

PM talks

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Sheikh Hasina discussed how open pit mining could be implemented minimising its negative impact on environment. She also inquired whether dust caused by open pit mining would pose a very serious problem.

She felt that at first people have to be compensated for loss of land, and then they could realise that a bigger mine has greater benefit for the whole nation.

The premier and officials present at the meeting concentrated on the issue of coal mining methods.

Officials told the PM that one of the biggest environmental issues of open pit mining was managing the sub-soil water reservoir. If it is not managed, it can dry up all water sources in the adjacent areas, affecting agriculture and forestry.

Upon completion of such an open pit mine, there would be a void in the land that could be converted into a lake to serve as a long-term water source for irrigation and fisheries.

The PM also discussed how to augment natural gas supplies to minimise the on-going gas crunch and emphasised setting up two compressor stations to boost gas supplies across the country by 2012.

She also suggested that the authorities discourage use of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and increase of CNG price in the present context.

The mine has already created resentment among people of 15 adjacent villages, who were not made aware of the subsidence problem, and were never offered compensation for their loss of land or home. In fact, the project, approved in the early nineties, did not have any provision for such compensation or any component to handle environmental issues.

Soon after assuming power, the Awami League government started working on a compensation package. The government is also planning and designing a mining city in Barapukuria where the affected people will be offered jobs and residential facilities.

Surveys by the Geological Survey of Bangladesh (GSB) and others have so far pinpointed five coal deposits having more than 2,500 million tonnes reserve, which is equivalent to more than 60 tcf (trillion cubic feet) gas. Besides, there are untapped coal resource potentials in the northern region of the country.

But the biggest one of these deposits in Jamalganj is so deep that it cannot be profitably mined with the existing technology. Of the remaining four, only Barapukuria and Phulbari can be developed as open pit mines because the deposits are closer to the surface.

Officials say open pit mining is an attractive option to ensure energy security of the country as it allows maximum extraction of coal. The other method that allows mining of up to 20 percent of deposits is considered by many people as "environment friendly". But officials say underground mining is actually not environment friendly as the surface land subsides by one to two metres, making it useless for farming.

Bangladesh needs 13 million tonnes of coal a year for the next 10 years to generate additional power to meet its rising demand, as natural gas supplies for generating power will not meet this need.

According to the sixth draft coal policy, if Bangladesh's GDP remains as low as 5.5 percent till 2025, the country needs 19,000 megawatt additional power, if GDP is as high as 8 percent, it needs 41,000 MW power. But the country is already faced with an acute gas crisis. So, coal is being considered as an alternative. In a low GDP growth situation, the country will need 136 million tonnes of coal, and in case of a high GDP growth, it will need 450 million tonnes of coal till 2025.

Officials mentioned that the government has already taken initiatives for six 500 MW coal-based power plants in Chittagong, Mongla, Jajira and Meghnaghat. As planned, these plants would operate with imported coal. If an open pit mine is developed in the country, it can cater to the needs of these plants, they added.

RU provosts

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Meanwhile, a three-member probe committee headed by Suhrawardy Hall provost Prof Akhter Faruque was formed to investigate the incident.

Akhter Faruque told the correspondent that the committee will start an investigation today after a meeting with its members.

He mentioned that they could not start their investigation on Saturday for observing workabstention.

IGP warns tender culprits

BSS, Dhaka

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad yesterday said that stern actions would be taken against police officers who would fail to stop tender related violence in their respective areas.

The Home Ministry is also considering different possible ways including the introduction of e-tender to avoid such violence, the IGP said.

There is a serious instruction from the government to take stern actions against the persons involved in such incidents even if they are the activists or leaders of the ruling party, he added.

"The highest tier of the government has already instructed the law enforcement agencies to launch serious drives against the persons involved in tender related violence in any part of the country," he said while addressing a press conference at the police headquarters after a high level meeting.

Special instructions have already been issued to all metropolitan police units as well as district and thana units to take stern actions against those involved in the tender related violence, IGP said adding, "if any officer fails to take action against them, he or she would be punished."

The concerned departments or offices may accomplish their tender process in the offices of the nearest Deputy Commissioner (DC), Police Super (SP) or Police Station to avoid tender related violence, the IGP said.

Replying to a question, Nur Mohammad said "show cause notices" have already been issued to a number of police officers including SPs and OCs for their alleged failure in curbing the tender related violence.

Additional Inspectors General of Police Nobo Bikram Kishore Tripura, Hassan Mahmud Khandkar and Syed Shah Zaman Raj, among others, were present at the press briefing.

Long list

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Sub-inspector of Dinajpur Police Station Md Nazrul Islam Jewel filed the case against the alleged miscreants under Speedy Tribunal Act 2002 (Amended 2007) bringing a charge of deteriorating law and order in the district.

On Friday night, police arrested six people including two whose photographs were published in different dailies for their involvement in the violence.

The detained were identified as Ripon, 30, son of late Nurul Haque, Murad, 28, son of Late Hanif, Sumon 32, son of Golam Nabi, Azmol, 36, son of Shafique, Shaju son of Motiur Rahman and Alal, 32, son of Aminul Islam. All the arrestees are from Ghashipara area in Dinajpur town.

Sources said police have prepared a list of 17 people who were involved in Thursday's tender violence in the PWD area.

State Minister for Land Md Mostafizur Rahman Fizar had several meetings in Dinajpur with engineers of state-run organisations and his party activists Friday. The decision of the meeting could not be learnt yet.

Meanwhile, Dinajpur district Jubo League held an emergency meeting Friday and expelled two of its executive committee members Faisal Ibne Aziz (information and research secretary) and Mahmudul Masud (relief secretary) for their involvement in the tender violence.

The ousted Jubo League leaders, however, denied the allegation.

Tarail stalker

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Leader told The Daily Star that Pinky had relationships with several youths in the area and committed suicide because of indignity.

He claimed that Tabarak was innocent.

Some teachers and classmates of Pinky's school said Tabarak had been stalking and waylaying Pinky and thus oppressing her over the past two years.

Another girl

**FROM PAGE 16**  
stalking Nurani but he didn't pay heed," said Madrasa Super Zafar Ahmed.

"Shaharul and his friends used to tease my daughter. We have complained to his father also but to no avail," said victim's mother Akina Khatun.

The students of madrasa yesterday demanded punishment of those for whom Nurani committed suicide.

1 killed in clash

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The workers tried to blockade the Dhaka-Sylhet Highway but police managed to persuade them against it.

The situation calmed down at about 11:30am after Fazlul Haq, local upazila chairman, rushed in and assured the workers of meeting their demands.

The workers claimed that they had been demanding hike in pay, overtime allowance, leave allowance and wage increments but the authorities did not pay any heed to their demands.

According to the workers, the scrap-garment trader is a company thug who was let loose with his gang on them to thwart the peaceful demonstration.

In a press statement, Fayezur Rahman, general manager of Opex and Sinha Textile Group, gave a different picture.

He said the confrontation took place when a group of agitating workers in collaboration with some outsiders closed the main entrance of the factory around 7:30am so that other workers could not enter the factory.

He said senior officials of the factory were not present during the demonstration where the workers were demanding an increase in their attendance bonus.

Fayezur said outside the gate workers who wanted to get inside and work clashed with outsiders preventing them.

According to Fayezur, the company sent back the workers to bring back composure in the factory, and the second shift resumed work as usual from 2pm.

He also said they were planning to increase the attendance bonus for the workers. The factory provides attendance bonus to ensure regular atten-

2 killed

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Bangshal and Sutrapur police stations.

The bodies were sent to Mitford Hospital for autopsy.

Acting on secret information, a patrol team of Rab-10 conducted a drive in Para Gendaria Balur Math area where Jahangir and his cohorts gathered for committing crime at about 2:00am, Rab sources said.

Sensing presence of the Rab personnel, the gang opened fire on them, prompting the elite force members to fire back, which triggered a gun battle.

Jahangir and Sohel were caught in the line of fire and died on the spot, Rab sources said, adding that 30 rounds of bullet were traded during the gunfight.

The Rab said the criminals used to realise tolls from Keraniganj and Old Dhaka and gun down traders for refusing to pay the money.

EC's poll plan

**FROM PAGE 1**  
prevent further delays in holding the polls.

The parliament's last session was prorogued on April 5 without amending the two acts and the House will go into next session early in June, making it very unlikely for the EC to hold the elections as planned.

Meanwhile, the EC's decision to hold the polls to Dhaka City Corporation on May 31 was not warmly received by the government, which fears the opposition-backed candidates would cash in on the current power, gas and water crises.

Ruling party leaders would rather have the elections in winter when the crises are expected to be less severe. LGRD State Minister Jahangir Kabir Nanak on Thursday said winter is the best time for any elections as presently the country is experiencing hot spells, which will be followed by monsoon and floods.

The laws empower the EC only to conduct the polls to local government bodies while the LGRD ministry is their custodian. Traditionally, the date of a local body election largely depends on the desire of the LGRD ministry, EC officials say.

After holding the polls to DCC in May, the EC planned to go for a series of elections to other local government bodies -- Chittagong City Corporation, and country-wide union parishads and municipalities.

Officials at the EC fear that if the DCC election is delayed, all other elections would be pushed back. Election Commissioner Muhammed Sohul Hussain yesterday told The Daily Star, "If we can complete the DCC election in May, then we can go ahead with our plan to hold polls to union parishads and municipalities."

dance of workers but it is not mandatory under labour laws, he said.

Md Yunus Ali, officer-in-charge of Sonargaon Police Station, said his forces were deployed in that area to ensure peace.

Meanwhile, Abdus Salam Murshedy, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, in a statement expressed profound shock at the death of a person at Opex and Sinha Group in Kanchpur yesterday.

Murshedy conveyed his sympathy to the bereaved family members.

A five-member committee was formed headed by Md Shafiqul Islam (Mohiuddin), second vice president of BGMEA, to investigate the incident, said the statement.

The committee was asked to submit its report within three days.

BNP factions

**FROM PAGE 16**  
municipality unit secretary Rejaul Islam Raja during the clash.

Party insiders said a faction led by BNP president of the district unit Kabir Murad had organised a meeting at Asaduzzaman auditorium in the town where BNP's standing committee member and former minister Tariqul Islam was scheduled to attend as the chief guest.

The meeting was called as part of the preparation to make BNP's Khulna divisional grand rally a success, they added.

Another district unit of BNP led by Iqbal Akhter Khan Kafur called a separate meeting at his residence yesterday causing a conflict between two rival factions.

BNP men of the factions were locked in a clash around 4:00pm when supporters of Kafur with bombs, and lethal weapons attacked a procession by vice-president of the other unit Monowar Hossain Khan on their way to the meeting venue at Asaduzzaman auditorium.

The clash then spread to different parts of the town until about 6:30pm.

Tariqul Islam however arrived at the auditorium around 5:30pm and addressed the gathering with Kabir Murad in the chair.

Party insiders said the district units of BNP have been engaged in internal feud from July over formation of committees at different levels.

Magura district BNP unit was divided into two factions last year, one led by Kabir Murad and the other by Iqbal Akhter, they said.

The rival factions held separate councils and formed two different committees. But the committee led by Kabir Murad was approved by the central committee.

Govt's school bus

**FROM PAGE 16**  
school buses also had failed.

SM Salehuddin, additional executive director of the coordination board, said, "One private car for just one child makes at least four trips a day - to drop off, go home and pick up, come home. It increases the frequency of vehicular movement. A school bus carrying about 60 or more students would definitely help reduce the frequency."

He added private cars often remain parked right in front of the school gate during the entire school time jamming the area.

"A school bus would reduce the fuel consumption of private cars. It would also give a chance to children from different class backgrounds to socialise," he noted.

There are around 400 government and non-government schools in the capital. According to Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, more than half of over four lakh registered automobiles plying city roads are private cars.

A survey of Dhaka Urban Transport Projects reads private cars carry only 9 percent of total commuters but occupy more than 35 percent of road space.

Rokeya Akhter, principal of Vigarunnisa Noon School and College said, "We also want respite from traffic congestion and as per our promise we tried to convince parents. What can we do if they don't show interest? Parents prefer to transport children in family cars."

Shahan Ara Begum, principal of Ideal School and College said, "Parents have some valid reasons for opposing the initiative. The buses would only follow a certain route. It wouldn't pick up or drop off at home arising security question. Parents are also concerned about sudden rain or storm."

"If the buses are late then the children too would be late in school. Who will provide security inside the bus and what happens to junior classes that end early? BRTC couldn't provide solution to these problems", she said.

Anti-war trial

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Hearing the chairperson's remark, some BNP leaders, in favour of a "fair" trial of war criminals, remained silent.

On April 2, BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain said the ruling party would eliminate political opponents in the name of trying war criminals.

He said BNP has no objection to trying anyone who committed such crimes. But there is no need to form a special court or an investigation team, or even bringing any amendment to the existing laws for the purpose.

The government on March 25 announced formation of the tribunal, investigation agency and prosecution team for trying war criminals.

Commenting on their stance on trial of war criminals, BNP Standing Committee member Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman said, "We are discussing the issue. The government move to try war criminals is aimed at achieving political gains as the ministers sometimes term it trial for war crimes and at times crimes against humanity."

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir said the party's standing committee had discussions to devise a strategy on the serious issue.

OC closed

**FROM PAGE 1**  
confirmed the closure of OC Fazlur Rahman.

Police arrested Shyamnagar apazila Jubo League president Abdul Kader and its workers Abdul Jalil and Shahidul Islam for assaulting an official of the Narcotics Control Department and an on-duty police officer on April 3.

The EC official said the commission had planned to hold elections to over 250 municipalities out of 309 this year, which is due since mid-2009.

Earlier, the EC and the past caretaker government had planned to complete all local government bodies' elections before the last parliamentary polls held in December, 2008.

Chief Election Commissioner CEC ATM Shamsul Huda on July 15, 2007 announced an electoral roadmap specifying tentative timeframe for the polls.

But the EC could not move with its plan in the face of strong opposition of political parties as they opposed local bodies' polls before the parliamentary elections. The EC could not begin local bodies' elections after December 29, 2008 parliamentary polls according to its plans due to absence of laws, which were enacted at the end of last year.

Largest Pakistan Army war games begin

INDO ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Islamabad

The Pakistan Army yesterday began its largest war games near the Indian border involving some 20,000 soldiers and the air force.

The six-week exercise, codenamed Azm-i-Nau 3, involves troops from all arms and services, besides engagement of various aircraft and equipment of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF), online news agency reported.

It is the largest exercise since the Zarb-i-Momin war games of 1989. The ongoing PAF exercise High Mark 2010 will be fully integrated with the army field exercise, which will continue till May 13.

The exercise is being organised in southern Punjab, Sialkot and Sindh.

The Director General of Military Training, Maj Gen Muzammil Hussain, said India had been informed about the exercise.

He said the exercise would be the culmination of a long and deliberate process of war games, discussions and logistic evolution of a concept of warfare that is fully responsive

to a wide array of emerging threats.

The process commenced with the exercise Azm-i-Nau-2 in February.

Hussain pointed out that the army followed a biennial training pattern where training objectives set forth were to be achieved over a span of two years.

The training was mission oriented and based on the obtaining security environment, he said, adding that the training was methodical and progressive, culminating in map exercises, war games and field exercises at various levels of command.

"In the light of the army chief's vision, a comprehensive package in the form of the Year of Training was formulated in 2009-2010 and now, the Pakistan Army is all set to go in the field to validate those concepts," Hussain pointed out.

Military sources said the Pakistan Army chief, Gen Ashfaq Parvez Kiyani, would supervise Azm-i-Nau-3. All corps commanders would be responsible for their respective commands and formations.

Warm-up

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Ahmed from BNP and Noor-un-Nabi Chowdhury Shawon from Awami League are contesting in the by-election.

Rizvi said doubts and apprehensions have arisen afresh in the public minds over holding of a free, fair and neutral election in the constituency following the convergence of listed criminals and armed cadres in favour of the ruling party candidate.

"Question also arises what type of election will be held under such circumstances," he said.

According to the field reports of BNP candidate, supporters and locals, nearly 30 polling centres in Lalmoan upazila and 16 polling centres in Tajmuddin are very vulnerable, he said.

He said they have repeatedly informed the local administration and the Election Commission about the situation, including attacks on and obstructions to BNP candidate's election campaign and its workers meeting by the ruling party candidate's supporters and

cadres.

Instead of taking any action, the local administration plays the role of silent spectator, he alleged.

The EC did not take any action against the ruling party candidate for violation of the election code of conduct one after another, he added.

He reiterated the party's demand for deployment of army in Bhol-3 constituency for free, fair and impartial election.

Meanwhile, leaders of Awami League yesterday said the party wants to hold the by-election of Bhol-3 constituency in a free, fair and credible manner.

They were addressing at a public meeting at local girls high school under Lalmoan upazila organised by district unit of Jubo League in the evening.

Member of Advisory Council of AL Tofail Ahmed, AL Presidium Member Advocate Yusuf Hossain Humayun and Nur Nabi Chowdhury Sawan, among others, spoke in the meeting.

Plane crash

**FROM PAGE 1**  
devastated Poland's military leadership.

Former Polish president Lech Walesa, who headed the Solidarity movement, called the disaster "inconceivable".

"The Soviets killed Polish elites in Katyn 70 years ago. Today, the Polish elite died there while getting ready to pay homage to the Poles killed there," a shaken Walesa said.

The 88 passengers included General Franciszek Gagor, chief of Poland's armed forces and the heads of all the main armed forces, central bank governor Sławomir Skrzypek, deputy foreign minister Andrzej Kremer, Kaczynski's wife Maria, and scores of MPs, historians and other officials.

The delegation was to attend a memorial service in the Katyn Forest, near the crash scene, where 22,000 top Polish officers and troops were killed by Soviet troops 70 years ago. The event had been intended to help reconciliation between Poland and Russia. The jet's engines and a large chunk of its muddled tailfin, strewn over a large area in the fog-blanketed forest.

Fire-fighters hosed down burning sections of the plane while security personnel and civilian investigators inspected the wreckage.

Russian news agencies reported that pilot error was suspected. "The cause of the plane crash was apparently an error by the crew during the approach to landing," Russian state news agency RIA Novosti quoted an unnamed official in Smolensk as saying.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev appointed Prime Minister Vladimir Putin to head an inquiry commission and sent Emergency Situations Minister Sergei Shoigu to the site.

Kaczynski was the identical twin brother of former prime minister Jaroslaw with whom he led Poland's nationalist right wing, stubbornly taking on other European leaders at EU summits to defend his country's cause.

He faced an election later this year but was to fight for

new term.

Kaczynski was to lead the Polish delegation at commemorative ceremonies for the Katyn massacre, which decimated Poland's military and intellectual elite 70 years ago.

The crash occurred three days after Putin and his Polish counterpart, Donald Tusk, together attended a memorial for the victims of the massacre at Katyn.

The Putin-Tusk meeting there was seen as a huge symbolic advance in Russia's often-thorny relations with Poland.

Putin called Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk to express condolences over the "tragic" crash, the Russian leader's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told Russian news agencies reported.

"I have given an order to carry out a detailed investigation of the accident with complete and close cooperation with the Polish side," Medvedev said in a message to Bronislaw Komorowski, head of the Polish parliament who is set to take over Kaczynski's duties.

"Russia shares Poland's grief and mourning. I ask you to offer my sincerest condolences to the Polish people, words of sympathy and support for the relatives and loved ones of the dead," said the message, posted on the Kremlin website.

World leaders expressed shock at the disaster. French President Nicolas Sarkozy said he "conveys all his sympathy to the family of president Kaczynski and to the families of all the victims and wishes to express his deep personal condolences and on behalf of the French people."

He paid homage to his Polish counterpart as a man "driven by ardent patriotism, who dedicated his life to his country."

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said: "I am deeply shocked by the plane accident and the death of the Polish president."

"He will be mourned across the world and remembered as a passionate patriot and democrat," said British Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

No fresh listing

**FROM PAGE 16**  
The government only recognises 28,000 Rohingya staying at two UNHCR-administered camps in Cox's Bazar, he said.

More than three lakh illegal Myanmar nationals are staying outside the two camps set up in Nowapara and Kutupalong of Cox's Bazar district. There are, however, no official statistics for illegal Rohingyas.

Mijarul said the government is very "tolerant and flexible" to thousands of illegal Myanmar nationals who are involved in various economic activities.

The foreign secretary said the government is allowing them to take health services on humanitarian ground.

"We have not dumped them in the concentration camps. But this is not our weakness. Our efforts are on to repatriate them," maintained Mijarul.

He also criticised some international NGOs and media for presenting "untrue" stories about Rohingya refugees.

Some western diplomats and legislators have recently visited Cox's Bazar to see for themselves the poor living conditions of Rohingyas. International pressures are there on the government to give recognition to illegal Myanmar nationals.

UNHCR, with the help of Bangladesh and Myanmar government, registered over 200,000 Rohingyas as refugees.

UNHCR helped repatriate most of the refugees. Over 28,000 Rohingyas, however, refused to return to their homeland in Rakhain state.

The local administration in Cox's Bazar said that most of the previously repatriated Rohingyas re-entered Bangladesh because of poverty there.

**MARITIME BOUNDARY**  
On maritime boundary with Myanmar, the foreign secretary said the gap with the neighbour has been reduced substantially on the long-standing issue of demarcating maritime boundary.

He said the 6th Technical Committee meeting held in Myanmar on March 17-18 made some progress as Myanmar side shifted its position recognising Bangladesh's plea for "equity" principle.

the Bay of Bengal and the results are satisfactory. On the basis of the survey results, he said, Bangladesh will submit its claim on its territorial sea in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) by the deadline of July 11, 2011.

**NUCLEAR POWER PLANT**  
Mijarul said a high-powered delegation led by two advisers of the prime minister -- Dr Toufique-Elahi Chow