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MARITIME DISPUTE WITH INDIA-MYANMAR

Dhaka readies for long legal battle

Chances of amicable settlement slim

REZAUL KARIM

Bangladesh is preparing for a lengthy legal battle at an international tribunal to establish its claim over territorial waters in the Bay of Bengal, as talks for an amicable settlement of maritime boundary disputes with India and Myanmar do not seem promising.

Bangladesh's documents in the case regarding the dispute with Myanmar have been finalised, and will be filed at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) by July 1. The deadline for filing of counter-documents by Myanmar is December 1.

Bangladesh is also scheduled to sub-

mit, by May 31, 2011, a memorandum to the Arbitral Tribunal of the United Nations, claiming its legitimate authority over territorial waters in connection with the dispute with India. India will submit a counter-memorandum by May 31, 2012.

The Bangladesh government already appointed a panel of foreign experts to prepare the documents for the legal battle at the UN, foreign ministry sources said.

Besides, a technical team of Bangladesh experts, led by a retired navy official, is currently reviewing the legal provisions, while also negotiating with Myanmar.

Despite Bangladesh's move for seeking UN involvement, the country's

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni said at a press conference on June 13, "We have kept open the option of amicable settlement through bilateral discussions."

Bangladesh lodged objections with the UN, regarding the claims of India and Myanmar on October 8, 2009, as it has disputes with both countries in two areas -- "natural prolongation of the continental shelf and the baseline".

ITLOS already nominated three of the five arbitrators of the tribunal instituted for settlement of the dispute with India. The three are Tullio Treves of Italy, Ivan Anthony Shearer of Australia, and Rudiger Wolfrum of Germany.

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Spain striker David Villa (R) takes a joy ride after scoring a wonderful solo goal, his first of two strikes against Honduras in a Group H World Cup match at Ellis Park stadium in Johannesburg yesterday. Spain won 2-0.

PHOTO: AFP

Spain ride on Villa double

AFP, Johannesburg

Goals either side of half-time by Barcelona's new signing David Villa saw Spain beat Honduras 2-0 in their Group H clash at Ellis Park on Monday to put their World Cup back on track.

After losing their opening game 1-0 to Switzerland, the easy victory puts Spain on course to reach the last 16, providing Vicente Del Bosque's side can beat Chile on Friday.

Honduras rarely threatened the Euro 2008 winners and after their second defeat are out of contention in the tournament, while Spain will need to produce a more convincing display if they are to progress far in the tournament.

The Central American minnows looked pedestrian while Spain attacked in waves as Villa's brilliance shone for his goals on 17 and 51 minutes, but he wasted the chance to complete his hat-trick when he missed a second-half penalty.

The 28-year-old gave a glimpse of what was to come when he rattled the crossbar on seven minutes from 30 metres out. Honduras midfielder Danilo Turcios earned the first yellow



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card on eight minutes for trying to interfere with a quickly taken free-kick.

Villa finally opened the scoring when he cut in from the left wing, beat the defence and then squeezed his shot past two defenders and into the top left-hand corner of the goal on 17 minutes.

Fernando Torres, one of two changes to the side which lost to the Swiss, wasted Sergio Ramos's cross from the wing when he headed over with half an hour gone in what was a quiet performance from the Liverpool striker still edging back to form.

Emilio Izaguirre picked up the second booking for Honduras when he fouled Spanish winger Jesus Navas on 38 minutes, but Villa was later lucky not to get booked when he appeared to slap Izaguirre in the face in the penalty area.

Spain kept up the pressure after the break as the first-half finished 1-0 and Villa scored his second soon after when a Navas pass found him in space.

His shot from outside the penalty area gave Honduras goalkeeper Noel Valladares no chance on 52 minutes.

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His dream comes true

Jute genome hero Alam tells *The Daily Star* stories behind his decoding feats, aspiration for doing something for motherland

REAZ AHMAD

In two successive years, expatriate Bangladeshi scientist Dr Maqsudul Alam achieved two milestones in genomics -- sequencing the genomes of papaya and rubber plants.

These successes shot Alam into spotlight in the scientific fraternity and hit headlines in the world's leading scientific journals in 2008 and 2009 but that could not quench his thirst for doing something special to benefit his motherland.

Maqsudul Alam, born in Faridpur -- a region known for growing jute -- finally translated his dream into reality this month by successfully leading a team of Bangladeshi scientists and researchers in decoding jute plant genome.



Maqsudul Alam

In Alam's own words, "It worked as an orchestra, the timing was right; the team members were passionate and talented."

"Through this project, we can deliver high quality and disease resistant seeds for improved jute fibre at very low cost to the farmers," hoped the University of Hawaii Professor Maqsudul Alam in an exclusive interview to *The Daily Star* through e-mail.

After he led genome sequencing of a transgenic papaya in Hawaii, Alam did the same for rubber in Malaysia last year. But deep in his mind, he always nurtured a craving for doing the same for jute at some opportune time.

Maqsudul Alam, whose father was martyred during Bangladesh's Liberation War, pursued higher studies

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Anti-hartal bill placed

Aim is to punish strike enforcers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A bill was recently submitted to the Parliament Secretariat seeking to enact a law that would enable authorities concerned to punish individuals who force people to observe hartals.

According to the bill, if anybody is found guilty of forcing people to close markets, shops, offices and prevent people from using or running vehicles on streets, he or she could be sentenced up to seven years' imprisonment.

The bill will be placed before the parliament soon.

The private member's bill, submitted by Jatiya Party lawmaker Mujib-ul-Haque Chhunu, also proposed to deploy mobile courts on hartal days to hold trials of the offence summarily or the court may hold trials later if cases are filed in this connection.

According to the bill, top leaders of political parties,

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Garment workers vandalise a factory of Ha-Meem Group in Ashulia on the outskirts of the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: RONI CHOWDHURY

Labour unrest shuts all garment units in Ashulia

200 hurt as RMG workers run amok; 50 vehicles damaged; 30 factories ransacked; five arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) decided to close all apparel units in Ashulia for an indefinite period in the wake of yesterday's labour unrest that injured at least 200 people.

The decision came at an emergency meeting of the association and it reasoned out that the continuous unrest spread jitters among garment entrepreneurs.

Ashulia, an industrial belt, turned into a battlefield with several thousand garment-workers blocking the busy road and vandalising vehicles. The workers demanded Tk 5,000 in minimum wages.

At least 20 police personnel were among the injured after clashes raged between the workers and law enforcers.

The areas troubled by the labour unrest include Jirabo, Narasinghapur, Ghoshbagh and Baipail.

Police and locals said the trouble originated from Ananta Garments in Nishchintapur, where workers demonstrated for a three-fold pay hike to Tk 5,000.

The violence spread as a group of workers from a nearby factory broke into a Ha-Meem Group factory during the lunch break, said witnesses.

Delwar Hossain, deputy managing director of Ha-Meem

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NGO activities under review

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The NGO Affairs Bureau has moved to evaluate overall activities of non-government organisations (NGO) through which the past BNP-led government spent Tk 10,366 crore in different projects.

But the bureau could not ascertain how much money

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Notice

Today's issue contains a two-page supplement on the roundtable "Student Politics: How to Restore its Glory" organised by *The Daily Star* on May 22, 2010.

DAP gets nod Challenges from within

PM fully backs recovery of grabbed rivers or lands; asks not to bow down to encroachers' pressure

HASAN JAHIID TUSHER

The cabinet yesterday directed the authorities concerned to quickly implement the Detailed Area Plan (DAP) for Dhaka Metropolitan City that aims at sustainable environment, and provides a guideline for urban development.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who chaired a cabinet meeting yesterday, assigned seven ministries to implement DAP through building favourable public opinion, and holding inter-ministerial meetings. The ministries are of housing, land, communication, local government and rural development, water resources, shipping, and environment.

The cabinet also instructed the authorities to issue a gazette notification to protect all water bodies of the capital including rivers.

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Influential people in government working against its plan to protect wetlands, implement DAP

PINAKI ROY and HELEMUL ALAM

The government faces challenges from inside in implementing the Detail Area Plan of the capital as some bureaucrats, lawmakers and even an adviser to the premier try to incorporate flood flow zone as residential areas in the draft.

Influential land developers were flexing their muscles and pressurising the state minister for housing and public works and Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha officials to relax the existing rules.

Some influential leaders of land developers' association even blasted the state minister over the draft DAP, which

reserves 21 percent land as water bodies where no development will be permitted.

The leaders came down heavily on the state minister in front of some newsmen at his ministry's conference room on June 13.

Besides, some ruling party lawmakers also lobbied for a quarter of land developers to change the rules or relax the existing ones, sources say.

Rajuk Chairman Md Nurul Huda said they received requests from different stakeholders as they feel they have been facing injustice and "following their prayers we submitted our explanations on it".

"I did everything as far as rules are

concerned and we did nothing out of rules and will not do so," he said.

The government formed a six-member committee to review DAP which received at least four letters. The letters were earlier submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Public Works requesting to change the character of flood flow zone as unapproved housing projects located in some areas.

The Pratyasha Samabay Samity, a cooperative organisation of around 400 BCS (Administration) officials who built a housing project in Kakoli Sataish Mouja in Tongi, is located partly in flood flow zone.

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HUSBAND MURDER Wife, 5 others to die

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced six people including a model to death for killing her husband Jahangir Alam, a trader in the city's Shyampur area in November 2008.

The convicts are victim's wife model Sumaiya Kaniz Sagorika, Ali Ashraf Liton, Mohammad Ibrahim, Hizra Khalil, Al Amin and Khalil Sheikh.

Judge Kaniz Akhter Nasrina Khanam of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-3 delivered the

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