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People's Right to Know

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## outlines closer cooperation

UNB, Beijing

Bangladesh and China yesterday issued a joint statement after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's talks with Chinese : UNB, Beijing President Hu Jintao and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, outlining closer partnership and cooperation.

The statement said the two sides agreed to intensify cooperation in trade, investment, agriculture, transportation and 🙏 infrastructure development.

directions for taking China- Diaouthai. Bangladesh relations forward.

They also exchanged views on international and regional issues of mutual interest and identified areas for collective initiatives to face global chal-:

Dhaka-Beijing China's help sought for jt statement deep-sea port, road link

#### PM invites more Chinese investment in Bangladesh

: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday sought Chinese cooperation to construct a deep-sea port in Chittagong and estab-· lish road link between Chittagong and

"China can be benefited by using the . deep seaport while all neighbouring The leaders of the two; countries also can use it," Hasina said as a countries had an in-depth · key speaker at the Bangladesh-China exchange of views and Business Forum and Luncheon reached agreement on newer : Reception at State Guest House

> The PM invited Chinese investors to put money in Bangladesh's promising · sectors like textiles, small machineries, : fertilisers, footwear and ceramics.

She also encouraged investment in IT · outsourcing, tourism, healthcare, educa-DETAILS ON PAGE 5 : tion, power, telecommunications, infra-

structure development, gas and energy, agro-based industries and pharmaceuticals.

"I would urge you to invest in Bangladesh which would be lucrative as well as strengthen further our two countries' relation," Hasina said.

She expected bilateral trade between Dhaka and Beijing would increase to \$5 billion in 2010 from \$4.58 billion in 2009.

The China Council for Promotion of

International Trade and Bangladesh Embassy in Beijing jointly arranged the The PM stressed on "energetic" efforts

from both Bangladesh and China for increasing exports from Dhaka to Chinese markets in a bid to reduce the huge trade gap.

Hasina said though Bangladesh is now China's third biggest trading partner in

South Asia, currently, the trade balance is hugely in favour of China.

"I, therefore, invite you to Bangladesh with the assurance of all possible assistance in your investment ventures," she

"I hope my call to you would receive your favourable response and thus bring greater prosperity to our neighbourly countries and friendly peoples," she added.

The Bangladesh premier said scope also exists for joint ventures with buy back arrangements for exports to Europe, and for equity participation in private sector. To facilitate bilateral trade and com-

merce, she said Bangladesh is agreeable to open multi-designations and multidestinations arrangement for the two airlines.

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PHOTO: AFP

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Chinese President Hu Jintao shake hands at the Great Hall in Beijing yesterday.

#### Hasina meets Chinese president

BSS, Beijing

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday sought Chinese assistance and cooperation to turn Bangladesh into a modern digital country and face climate change battle.

The premier made the request when she met Chinese President Hu Jintao at Fu Jian Hall of the Great Hall in the Chinese capital.

The Chinese president assured Hasina of his country's continued cooperation towards achieving socioeconomic development of Bangladesh.

Hasina at the meeting expressed the hope that comprehensive partnership of cooperation between Bangladesh and China will help Bangladesh achieve its

development goals.

**SEE PAGE 15 COL 3** 

#### EC asks parties to report on affiliated student wings

Bss, Dhaka

The Election Commission (EC) has asked three political parties to notify the commission about the affiliation with their respective student wings.

The EC yesterday issued letters to the political parties in this regard mentioning some press reports and speeches of the leaders of Awami League, BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami.

The letters, issued from the office of Deputy Secretary **SEE PAGE 15 COL 8** 

#### 'ILLEGAL' VOIP Govt shuts RanksTel operations

Company denies involvement STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission yesterday shut down all operations of RanksTel for its alleged involvement in illegal VoIP (voice over Internet protocol) business and detained three of its senior officials.

The detained officials are General Manager (technical) Sheikh Kamruzzaman, Deputy General Manager (sales) Karim Iqbal and Deputy General Manager (technical) Mominur Rahman.

The BTRC raided the RanksTel offices at Eskaton and Tejgaon with the help of members of Rapid Action Battalion for around 12 hours SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

#### JRC MEET ENDS

# Dhaka places draft of interim Teesta deal

India presents 'principles' of water sharing

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Bangladesh and India last night exchanged draft agreements and promised to go ahead expeditiously towards resolving the vexed Teesta water-sharing issue.

Seeking to address Bangladesh's concerns on Tipaimukh dam and river inter-linking project, India reiterated "that it would not take steps that would adversely impact on Bangladesh and conveyed that it would also not take any unilateral decisions on its proposed

river inter-linking that might affect Bangladesh side", said an official statement issued here late last night.

Wrapping up the two-day ministerial-level meeting of the Joint River Commission, Bangladesh submitted a draft of an interim agreement on sharing of Teesta water while India presented a draft "Statement of Principles" of sharing of the river water during dry season.

The water resource secretaries of the two SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

#### India mulls 'no-firing' for a year

BANGLADESH BORDER

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India yesterday said it might declare a unilateral "nofiring" along its border with Bangladesh for a year to avoid civilian deaths in crossfire.

"We are considering unilateral no-firing on the border for one year. The modalities of that are being worked out,' Indian Home Secretary Gopal Krishna Pillai said at the India-Bangladesh security dialogue.

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### Shady business with seized rickshaws That way, the three-wheelers impounded

MUKHLESUR RAHMAN

A section of ruling party men are allegedly making a fast buck selling seized rickshaws meant for free distribution among the poor outside the capital.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police towed away around 5,000 unauthorised three-wheelers between August and December last year.

Worth around Tk 5 crore, those rickshaws had been allotted to 48 constituencies on recommendations from as many lawmakers.

But instead of being handed out to poor constituents, many have ended up into the hands of ruling party men who are now selling those in the capital, said DMP traffic sources.

last year are returning to the city streets. This deals a blow to the home ministry's

plan to get rid of the unlicensed rickshaws in the capital and ease traffic congestion.

In a letter to DMP on December 15, the ministry said the rickshaws seized for not having registration with Dhaka City Corporation would be given to the disadvantaged people elsewhere in the country.

It also mentioned that a constituency would be allotted seized rickshaws on request from its lawmaker.

A committee comprising deputy commissioner and superintendent of police, among SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



Sadarghat launch terminal bustles with people again yesterday. It returned to its usual self after the water transport workers on Thursday night called off the strike that lasted for three

days.

PHOTO:

SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Cops dictate terms for Ahmadiyya programmes

RASHIDUL HASAN

Bowing to threats of Khatme Nabuwat Movement, Brahmanbaria police yesterday imposed seven conditions on the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat community's annual religious programme at Kandipara.

Amid death threats issued by Khatme Nabuwat on Ahmadiyya people and threats to foil the programme, police asked Ahmadiyya leaders not to use any loudspeakers in their programme that began yesterday. They also asked them to keep the programme confined to their mosque premise and hold no talks on politics, anti-government movements or anything indecent. The police placed the condition of "no misinterpretation of religion" and finishing the programme by 6:00pm each day of the two-day programme.

The law enforcers in the conditions also outlined discussion topics--Ideals of Hazrat Muhammad (SM) and the Quran--on which the Ahmadiyya leaders will be able to speak on.

Tahffuze Khatme Nabuwat Jubo Sangathan had written to the deputy commissioner of the district asking for help in preventing "anti-Islamic activities". They claimed that allowing the Ahmadiyya programme to be held could deteriorate law and

**SEE PAGE 15 COL 1** 

#### WB to help build small power plants

UNB, Dhaka

The World Bank will assist Bangladesh with US\$ 257 million for facilitating Private-Public Partnership (PPP) in setting up small power plants.

A negotiation to this effect between the Bank and the government will be held today to provide the assistance under the Investment Promotion and Financing Facility (IPFF) Project of the World Bank.

The WB helps the government in setting up small power plants, which is a fast and effective way of scaling up power generation in the coun-

The IPFF Project of the WB has already financed seven fully operational small power plants. Of the plants, four are Doreen Power Plants in Tangail (22MW), Feni (22MW), Mohipal of Feni (11MW) and Narsingdi (22MW), two Malancho power plants

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# Siddhirganj power project hits a snag

#### Disagreement with World Bank over equipment makes financing uncertain consultant SNC Lavalin had recommended

SHARIER KHAN

The troubled tender process for 300 megawatt Siddhirganj gas-fired peaking power project hits a snag again as the government and the World Bank have taken contradictory stance over the use of equipment manufactured by German company Siemens in the project.

The project's financier the WB in July last year informed the government its decision that Siemens has been restrained from participating in projects financed by the WB Group till December 31 this year as the bank was investigating an allegation of corruption against the company.

The Electricity Generation Company of Bangladesh (EGCB) that floated the tender in January last year and got offers from several bidders on April 30 has conditionally recommended Chinese company Sinohydro as the

lowest competitive bidder. The company uses Siemens equipment. On the other hand, the project's Canadian

awarding contract for the project to CMEC, which also uses Siemens equipment. The EGCB was proceeding with the tender

in an unusually slow pace all along while there had been allegations that a powerful ruling party man representing multiple Chinese bidders was trying to influence the bid outcome.

Because of this selection against the WB's stance, fate of the tender became uncertain from September-October last year. Considering the urgency of pushing

through all power tenders, the power ministry finally held a meeting with WB representatives last month to resolve the crisis. At the meeting, the WB team said the lowest

bidder of the tender had offered Siemens equipment, so it would not be possible for the bank to finance this project. They said that after re-evaluation, if it is possible, the second lowest bidder who has not offered Siemens machines **SEE PAGE 6 COL 4** 

Life back on waterways STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inland water transport resumed plying yesterday after the workers called off their indefinite strike following a tripartite meeting with the government and vessel owners Thursday night.

General Secretary of Noujan Sramik Federation Ashiqul Alam Chowdhury said all their leaders and workers resumed working soon after the strike was withdrawn.

However, Senior Vice-President of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport (Passenger Carriers) Owners' Association Badiuzzaman Badal said business was dull yesterday as strike call-off came late on Thursday.

Thursday's meeting formed a 16-member committee and asked it to review the workers' 22-point demands. The committee is to submit a report incorporating wage structure for inland water transport workers in

Staff and Workers of Fakir Knitwears Ltd. Nikita Apparels Ltd. **SEE PAGE 15 COL 3** 



Mr. Fakir Akhteruzzaman Managing Director of Fakir Knitwears Ltd. is receiving National Export

Trophy (Bronze) for the year 2006-2007 from Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

CONGRATULATIONS

Under your able guidence and leadership we are proud to be behind you on the occasion of your invaluable achievement.