery taking place, but could do nothing as he too

was held at gunpoint. Sananda Jewellers' owner Dhananjay said robbers took away over 250 tolas (2.916

kilograms) of gold ornaments worth around Tk 62 lakh. Contacted, DMP Deputy Commissioner of Mirpur zone

Lutful Kabir said they were looking into the matter. Tk 15cr granted

FROM PAGE 1 development on priority basis"

is from March 2010 to June 2014. The main works to be done under the project are 1,000 km road improvement in upazilas, 5,100 km village road development, 2,370 km union road development, construction of bridges and culverts on village roads of 49,500 metre.

Planning Minister AK

Khandker said the project has been taken for rural development following the lists provided by the lawmakers. He said MPs from lawmakers from all parties submitted

proposals and the project has

been taken accordingly. No

discrepancy was made on

Department in line with the

political consideration. The planning minister said the lawmakers would not be given any money in cash, as it would be done through the Local Government Engineering

MPs' proposals.

The 300 CNG buses would be imported with Korean soft loan. The planning minister said the loan has been taken with easy terms and with an interest at the rate of 0.5 percent. AK Khandker also said the

prime minister has directed to reintroduce the double decker BRTC buses on the city routes to ease traffic jam. Now 263 double decker buses are lying out of order. Prime Minister Sheikh

Hasina expressing dissatisfaction at this said if necessary the BRTC buses would be given subsidy to put those on the roads again.

role of some NGOs working in the CHT areas.