

# Fierce determination helped Musa conquer Everest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite all odds and adverse circumstances, the thought of going back never crossed his mind, as he was determined to conquer the Mount Everest, the top of the world.

"I saw bodies lying on the glaciers of the Himalayas what was really frightening. The weather was not in my favour; yet I didn't stop and it's my determination that took me to the top of the world," said Musa Ibrahim, the first Bangladeshi Everest climber.

Musa, who returned home on Tuesday after his 55 days' expedition, was sharing his experiences at a press briefing organ-

ised by the North Alpine Club Bangladesh in the city yesterday.

"I survived" were the first words Musa said while talking to Alpine Club President Anisul Haque over phone soon after scaling the summit.

"The pipe of my oxygen got leaked, my fingers got frosted, and oxygen level in the air was too low," he said.

Musa also showed photographs of his expedition on a projector screen.

About his next mission, Musa said, "From now, I will try to support those youths who have the determination to do something different apart from regular study and job."

Speaking on the occasion, Summit

Group Chairman Md Aziz Khan said, "Musa has accomplished his mission on his own and brought glory to all of us. He is a source of inspiration. We can learn from the determination shown by Musa."

Som Bahadur Sherpa, one of three guides who accompanied Musa during the expedition, said this is his last expedition.

However, he said that he would be delighted to guide any woman who will try to conquer the Everest as a first Bangladeshi woman.

Two other Sherpas -- Kailash Tamag and Lakma Nuru -- were also present at the press briefing.



Musa Ibrahim, the first Bangladeshi Everest climber, speaks at a press briefing at the IDB Bhaban in the city yesterday. The North Alpine Club Bangladesh organised the event.

PHOTO: STAR

## UK concerned at closure of media houses

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The British government has expressed concern at the recent closure of media houses in Bangladesh.

"We are very concerned at the recent closure of media outlets. This raises questions of media freedom in Bangladesh, which is vital for a functional and sustainable democracy," said a spokesperson of the British High Commission in Dhaka yesterday.

The statement came following the closure of private satellite TV Channel 1 and the daily Amar Desh.

## Police foil protest by Eden students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The police yesterday foiled a demonstration of the students of Eden Girls' College and allegedly assaulted some 10 or 12 female students.

The students have been demonstrating for the last few days in protest against the harassment of a female student by a donor at Dhanmondi on May 9.

The students alleged that the police took away banners, switched off microphone and misbehaved with them when they were trying to stage a demonstration in front of the college yesterday.

## JS panel of chairmen

UNB, Sangsad Bhaban

A five-member panel of chairmen was named to conduct the parliament's current budget session in absence of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker.

Speaker Advocate Abdul Hamid named the members of the panel. They are: Adv Fazle Rabbi Mia, Bir Bahadur, Majibul Huq, Abdul Momin Talukdar and Sanjida Khanam.

The House passed an obituary reference on those personalities who died at home and abroad recently.

Those who died include Nepal's former prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala, Abul Hasnat Chowdhury (Moti Chowdhury), Molla Momen Uddin Ahmed, Adv Mosharraf Hossain, Nur-e-Alam Ziku, Tabibur Rahman Sardar and KG Mostafa.

## POWER SECTOR

# PM spells out problems in JS

UNB, Sangsad Bhaban

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said in the Parliament that the highest power deficit at the end of 2008 was 1,049 megawatts.

Replying to a starred question by M Moslem Uddin (Mymensingh-6) during the PM's question and answer session, she said that till December 31, 2008 the power deficit was mainly due to not setting up new power plants, less productivity in the public power plants and gas crisis.

She said that after 2002, no new power plant was set up either in the public or private sector. "As a result, there was no enhancement of power generation with the growing demand."

In this connection, she said in 1996 her government signed agreements to produce 1,260MW electricity by 2002 under the guidelines of the Private Sector Power Generation Policy.

"But no new power plant was set up by the public or private sector after 2002," she said.

Hasina also said that one third of the public power plants are over 20 years old. The power productivity and reliability of these power plants have declined over the years. From these plants, 400-500MW lower electricity was being generated.

She mentioned that previous governments had not taken any effective steps to explore gas.

"There was a deficit in gas supply as the governments failed to calculate the demand of gas properly. As a result the power plants cannot go for optimum level of power generation," she said.

Hasina informed the Parliament that her government is not afraid of the high population growth of the country rather she underscored the need for turning the huge population into skilled manpower.

"I don't think that the huge population of the country is a burden for us, I prefer to term it as a strength for us. We just need to train the population," she said, responding to a supplementary question from Khan Tipu Sultan during the PM's question-answer hour.

## BIBIYANA PROJECT

# Power cell holds meet with two cos 14 months after re-tender

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fourteen months after floating the re-tender of Bibiyana 450MW gas-fired power project, the Power Cell yesterday held a meeting with two power companies to discuss submission of their proposals.

Two other power consortiums that had previously pre-qualified for this project did not show up at the meeting.

Sources said Malaysian YTL Power and a consortium of local Summit Mercantile Corporation and GE Energy of USA took part in yesterday's meeting. The Power Cell officials along with a consultant from the World Bank discussed various aspects of the request for proposals (RFP) that the bidders would submit by July 18.

Both the companies told the Power Cell that they should be allowed more time to prepare and submit their RFPs.

Two other consortiums--one Meiya Power of Hong Kong and local Shasha Denims, and the other CMEC and Shenzen Shenwan Power of China and Asian Entech and Otobi ltd of Bangladesh--failed to turn up at the meeting.

The Bibiyana tender failed in 2008 as it drew no competition. Fresh tender was floated in April last year and it took five months for the Power Cell to select suitable bidders.

Much of this time was wasted as the power ministry wanted the World Bank to provide consultancy after the tender was floated, and the bank initially said it would be involved only if the tender was floated from scratch.

The Power Cell took several months to prepare the RFP documents.

# Closure of Amar Desh protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition BNP yesterday staged countrywide demonstrations protesting cancellation of declaration of the daily Amar Desh and demanding immediate release of its acting editor Mahmudur Rahman.

Pro-BNP journalist unions at a protest rally at the National Press Club in the city demanded resumption of its publication and release of the acting editor. Pro-Awami League journalist bodies also expressed concern over the declaration cancellation of the daily.

Meanwhile, different political parties, professional bodies, human rights organisations strongly protested and condemned the government decision to shut down the Amar Desh, a pro-BNP newspaper.

The main opposition party brought out a procession and held a brief rally in the city protesting closure of the newspaper and demanding release of Mahmudur Rahman, who was energy adviser during the past BNP-led coalition government.

Earlier in the day, BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain announced the protest programme at a press briefing.

He bitterly criticised the government for arresting Mahmudur Rahman, and said it wants to control the media through repression.

Later, they started the procession from Bijoynagar at about 4:00pm and ended at the National Press Club. BNP standing Committee member Abdul Moyeen Khan and Senior Joint Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, among others, attended the programme.

Top BNP leaders including Delwar, however, were not present in the protest programme.

BNP leaders said they started their protest procession from Bijoynagar as police did not allow the opposition supporters to gather in front of the party's Nayapalton office.

Pro-BNP faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) organised a rally on the National Press Club premises in the morning.

Renowned journalist Ataus Samad, News Today Editor Reazuddin Ahmed, Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Farroque, Shahiduddin Chowdhury Annee MP expressed their solidarity to the protestors.

Many parties, professional bodies and political leaders including Jamaat-e-Islami chief Motiur Rahman Nizami, Bangladesh Jatiya Party Chairman Andaleev Rahman Partha and Secretary General Shameem Al Mamun, BFUJ President Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury and Secretary General Altaf Mahmud, DUJ President Shah Alamgir and General Secretary Abu Zafar Surya, National Press Club President Shaikat Mahmud and General Secretary Kamaluddin Sabuj, Ain O Salish Kendra, Dhaka Reporters Unity President Shamim Ahmed and General Secretary Pathick Saha, Chittagong University Teachers Association, Chittagong Metropolitan Union of Journalists, Democratic left alliance in separate statements expressed concern over the cancellation of declaration of the newspaper and arrest of its acting editor.

## Mahmudur, three others asked to appear before SC on July 5

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday ordered the editor and the publisher of the Bangla daily Amar Desh, which was shut down on Tuesday, and three others to appear before it on July 5 in connection with a contempt of court charge against them.

The SC full bench headed by Chief Justice Mohammed Fazlul Karim also issued a rule asking them to explain why they should not be punished on charge of committing gross contempt of court by publishing a new item.

The charge against them was made in a contempt of court petition filed by two SC lawyers for publishing a report in the Amar Desh on April 21 with the headline "Chamber manei sarkar pakkhe stay (Chamber bench means stay orders in favour of the government)".

The respondents against whom the SC rule was issued include Editor (acting) of the Amar Desh Mahmudur Rahman (now detained), its publisher Hashmat Ali, deputy editor Syed Abdal Ahmed, news editor Mustahid Ahmed and staff reporter Aliullah Noman.

Meanwhile, the government on Tuesday cancelled the declaration of the Amar Desh saying that it has no publisher. Hashmat Ali notified the deputy commissioner (DC) of Dhaka in March that he is no longer willing to remain publisher of the newspaper. The DC has accepted his notification.

The SC passed the orders after hearing the contempt of court petition filed by advocate Riaz Uddin Khan and barrister Mynul Hassan.

They petition filed on May 2 stated that the news item seriously damaged the image and dignity of the apex court.

Additional Attorney General MK Rahman appeared for the petitioners.



## Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gully or squally wind is likely to occur at a few places over Sylhet division and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:43pm today and rises at 5:11am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 36.8 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 22.0 degrees Celsius at Sylhet.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	35.3	29.0	77	70
Chittagong	32.0	27.5	79	87
Rajshahi	36.8	26.4	83	51
Khulna	36.6	26.6	81	69
Barisal	34.6	29.0	81	76
Sylhet	28.1	22.0	97	87
Cox's Bazar	33.5	27.5	79	84

## TCB plans to check price hike of essentials during Ramadan

BSS, Dhaka

Unlike previous years, the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) this year has undertaken several steps in advance to check price hike of essentials during Ramadan.

The state-run trading agency plans to import pulses, edible oil, palm oil, sugar and onion for supplying those to the people of low-income groups at fair prices.

"We have taken the risk as far as possible for this year's Ramadan," M Khalilur Rahman, chairman of TCB, told BSS.

He said TCB has already opened four letters of credit (LCs) to procure the items to rein in price hike of essentials during the holy month.

Four local and international tenders have been invited to procure 6,000 tonnes of soyabean oil, 25,000 tonnes of sugar, 6,000 tonnes of edible oil, 15,000 tonnes of pulse and 2,000 tonnes of gram. "We will procure 4,000 tonnes of gram, 25,000 tonnes of edible oil and 50,000 tonnes of sugar before Ramadan," he said.

When asked whether they have any special measures to check sugar price, Khalil

said TCB has taken a strategic plan to procure the item from local sources this year.

The procured goods will be stored in the government's warehouses and be supplied to the people through 1,700 dealers which are now being appointed by the trading agency, he said.

Besides, TCB has signed an agreement with SG Oil Refineries Limited, a Mongla-based Indian company, to procure 6,000 metric tonnes of refined edible oil every month.

For the first time, Khalil said, the agency will sell its own brand of packets of edible oil weighing one, two and five liters.

The country needs one lakh tonnes of edible oil a month that soars up nearly to 1.5 lakh tonnes during the Ramada. Other essentials such as pulses, onion and sugar also go up at that time.

When contacted, President of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) Anisul Huq said, "I think the prices of essentials remained somewhat stable during last year's Ramadan due to the participation of FBCCI in market monitoring."

He said the FBCCI will also monitor market this year if necessary.

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