

## Deal signed

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Chartered Bank will finance 80 percent of the cost, officials said during the signing at the Bidyut Bhaban in the capital.

Kim, Ok Chul, senior executive vice president of Hyundai Engineering; Chan-Kun Han, executive vice president of Daewoo International; and Nur Alam, managing director of Ashuganj Power Station Company signed the deal on behalf of their organisation.

The South Korean companies will have to implement the natural gas-run combined cycle power plant in the next two years.

Ashuganj Power Station, an enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board, is the country's second largest power station that currently supplies up to 13 percent of the total power requirement in the country. It now produces 674MW of electricity daily.

The new plant in Ashuganj, 90km northeast of the capital, is to supply power to the national grid.

Energy Adviser Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury urged the contractors to implement the project as early as possible.

State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Tajul Islam, Power Secretary Abul Kalam Azad, Daewoo International Vice Chairman and CEO Lee, Dong Hee, South Korean Ambassador to Bangladesh Cho, Tae Young and PDB Chairman ASM Alamgir Kabir were present on the occasion.

## 2 outlaws

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personnel were also injured during the gunfights.

Mukul was wanted in seven cases including two for murder and four for abduction, reports our Jhenidah correspondent quoting Maj Sakhawat Hossain, commander of Jhenidah Rab camp.

A joint contingent of Rab and police cordoned off a field at Pairadanga village in Harinakunda upazila around 3:10am on information that a group of criminals were holding a secret meeting there, Maj Sakhawat said.

Sensing presence of the law enforcers, the outlaws fired shots, inviting retaliatory fire by the security men.

After the gun battle, Mukul's bullet-ridden body was found lying on the spot while his accomplices managed to flee. He was rushed to Jhenidah General Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

The law enforcers exchanged 48 bullets during around a quarter of an hour's shootout, Maj Sakhawat added. Four firearms, three bullets, two bombs and a knife were recovered from the spot.

Motiar Rahman, a constable of Harinakunda Police Station and Shariful Islam of Jhenidah Rab camp were injured during the gunfight, said Abul Khaer, officer-in-charge of Harinakunda Police Station.

Mukul's body was sent to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy, the OC added.

Our Natore correspondent reports, a team of Rab personnel raided a char area at Bilmaria in Lalpur upazila around 3:30am on information that some criminals were holding a meeting there.

Sensing presence of the elite force, the accomplices of Jahangir fired shots, prompting them to retaliate which triggered a gunfight, said Squadron Leader Kamrul Islam, the Rab chief in Natore.

Jahangir's bullet-ridden body was found lying on the spot while his accomplices managed to flee.

Rab exchanged 16 bullets during the nearly 15-minute 'gunfight', the Rab chief continued adding that Jahangir was leading the infamous Panna Bahini after the death of its chief Panna in 2005.

He was accused in seven cases including murder and extortion, he added. Rab team also recovered five firearms and 54 bullets from the spot.

Two Rab members--Havilder Tozammel and Nayek Jahurul--also received the minor injuries during the gunfight and took primary treatment at Natore Sadar Hospital.

They were later shifted to Rajshahi Police Hospital, said Major Anwar, deputy director of Rab-5 in Rajshahi.

## Speaker vows

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The changed plan means that an estimated 55 metres of the Sangsad complex will now be lost to the metro route.

The government is yet to respond, however, to Jica's request that the official consent of the parliament authorities to use the land be first obtained, said the sources.

A senior Jica official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said rather tersely, "We are observing the situation." He noted that funds allocation for the metro rail still depended on the progress made by the government.

Meanwhile, as controversy builds up around the metro rail plan, time appears to be running out for the project to get underway.

An appraisal of the plan with the Japanese authorities must be done by November in order to meet the February deadline for a signing of the loan deal, the Jica official said.

Before that, however, the government must finalise the route alignment through ascertaining the number of households that would be affected on the alternative route and the amount of land that would be required for the ambitious project.

"We cannot go for any action over the new route until the government meets these prerequisites," he said.

Jica has pledged to provide 80 percent of the \$ 2.7-billion estimated cost for the construction of the 20.1 kilometre metro line stretching from Uttara third phase to Bangladesh Bank.

The original route plan had Bijoy Sarani as part of the proposed rail.

The Bangladesh Air Force

objected to Bijoy Sarani, arguing that it would be an obstruction to aviation related operations from the Tejgaon airfield nearby during emergencies.

The BAF instead suggested that the route be diverted along Sangsad Avenue through Khamarbari, taking up a stretch of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban area.

Speaker Abdul Hamid, who is emphatic about his objections to the plan, has lately been vocal against the air force proposal.

He said he would exert his position as custodian of parliament on the issue. "It is my duty to protect the institutional sanctity and architectural heritage of the Sangsad Bhaban," he said.

The Sangsad Bhaban is regarded as an architectural marvel built by Louis I Kahn, the internationally known architect who designed the Bangladesh parliament building as a lotus floating on the lake.

Experts on the metro project's technical steering committee earlier dismissed the BAF's objection as being without basis, noting that the air force operated all its major aircraft from Shahjalal International Airport.

They make the case that since the 22-metre high Bangabandhu Novo Theatre already exists in the air funnel of the airstrip, the objection to the 19-metre elevated route of the metro rail sounds illogical.

An alteration in the route, note the experts, will compel the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council in Farmgate to tear down a couple of its tall buildings. It also clashes with a ramp of the proposed elevated expressway.

## India launches

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three-hour battery life and two USB ports, but questions remain over how it will perform.

Officials hope the computer will give digital access to students in small towns and villages across India, which lags behind its rivals in connectivity.

At the launch in the Indian capital, Delhi, Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal handed out 500 Aakash (meaning sky) tablets to students who will trial them.

He said the government planned to buy 100,000 of the tablets. It hopes to distribute 10 million of the devices to students over the next few years.

"The rich have access to the digital world, the poor and ordinary have been excluded. Aakash will end that digital divide," Mr Sibal said.

The Aakash has been developed by UK-based company DataWind and Indian Institute of Technology (Rajasthan).

## 2.68 lakh workers

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Atiqur Rahman said some 24,000 of the irregular and registered Bangladeshi workers do not have jobs. And a similar number got registered under outsourcing companies.

The Malaysian government had earlier said irregular foreign workers getting registered under outsourcing companies might not be regularised. But it later said they would be considered jobless, as the outsourcing companies are not employers, and given jobs, the envoy said.

High Commissioner gets threats  
Meanwhile, Atiqur Rahman last week got threats from Bangladeshi manpower brokers (middlemen) who wanted to make money by processing passport applications of the irregular Bangladeshi workers in Malaysia.

They threatened him with dire consequences as the Bangladesh mission introduced a broker-free system of issuing passports, he said.

"We have informed all our workers in Malaysia and their employers that they themselves will submit applications for passports. We are interviewing the applicants to verify their nationality," Atiqur said.

This might have created resentment among the brokers who have already collected applications of around 60 percent of the irregular Bangladeshi workers.

## Chemistry

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Quasicrystals have been found in the lab and some have been discovered to occur naturally in minerals.

Their closely-packed structure helps them strengthen materials, with potential outlets in consumer products such as frying pans and machines such as diesel engines which experience high heat and mechanical stress.

Shechtman's research "has fundamentally altered how chemists conceive of solid matter", the jury said.

His discovery was "extremely controversial", the Nobel committee said, noting that the atoms were "arranged in a manner that was contrary to the laws of nature".

The pattern was "considered just as impossible as creating a football using only six-cornered polygons, when a sphere needs both five and six-cornered polygons".

The Israeli was met with total opposition in his pursuit and even ridiculed by his colleagues, with the head of his laboratory handing him a textbook in crystallography and suggesting he read it.

He was ultimately asked to leave his research group at the US National Institute of Standards and Technology.

"His battle eventually forced scientists to reconsider their conception of the very nature of matter," the jury said.

Shechtman, born in 1941, is currently a professor at Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, where he holds the Philip Tobias Chair.

He will receive the 10 million Swedish kronor (\$1.48m) award at a formal ceremony in Stockholm on December 10, the anniversary of the death of prize creator Alfred Nobel.

CONSUMERS	USAGE	PRESENT TARIFF TK/KILOWATT HOUR	PROPOSED RATE
<b>0.400KV LEVEL</b>			
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>	A. UP TO 100 UNITS	2.60	2.80
	B. 101-500 UNITS	3.46	4.00
	C. 501-1,000 UNITS	5.93	6.50
	D. ABOVE 1,000 UNITS	5.93	8.00
<b>IRRIGATION</b>		1.93	2.30
<b>SMALL INDUSTRIES</b>	A. FLAT RATE	4.56	5.70
	B. OFF-PEAK	3.67	4.70
	C. PEAK RATE	6.24	7.70
<b>NONRESIDENTIAL</b>		3.35	4.10
<b>COMMERCIAL</b>	A. FLAT RATE	5.85	7.10
	B. OFF-PEAK	4.25	5.70
	C. PEAK RATE	8.87	9.20
<b>STREET LAMPS</b>		4.17	4.80
<b>11KV LEVEL</b>			
	A. FLAT RATE	4.37	5.50
	B. OFF-PEAK	3.60	4.50
	C. PEAK RATE	7.47	7.60
<b>33 KV LEVEL</b>			
	A. FLAT RATE	4.11	5.30
	B. OFF-PEAK	3.49	4.40
	C. PEAK RATE	7.16	7.40
<b>132 KV LEVEL</b>			
	A. FLAT RATE	3.25	5.20
	B. TIME 11PM-8AM	1.71	4.30
	C. TIME 8AM-5PM	1.91	4.30
	D. TIME 5PM-11PM	6.23	7.20

## PDB proposes power tariff

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increase much for people of low income group. "Those who use more will have to buy electricity at higher prices. Now both groups of users pay the same tariff. We have tried to fix this weak-

ness of the tariff structure through the proposals," he said.

He said the PDB proposed increasing the tariff gradually instead of all at once so that the burden is kept at tolera-

ble level. "We hope the BEREC will soon take step in this regard," Kabir said.

A BEREC official told The Daily Star that the proposed tariff could be finalised in November.

## Bangladesh may feel the heat

**FROM PAGE 20**  
is the least protective among South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) countries as far as its agricultural tariff regime is concerned.

He pointed out, sometimes big food importing countries also reduce their import tariffs to lower domestic prices, when it is coupled with export restrictions by exporting countries, that by default worsens significantly the situation of small food importing countries like Bangladesh.

Citing the food crisis of 2007-08, Prof MA Taslim of the department of economics at Dhaka University said World Trade Organisation (WTO) might not help food importing countries get food and ensure food security if any exporting country put a ban on export during a crisis period.

Experts at the workshop also underscored the importance of examining the role of large automatic rice millers in the staple market and their stocking behaviour as they influence prices.

Focusing on salinity affected southern region, experts suggested crop zoning, expansion of modern technology, and educating farmers on the negative impacts of climate change on farming.

**AUTOMATIC RICE MILLS**  
Minhaj Mahmud, co-

author of a paper on productivity and efficiency of rice mills, said the number of large auto-mills is quite small.

But those mills, with much larger capacity and higher productivity, have potential destabilising power and control over market intermediaries as often alleged, he added.

"Stock behaviour of auto-mills and others as well as networking with marketing agents and sellers of paddy may help explain the paradox of rising price of rice despite high production level," he said.

Planning Commission Member MA Sattar Mandal said some 20 to 25 automatic rice mills control a large part of rice processing. Sattar said small rice husking mills have roles in building stocks at local levels, and these might help reduce control and influence of large mills on the market.

Prof WMH Jaim, director of research and evaluation division of Brac, said rice, processed at automatic mills, have less nutrient content due to increased polishing.

The Centre for Policy Dialogue Executive Director Mustafizur Rahman suggested forming cooperatives of farmers.

**CLIMATE CHANGE**  
Citing salinity intrusion in

the soil of the south, sudden floods, and cyclones as well as erratic rainfall, State Minister for Environment and Forests Hasan Mahmud said Bangladesh has already begun encountering the negative impacts of climate change which threatens the nation's food security.

He also expressed his lack of hope about the possible outcome of the coming climate change meet in Durban. "We want a text of legally binding agreement. But the progress that has been made so far does not raise hopes for it."

Mahmud said commitments made in the past have not been reflected in the actions.

Atiq Rahman, executive director of the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS), said climate change has created fears of knowledge gap among farmers who have so far learnt cultivation techniques from their predecessors.

The climate change made it necessary to re-educate the farmers and it will take years to do it, he said.

Presenting a paper, Timothy Thomas of IFPRI said due to the climate change, yields of Aman rice in the south might decline but yields of Boro might increase.

## US public's approval of Congress hits record low

AFP, Washington

After months of partisan gridlock, more Americans of all political stripes disapprove of the US Congress than at any point in more than two decades, a poll found yesterday.

The Washington Post/ABC News poll found that just 14 percent of the US public approves of the job Congress is doing, less than just before elections in 1994, 2006 and 2010, which all saw the majority party lose the House.

The poll found that just three percent of Americans "strongly approve" of lawmakers' performance -- "essentially as low as possible, given the poll's margin of error of four percentage points," the Post said.

## Climate change

**FROM PAGE 20**  
drawing attention to global climate issues.

Waste Concern is the knowledge partner for the awards.

Sanjay Prakash, chief executive officer of HSBC Bangladesh, observed that though climate change continued to be a serious threat, the situation was getting better in small ways.

"We all have to work together to save the environment," said Prakash, citing such consequences of climate change as Sidr and Aila that have rattled Bangladesh in recent years.

He made it clear that HSBC, a carbon neutral bank, did not finance any project which damaged the environment.

In his comments, Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, said it was not easy to recover from the impact of climate change and a delay in addressing the issue could only make things worse.

"Climate change is an issue over which timely action is far more important," he said.

Anam said there had been much discussion on the state of the river Buriganga and yet WASA and the municipality continued to dump waste in it. "If we want to clean up the river we have to stop dumping garbage in it first," he added.

He urged all to change their mindset towards nature for the sake of life.

Iftekhar Enayetullah, director of Waste Concern, said the awards were meant not only to honour the people and the institutions involved in eco-friendly work but also to encourage others to step in to save the environment.

Five awards will be given out in four categories -- green business, green operations (a local and a foreign or joint venture firm), knowledge management and community engagement. Foreign companies have been added to the list this year.

Nomination forms and detailed information are available at [www.hsbc.com.bd](http://www.hsbc.com.bd) and [www.thedailystar.net](http://www.thedailystar.net). Applications for the awards must reach The Daily Star office on or before November 3, 2011.

## EC rejects

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to the councillor post, EC accepted 251 applications.

The commission on Tuesday accepted eight applications seeking candidacy for the mayoral post and 56 applications for the reserved seats for women.

Returning Officer Biswas Lutfar Rahman told reporters that decision about a few applications has not been taken yet as they do not have required documents. The applicants were asked to submit those documents.

The persons, whose applications were cancelled, can apply again to the divisional election commission's office within three days, added Lutfar Rahman.

The list of the candidates already selected will be announced today, he said. The last date for withdrawing nominations is October 12, and symbols for competing in the polls will be distributed the following day.

The candidates are allowed to start their campaign on October 9 while the city corporation elections will be held on October 30.

## Russia, China veto

**FROM PAGE 20**  
strikes in Libya using UN resolutions to justify the action.

The double veto marked a "sad day for the Syrian people" and for the council itself, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said, while vowing to keep supporting the "Syrian democrats' struggle for freedom."

"The Security Council should not remain silent in the face of the Syrian tragedy," said Juppe.

"It's a sad day for the Syrian people. It's a sad day for the Security Council."

Russia's UN envoy, Vitaly Churkin, said the European resolution was "based on a philosophy of confrontation," and that the threat of action was "unacceptable."

Many opponents raised the air strikes in Libya and fears or more in Syria to justify their votes.

China said it exercised its veto because the resolution would have "blindly" pressured the Arab nation and not helped.

"Some countries submit-

ted a draft resolution to blindly impose pressure and even threatened sanctions against Syria. This would not help to ease the situation," said foreign ministry spokesman Ma Zhaoxue.

US ambassador Susan Rice labelled the comments a "cheap ruse by those who would rather sell arms to the Syrian regime than stand with the Syrian people."

Rice called on the council to impose "tough, targeted sanctions" and an arms embargo against Syria.

"The United States is outraged that this council has utterly failed to address an urgent moral challenge and a growing threat to regional peace and security," she said.

The US ambassador later led her delegation out of the council chamber after Syria's ambassador Bashar Jaafar accused the United States of "genocide" in a long attack on the western countries.

Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan had voiced support for the proposed UN resolution and

said he would soon announce sanctions against neighbouring Syria.

Russia has proposed an alternative resolution, which condemns the opposition violence as well as that of the government and calls for dialogue to end the crisis. The European nations vowed however that it would not come to a vote.

In the latest violence, at least 11 people were shot dead by security forces on Tuesday, including six in the central province of Homs and two in the northwest of the country, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The other three were killed in various centres of protest across the country, the Britain-based Observatory said.

Canada announced new sanctions against Syrian oil exports and investment in its oil fields, also adding 27 people and 12 entities said to be close to the regime to a list of people or companies facing a travel ban and assets freeze.