

# Saarc sings

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work out the modalities relating to the establishment of such a conclave.

In this Silver Jubilee Year of Saarc, the leaders emphasised the need to develop a "Vision Statement" and agreed to form a "South Asia Forum" for generating debate and exchange of ideas on South Asia and its future.

The forum will consist of eminent personalities from diverse backgrounds. It would provide inputs based on a holistic understanding for charting out the future course of Saarc in the medium and long-terms, and recommend requisite improvements in the existing mechanism.

Such a forum could function on a public-private partnership basis, and allow multiple sources of input from beyond governments to be taken into consideration for the future of Saarc.

The leaders resolved that the Silver Jubilee Year should be commemorated by making Saarc truly action-oriented by implementing declarations and decisions and operating instruments to fulfil the hopes and aspirations of the region.

The Saarc leaders focused on people-centric development and noted Bhutan's concept of Gross National Happiness (GNH). They welcomed Bhutan's offer to host a Saarc Workshop on GNH in 2010.

On climate change, the leaders said the Saarc member states as developing countries were shouldering a major burden despite having contributed least to the problem. They called for initiating a process to formulate a common Saarc position for COP16, to be held in Mexico later this year, including on issues such as separate financing for adaptation and mitigation as well as technology transfer.

The leaders welcomed Nepal's initiative to organise a ministerial meeting of Mountainous Countries in Kathmandu later this year.

The Saarc leaders called for focus to be laid upon water management and conservation and development of cooperative projects at regional level in terms of exchange of best practices and knowledge, capacity building and transfer of eco-friendly technologies.

Expressing deep concern at the environmental degradation in the region, they reiterated the importance of development through adoption of eco-friendly technologies so that South Asia should become a world leader in low-carbon technology and renewable energies.

The leaders welcomed the signing of the Saarc Convention on Cooperation on Environment and called for its early ratification and implementation.

The leaders called for further negotiations and early finalisation of the Saarc Agreement on Rapid Response to Natural Disasters.

On energy sector, the leaders recognised the need to enhance cooperation in the energy sector to facilitate energy trade, development of efficient conventional and renewable energy sources including hydro-power.

They emphasised the need to undertake studies to develop regional energy projects and promote regional power trade.

The leaders agreed that an Action Plan on Energy conservation would be prepared by the Saarc Energy Centre in Islamabad with inputs from member states, which would then be submitted to the inter-governmental mechanism for consideration.

Saarc leaders also called for the creation of a web portal on Energy Conservation for exchange of information, including the sharing of best practices among Saarc member states.

A proposal from India for preparing a roadmap aimed at developing a Saarc Market for Electricity on a regional basis was noted, as Saarc is considering electricity trading, supported by enabling markets in the member states.

# RMG unrest

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also warned of tough action against further violence and road blockade under his police station.

At the meeting Salma Akter, a garment worker, placed their demands, including minimum salary of Tk 5,000 and Tk 400 attendance allowance per month.

Introduction of trade unions at the factories, tiffin allowance for work after 8:00 pm, double payment for work on holidays and six-month maternity leave are other demands she read out at the meeting.

Welcoming the Saarc Agreement on Trade for increasing trade cooperation and integration amongst the region's economies, they called for the early ratification of the deal.

The leaders stressed the need for improving trade facilitation and directed the Saarc bodies to expedite their work in these areas. They recognised the importance of the development of communication systems and transport infrastructures including transit facilities, especially for landlocked countries to promote intra-Saarc trade.

The commitment to implement Safta was reiterated, and a reduction of the size of the sensitive lists, acceleration of trade facilitation measures, and removal of non-tariff, para-tariff and other barriers were also called for.

On poverty alleviation, the leaders called for mainstreaming the Saarc Development Goals in the national processes and completion of the mid-term review of the SDGs as scheduled. They accepted the proposal of Nepal hosting the third ministerial meeting on poverty alleviation in 2011.

On Saarc Development Fund (SDF) for financing regional and sub-regional projects, the leaders welcomed the operations of the permanent secretariat of the SDF getting underway, including the appointment of its first Chief Executive Officer.

The leaders called for collaborative efforts to achieve greater intra-regional connectivity and endorsed the recommendation to declare 2010-2020 as the Decade of Intra-regional Connectivity in Saarc. They agreed on the need to expedite negotiations with a view to finalising the two agreements on Motor Vehicles and Railways.

The leaders appreciated the Saarc Commerce Ministers' position on WTO issues and Doha Development Agenda during the 7th WTO Ministerial Conference and directed the Commerce Ministers to continue the process.

On agriculture sector, the leaders called for early consideration of the concept of a regional seed bank, regional testing and certification of seeds and framework for transfer of plant genetic material and seeds.

In the field of education, the Saarc leaders underscored that it was imperative to recognise degrees, and where possible facilitation of credit transfer for open and distance education. They directed the expeditious finalisation of mutual recognition of academic and professional degrees, as part of the harmonisation of the educational curricula in South Asia.

About terrorism, the leaders expressed their firm resolve to root out terrorism. They emphasised that the linkages between terrorism, illegal trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances, illegal trafficking in persons and firearms all continue to remain a matter of serious concern and reiterated their commitment to address these problems in a comprehensive manner.

They demanded that the decision be withdrawn immediately.

Sources said the health ministry in last November issued a vacancy announcement of 171 third and fourth class employees in the hospital. DMCH authorities, however, gave appointments of 354 employees against the circular.

A probe committee of the ministry found huge corruption in the recruitment process in February this year.

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# Goutam's killers

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persons -- Gautam and his two friends. The cop started searching them.

ADC Mahub quoting Zakir alias Selim said he [Selim] in drunken stupor shot Gautam and his accomplices.

Zakir alias Selim told DB, he, Haider and another associate, now absconding, took part in the killing using the guns handed over by Sohel, the arms supplier.

ADC Mahub said Sohel made several hiding pockets inside his private car to carry arms.

Sohel gave two arms to Zakir alias Selim and the absconding killer that evening and they had a plan to commit another crime. Detectives are looking into that.

DB declined to mention the name of the third killer.

But Rab held a press briefing at his headquarters on April 26 to disclose that the killing was planned. Gautam's friend Shamim conspired with Kailla Zakir and Haider -- another two arrested by Rab -- to kill the SI.

Shamim was with Gautam during the incident and sustained bullet injury.

Rab personnel however did not ascertain the cause behind the assassination.

Investigators said the Rab's disclosure triggered controversy regarding the arrest made by Wari Police Outpost officials.

Investigators said another Zakir arrested by Rab was in Daudkandi in Comilla, according to the locals of the area.

Zakir alias Selim was freed from jail only around six months ago after he was caught and imprisoned in an arms case, they added.

Lt Col Ziaul Ahsan, chief of Rab intelligence, said, "We arrested the two as suspects and now investigators will unearth the fact."

A high-powered four-member monitoring committee headed by the CID chief was formed on Tuesday.

# Rental power

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between 1,000 MW and 2,000 MW. The government's previous deals with several local power companies for installing rental power units on an urgent basis had failed to produce desired results because none of these owned power plant equipment. A rental power company is supposed to own equipment.

While Aggreko is a genuine rental power company, Desh Energis is not.

Meanwhile, the power ministry has finalised more urgent power deals with local United Power and Belhara Orion Consortium, giving each a five-year contract for furnace oil-fired 100 MW power.

Earlier, the power ministry had agreed to a proposal from local Summit Power to expand the capacity of its 110 MW Khulna barge-mounted power plant by 100 MW for five years.

The ministry sealed these deals after the prime minister okayed allowing unsolicited power contracts to reduce load shedding in the shortest possible time. The PM also formed a high-powered inter-ministerial committee to speed up the process.

# Illegal billboards

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although a number of people were killed or injured in collapse of billboards.

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# 4 back home

**FROM PAGE 1**  
procedures to send the seamen to Benin and did not know that Golden Shipping SA was in trouble.

"However, we can fight with the company once the crewmembers return," said Abdur Rashid, managing director of KSF Shahinul Islam Shaheen of SIS could not be reached at his mobile number.

Jasim Uddin, an official at the Department of Shipping, said the committee formed to probe the incident is yet to submit its report. Repeated attempts to reach the Greek ship company were futile.

Ashraf Alam said Shahinul Islam Shaheen of SIS took Tk 1.20 lakh from him promising to get him a job on a Swiss ship.

Ten of these seamen left the country on December 28 last year by the same flight, he said.

"I came to know that I was going to Benin only when Shaheen gave me the air ticket," Ashraf said. When he asked about it, Shaheen said they would go to Switzerland by ships from Benin.

It is a norm for seamen to join ships through seaport immigration after arriving in a country. But the agent of Golden Shipping SA did not follow that norm, which is illegal, said Ashraf, who had worked in Singapore and Saudi Arabia for a decade.

On December 30 last year, they boarded the ship Tasco but they couldn't set off. Marine Engineer Zahurul Islam, however, fixed it. It was later named MT Paloma.

"We worked as per the instructions of the company," Ashraf said, adding that they got frustrated as the company was not paying their salaries.

Of the 17 ships of the company, only three were fit for the journey though they had no safety appliances, he added.

"We were in constant fear of imminent storms. Once a storm ripped off the anchor of MT Marrie and it drifted a few miles away under the impact of powerful wind," he said.

However, Penagis, the owner of the shipping company, salvaged it with his ship SIDO, he went on to narrate the ordeal.

The ships of Golden

Shipping SA anchored in the sea did not have lights, which is a violation of maritime rules, Ashraf said.

A group of black people once attacked Penagis but he managed to escape as he had a modern ship and fought back with guns. The seamen could not trace him for three weeks.

"We heard that Golden Shipping SA was indebted to Nigerian shipping agents in Lagos port," he said, adding that Nigerian port authorities seized two of his ships early April.

According to crewmen, Nigeria used to sell oil abroad. But after it stopped selling oil in the recent years, the shipping companies adopted a new strategy. They sent small ships to Lagos to get oil to feed the big ones anchored at Cotonou to transport it to Europe and Russia.

They, however, has not been very successful in doing so.

"All these might have resulted in the present miserable condition of the shipping company," said Shahadat Hossain, another returnee.

Against this backdrop the shipping company was trying to sell its ships but it has not been able to do that yet, he said.

Narrating the misbehaviours of the shipping company, Ashraf said electrician Parvez got his leg fractured and the company sent him back home without any treatment.

Abdul Majid, a cook, was once seriously burnt by hot water but he was not treated, he said.

"When we were brought onshore before we flew for home we were not provided with any food throughout the day and night," said Fazlul Haque.

The company also avoided the seaport immigration while leaving the ship, he said.

"When I recall those dreadful days I feel as if my body is undulating with the ship bobbing up and down on the sea water," said Ashraf.

Shahadat Hossain did not want to relive those days when he had to go through the ordeal of his life. "I passed many sleepless nights. Just let me go," he said in a hushed voice.

# Manmohan tells Hasina

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multilateral interests including expansion of trade and business and enhancing connectivity between the two neighbouring countries.

After the meeting Press Secretary to the PM Abul Kalam Azad told journalists that Manmohan assured Hasina of his country's support for the continuation of advancement of democracy in Bangladesh.

The Indian PM also informed Hasina that his government will take necessary measures for finalising the draft of agreement on Teesta Water Sharing, which was handed over to Indian government recently.

Dr Singh also announced his country's support for the Bangladesh's candidature in the Committee of Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (Cedaw).

In response to the support of Bangladesh's efforts for the inclusion of the Sundarbans in the list of New Seven Wonders of the World, the Indian PM said both the countries would take joint initiatives to this end.

Expressing her satisfaction over the existing bilateral relations between the two friendly countries, Hasina expressed her hope that the

relations would be accelerated further in the days to come for the benefit of the two countries.

During the meeting, Hasina invited Dr Singh to visit Bangladesh at a convenient time and the Indian premier accepted the invitation.

Apart from joining the opening session of the Saarc Summit, she held separate meetings with the Saarc leaders and joined a banquet hosted by Bhutanese Prime Minister Lyonchhen Jigmi Y Thinley in honour of head of states and governments of the eight Saarc countries.

Earlier, Bhutanese King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck paid a courtesy call on Hasina at Bangladesh House in the Saarc Village. During the meeting, they discussed various issues of bilateral interest.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, State Minister for Environment and Forest Hasan Mahmud, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister M A Karim, among others, were present.

Besides, Indian Foreign Minister SM Krishna and Foreign Secretary Nirupoma Rao were present on the Indian side.

# EC Sohel tells

**FROM PAGE 1**  
enforcement agencies. The executive magistrates claimed that the by-poll was held in a very peaceful atmosphere and no major incident happened in the electoral area.

Journalists covering the by-poll had reported widespread intimidation of voters and driving out of polling agents of the opposition candidate from voting stations.

In the wake of such allegations, the EC invited the executive magistrates to a meeting to exchange views with them.

"We heard them. We will see if the electoral system can be improved further," Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda told journalists on the EC Secretariat premises after the meeting.

Commenting on whether the EC found any negligence on the part of the magistrates, the CEC said they performed well in the Bhol-3 by-poll.

# JU SENATE POLLS Pro-AL panel wins majority

**A CORRESPONDENT, JU**

Pro-Awami League Muktiyuddher Swapakkher Shakti won the majority of seats in the Senate election of Jahangirnagar University yesterday.

Out of the 33 seats, AL-backed panel bagged 32 seats while the pro-BNP panel Democratic Nationalists Teachers' Forum got only 1 in the senate.

The winners from Muktiyuddher Swapakkher Shakti are Abul Khaer, Al Masud Hasanuzzaman, S M Badiar Rahman, Kaushik Saha, Prithila Nazneen Neleema, Farid Ahmed, Farid Ahmed-2, Feroza Hossen, Fahmena Ahmed, Masrur Shahid Hossen, Muhammad Ismail Hossen, Md Tareq Chowdhury, Muhammad Hanif Ali, Mustafizur Rahman Khan, Md Bakhtiar Rana, Md Shamsul Alam, Md Abdur Rob, Md Abul Hossen, Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Md Abdus Salam, Md Aminul Islam, Md Amir Hossen, Md Arzu Miah, Md Emdadul Haque, Md Rafiquzzaman, Laiek Sazzad Endellah, Md Lutful Hai Jami, Md Hasibur Rahman, Rasheda Akhter, Sheikh Md Manzurul Haque, Sayad Hafizur Rahman and Sayada Shahanara Haque.

Md Sohel Rana is the only winner from pro-BNP Democratic Nationalists Teachers' Forum.

The election was held at the university teachers' club without any break from 9:00am to 2:00pm.

# Dhaka to get

**FROM PAGE 16**  
He highly appreciated the role played by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Copenhagen Summit and was impressed to see how well she represented the interests of Bangladesh and developing world.

Earlier, National Democratic Institute President Kenneth D Wollack called on Speaker Hamid at Bangladesh embassy in Washington.

# Fire burns

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around 8:30pm and soon engulfed the factory.

The flames damaged machinery and equipment for manufacturing electronic gadgets and motorcycles.

Fire fighters from Gazipur, Tongi and Savar extinguished the fire around 10:00pm.

# Stalking protest

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Locals rushed them to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, from where Mamun was shifted to Special Care Hospital.

Russell said Shohag used to tease his cousin on her way from home to school and pass ill comments.

On April 24, Mamun, Russell and Billal locked into an altercation with Shohag in Rayerbagh over the matter, but locals intervened and calmed the situation.

Jatrabari police told The Daily Star they arrested Shohag's brother Saiful yesterday morning after Mamun's cousin Shahidul Islam filed a murder case.

# Target stalkers

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government. Activists of different political parties and their associated bodies are involved in such unlawful activities, said the letter.

Those involved in crimes should be dealt with an iron hand irrespective of their political identity and affiliation, it said.

It said if the officials concerned fail to take legal actions against the offenders, they will face penalty for their failure.

The home secretary said they would provide the educational institutions with two to four phone numbers to lodge complaints.

On information, the law enforcers will take necessary actions, he said.

The name and address of the complainant would be kept secret, said the home secretary.

In another letter to different ministries, PMO Secretary Molla Waheeduzzaman enquired about the steps taken for implementation of government projects, especially those on priority issues like power, water and gas crises.

The home secretary said they would soon inform the PMO about the progress in implementing the projects under home ministry.

# Mutiny trial

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Prosecutor Muaid alleged the 16 accused including Torab and Monaranjan removed the bodies with a motive to destroy evidence of the killings.

Unlike the second day's proceedings, the court yesterday asked some other accused about the allegations against them.

The prosecutor said 80 riflemen including sepoy Saikat Haque were permanently attached to the hospital unit for training. But they did not take any steps to quell the mutiny; rather they left the HQ on February 26 without permission.

In reply to a few questions asked by the court, Saikat, who had only around 50 days' service in BDR, said he left the HQ between 8:00pm and 8:30pm crossing the boundary wall in civil dress.

The prosecutor went on to say that Habilder Humayun Kabir carried an SMG and grenades wearing a bullet-proof jacket during the mutiny.

He said Kabir had asked a ward master of the hospital for spirit to burn the bodies of the slain officers. But the ward master denied giving the spirit saying it was meant for medical purpose, not for setting fire.

Hearing this, Kabir had left the hospital angrily.

Kabir came to the hospital from Chhoto Harina 18 Rifle Battalion in Chittagong as attendant to his ailing wife but joined the mutineers forgetting his real purpose there.

The prosecutor told the court 84 of the 256 accused

# CPB cultural

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wearing prayer tupa.

The attackers broke chairs and threw those to the stage that left the artistes, including three children and a woman, injured, witnesses said. They assaulted some performers. They said such programmes will not be allowed anymore there. Identities of the injured persons could not be known immediately.

The programme that began at Bhuban Mohan Park around 8:00pm was followed by the concluding ceremony of 11th council of CPB. The artistes of Udichi Shilpi Goshthi were performing on the podium during the attack made around 9:00pm in presence of police.

After the attack, the CPB leaders held a protest rally in the city saying the attackers came from fanatic groups against democracy and liberation war. They demanded unearthing identity of the group and action against them within 24 hours.

OC Jashim Uddin of Boalia Police Station said they could not identify the attackers as they entered one by one. They started investigation, he added.

# Nuke rivals

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dialogue on all issues of mutual concern", Indian Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao told reporters.

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said the decision not to restrict the agenda of future talks was "a step in the right direction".

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his Pakistani counterpart, Yousef Raza Gilani, met for 90 minutes on the sidelines of the eight-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) summit under way in Thimphu.

India broke off a peace dialogue with Pakistan after the Mumbai attacks November 2008 that left 166 people dead.

Since then, it has repeatedly rebuffed Pakistani calls for a resumption, insisting that Islamabad has not done enough to bring the Pakistan-based militants that India blames for the carnage to justice.

During the talks with Gilani, Rao said the Indian prime minister was "very emphatic that Pakistan has to act, that the terror machine needs to be controlled, needs to be eliminated".

The last time Singh and Gilani sat down together was in July, on the sidelines of a Non-Aligned Movement's summit in Egypt.

That meeting ended with a joint statement that action on terrorism "should not be linked" to peace talks -- a formula that saw Singh pilloried at home for undermining India's insistence that Pakistan must first crack down on militant groups.

As a result, their next meeting, at the Washington summit earlier this month on nuclear

were attending Darbar of slain DG Shakil Ahmed, but they left Darbar Hall and joined the mutiny.

Lt Col Muaid said there is no arsenal at the hospital, but many members of this unit, some patients and attendants took up arms along with the mutineers.

Subedar Abdus Sobhan was admitted in the hospital. But he was seen provoking others on a microphone to join the mutiny on February 25, alleged Muaid.

But Sobhan denied the allegation when the court asked him about it.

As the prosecutor prayed to frame charges against the accused, the court fixed November 22 for hearing to that end. The court informed the accused that they may hire their own lawyers and prepare for the hearing by that time.

The other members of the court are Lt Col Nurul Amin and Maj Md Ali Mustain Khan.

# Muggers kill RMG worker

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Muggers stabbed a garment worker to death in College Gate area Mohammadpur side in the city