

# Iran sends rare letter

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embassy represents US interests in a country where Washington has no diplomatic ties.

The spokesman for Iran's Joint Armed Forces Staff, Massoud Jazayeri, said: "Our enemies, especially America, Britain and the Zionist regime (Israel), have to be held responsible for their actions."

Iran in the past has accused Israel of causing a series of spectacular and sometimes bloody mishaps to its nuclear programme. Israeli officials do not comment on any involvement in those events, although some have publicly expressed satisfaction at the setbacks.

Feeling the heat from unprecedented new sanctions, Iran's clerical establishment has brandished its sword by threatening to block the main Mid-East oil shipping route, starting to enrich uranium at an underground bunker and sentencing an Iranian-American citizen to death on spying charges.

State TV said a "letter of condemnation" had also been sent to Britain, saying the killing of Iranian nuclear scientists began after the head of Britain's MI6 spy service announced intelligence operations against states seeking nuclear weapons.

The West says Iran's nuclear programme is aimed at building a bomb. Tehran says it has the right to peaceful nuclear power.

Tehran has urged the UN Security Council and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to condemn the latest killing.

After years of international sanctions that had little impact on Iran, US

President Barack Obama signed new measures on New Year's Eve that, if fully implemented, would make it impossible for most countries to pay for Iranian oil.

Washington is requiring that countries gradually reduce their purchases of Iranian oil in order to receive temporary waivers from the sanctions.

The European Union is expected to unveil similar measures next week, and announce a gradual oil embargo among its member states, who collectively buy about a fifth of Iran's exports.

The combined measures mean Iran may fail to sell all of the 2.6 million barrels a day of exports it relies on to feed its 74 million people. Even if it finds buyers, it will have to offer steep discounts, cutting into its desperately-needed revenue.

On Tuesday shipping sources told Reuters Iran was storing an increasing supply of oil at sea - as much as 8 million barrels - and was likely to store more as it struggles to sell it.

Iran denies it is having trouble: "There has been no disruption in Iran's crude exports through the Persian Gulf... We have not stored oil in the Gulf because of sanctions as some foreign media reported," oil official Pirouz Mousavi told the semi-official Mehr news agency on Friday.

The sanctions are causing real hardship on the streets, where prices for basic imported goods are soaring, the rial currency has plummeted and Iranians have been flocking to sell rials to buy dollars to protect their savings.

**CLASH THREAT**

Iran has threatened to block the Strait of Hormuz leading to the Gulf if sanctions are imposed on its oil exports, and has threatened to take unspecified action if Washington sails an aircraft carrier through the strait, an international waterway.

Military experts say Tehran can do little to fight the massive US-led fleet that guards the strait, but the threats raise the chance of a miscalculation that could lead to a military clash and a global oil crisis.

The Pentagon said on Friday that small Iranian boats had approached close to US vessels in the strait last week, although it said it did not believe there was "hostile intent."

The United States and Israel have not ruled out military action if diplomacy fails to resolve the nuclear dispute. Iran says it would retaliate if attacked.

The tension has caused spikes in global oil prices in recent weeks, although prices eased at the close of last week's trading on the prospect of reduced demand in economically stricken European countries. Brent crude fell 82 cents to settle at \$110.44 a barrel on Friday.

The chances for an imminent easing of tension look even more remote as the nuclear deadlock continues because of Iran's refusal to halt the sensitive nuclear work.

Nuclear talks with major powers collapsed a year ago. Iran says it wants the talks to resume, but the West says there is no point unless it is willing to discuss a halt to uranium enrichment, which can be used to make material for a bomb.

# Moudud

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another case against Moudud -- who also served the cabinet of military ruler HM Ershad -- for dodging Tk 4.12 crore in income tax for the years from 1997 to 2006.

Motijheel and Kotwali police on August 27 and October 25 in 2008 filed two more cases against Moudud on charges of stashing away Tk 2.2 crore in a bank through forged documents.

He was also accused in a graft case filed on December 9, 2007 with Tejgaon police.

Later, the higher courts stayed proceedings of the cases.

Moudud was also sued by the Anti-Corruption Commission in 2007 for amassing wealth worth over Tk 7.38 crore through illegal means and concealing information about property worth over Tk 4.40 crore from the commission.

The case is pending for chargehearing.

Moudud was arrested at his home by the joint forces in a raid on April 13, 2007 with 32 cans of beer and 16 bottles of other alcoholic beverages.

The following day, Gulshan police filed a case against him under the Narcotics Control Act. But the High Court stayed proceedings of the case.

# Tigress rescued

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of the report, the tigress was being taken to Dhaka forest office.

Today, it will be transferred to Dulahazari safari park.

"The six-year-old tigress was very weak because it was difficult for her to hunt with three legs," said Abu Naser Mohsin Hossain, assistant conservator of forest (ACF), Sundarbans division, who tranquillized the tigress.

Seeing the leg injury, he said the tigress had lost the leg when it had been a cub of one or one and a half years.

Earlier, forest and Sundarbans Tiger Project officials captured another stray tiger on February 19 last year from Harinagar village of Shyamnagar upazila in Sakhira district. It was released into the Sundarbans and later found dead in the forest.

# War crimes court

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building, where the second tribunal will be set up.

After logistics supports are ensured, the government will appoint judges and more lawyers for the tribunal, Shafique said.

The existing International Crimes Tribunal was set up on March 25, 2010 to try Bangladeshi war criminals, who committed crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War.

The tribunal is currently dealing with war crimes charges against six Jamaat-e-Islami leaders including its former chief Gulam Azam, and two BNP leaders.

According to the law minister, the cases pending with the existing tribunal for which charges were not framed, can be transferred to the new tribunal if the chief prosecutor appeals for it.

# 120 leaders

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doing their duties on September 19 last year. Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Erfan Ullah of the Speedy Trial Court-7 rejected their discharge petitions and passed the order.

Jamaat's acting secretary general ATM Azharul Islam and 108 accused, now in jail, pleaded not guilty after the charges were read out to them before the court.

The court has set January 25 for beginning the trial. It also framed charges against 11 including Jamaat's acting ameer Maqbul Ahmad in their absence as they are on the run. Earlier, the same court issued arrest warrants against them.

On September 19, several hundred Jamaat activists clashed with police in Kakrail, Bijoyagar and Shantinagar in the capital, torched and vandalised vehicles and shops, leaving at least 100 people injured.

Two cases were filed with Paltan and Ramna police stations on charges of assaulting police, interrupting traffic movement and creating anarchy, one of which is still pending with another court.

On September 28 last year, Ramna police submitted the charge sheet against the accused.

# Tripura shows the right way

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Referring to Tripura's conservative approach to foreign direct investment (FDI) there in opposition to the central government's liberal policy, the state's chief minister said the conservative approach does not apply to investments from Bangladesh.

"We are not looking at Bangladesh as we look at the US, Japan, France or Germany in regard to FDI. We generally oppose FDI. But Bangladesh is not a shark or a crocodile. So there is no question of disallowing Bangladesh from investing in the state," said Manik Sarkar.

"India has to have a liberal attitude towards Bangladesh in regard to bilateral relations," he added.

He said there will be enhanced exchange between Agartala and Dhaka in the fields of education, culture and sports.

Addressing a huge crowd of people of all walks of life at Assam Rifles Ground in Agartala on January 12, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina proposed to Tripura that a joint-venture power plant could be set up there for mutual benefit.

The same day the Tripura chief minister acknowledged that Bangladesh helped India to carry heavy equipment for setting up a power plant at Palatana of Tripura which will produce 726 megawatt (MW) of electricity, of which the state

government will get 196 MW while it will be able to export 100 MW to Bangladesh.

He said after getting proposals about the joint-venture power plant from Bangladesh, they will examine those and consult with the central government for moving forward.

"Nature has given resources here in Tripura. If my neighbour can benefit from this, what is the problem in helping the neighbour?" he said.

"If I don't do so, how will there be a friendship? Friendship does not happen only in words. It is sometimes give and take. I'll give and I'll get, and sometimes it is not a question whether I'll get or not," he said adding, "If I have something surplus and I don't have any problem, what's wrong in giving that to my next door neighbour who is in problems regarding power?"

He however said, "We have to see how the central government takes this."

Bangladesh is looking to expand the market for its goods, and Tripura can be a market for Bangladeshi businesses, he said.

"We need a lot of daily essentials that we now get from other ends of India which becomes costly. We could get many of those essentials from Bangladesh for cheap," Manik Sarkar said.

About Bangladeshi entrepreneurs' allegation that the Indian visa regime for them is too tough and sometimes

quite harassing, the Tripura chief minister said the regime should be eased for Bangladeshis.

Asked about Bangladeshi business's position regarding bilateral relations with Tripura, the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries President AK Azad told The Daily Star yesterday, "I will write to the chief minister and the industries and commerce minister of Tripura tomorrow urging them to come to Bangladesh shortly with their business delegates to carry on follow up discussions on the possibility of investment for setting up a joint-venture power plant and an export processing zone there."

He said Tripura has huge natural resources for power generation that Bangladesh does not have, adding that a bypass road to Agartala border has been developed in the Bangladesh territory, and the railway has been upgraded for business with the neighbouring Indian state.

He also said they already informed the Indian High Commission in Dhaka that Bangladeshi entrepreneurs are facing difficulties in obtaining Indian visa, and the high commission told them that they will sit with the business community and Bangladesh foreign ministry officials soon regarding the matter, to figure out how to make obtaining business visas much easier.

"I don't think there will be an impact on the stockmarket because of the decision. But some people may upset the markets by taking advantage of the amendment," he said.

In a desperate effort to boost the stockmarket, the government revived amnesty for investors in this year's budget to invest black money in stocks by paying 10 percent tax.

Now, the NBR made it clear that no question will be raised about the money invested in the stockmarket under the income tax law and the opportunity will remain valid until June 30.

Khondaker Golam Moazzem, senior research fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said the circular sets a clear distinction between black money and undisclosed money.

Black money indicates money earned through illegal and criminal acts, but undisclosed money may be legally earned but may not be duly reflected in tax files submitted by stock investors.

Undisclosed money includes funds borrowed from relatives or collected from other sources to buy stocks, Moazzem said.

Since the opening of BO (beneficiary owner) accounts does not necessarily require a tax identification number, transactions of undisclosed money and earnings may not be fully reflected in investors' tax files, Moazzem said.

It implies that it is not easy to detect illegal or undisclosed money transacted in the secondary market, he said.

The circular may not have a serious impact on transactions in the secondary market. From a legal point of view, it is a positive decision, Moazzem said.

The circular makes it clear that the government will not allow people to invest in stocks any money earned through criminal acts, he added.

# Kazi Kamal

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mourn his death.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at Chairman Bari Mosque in Banani after Jhr prayers today. He will be laid to rest at his family graveyard at Shakasha in Gazipur.

Kamal, a graduate of Dhaka University and former coach of Bangladesh army basketball team, fought bravely in different operations in Dhaka and Narayanganj during the Liberation War.

He joined the army in October, 1971 but left it after the country's independence. He later became the coach of the national basketball team.

A few years later, he went to Germany and settled there. He returned home after more than a decade and started a business.

"I have rarely seen an idealistic person like him," said his long-time friend Fateh Ali Chowdhury, who fought the Liberation War alongside Kamal.

# Black money

**FROM PAGE 1**  
such investment, the tax administrator said in a circular yesterday.

The NBR amended the amnesty for black money following objections from an international anti-money laundering body, Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering.

While visiting Bangladesh in November, the APG high officials objected to the provision of not questioning the source of black money to be invested in stocks, a finance ministry official said.

If the provision had not been amended, the APG would have issued a worldwide public statement and banks of other countries would not open L/Cs (Letters of Credit) for Bangladeshi banks, the official said.

"The NBR made the right decision. Regulators should not allow money earned by criminal acts into the markets," said Yawer Sayeed, managing director and CEO of AIMS of Bangladesh, an asset management company.

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# Khaleda

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Hossain issued the bail order after hearing on a rule it had issued earlier.

On August 28, 2008, it granted an interim bail to Khaleda for four months, and issued the rule asking the government and the ACC to explain why she should not be granted regular bail.

The bench had later extended the ad interim bail six times.

On February 26, 2008, ACC Assistant Director Shamsul Alam filed the case against Khaleda and 15 others, including ten former ministers, for causing a loss of over Tk 158.71 crore to the public exchequer by awarding a contract on Barapukuria coalmine to a Chinese company.

Mahbubuddin Khokon appeared for the BNP chairperson, while Deputy Attorney General Gazi Mamunur Rashid represented the state.

# Pak PM won't go back

**FROM PAGE 1**  
central city of Vehari. "I will not answer to a person. I am answerable to parliament."

The fate of Pakistan's embattled leaders, including President Asif Ali Zardari, could be decided today when the Supreme Court takes up the memo scandal and high-profile graft cases even as the beleaguered government has turned to Parliament for crucial support.

Also, the National Assembly or lower house of parliament is expected to vote today on a resolution that seeks endorsement and support for "efforts made by the political leadership for strengthening democracy" and calls for reposing "full confidence and trust" in them.

Even as parliament considers the resolution, a 17-member bench of the apex court will resume hearing of a case related to the reopening of corruption cases that were closed under the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO), a graft amnesty issued by former military ruler Pervez Musharraf in 2007.

A judicial commission appointed by the apex court to investigate a mysterious memo that sought US help to prevent a feared military coup in Pakistan last year will also continue its proceedings today, reports The Hindu.

Recent tension has raised fears for the stability of the nuclear-armed country and exposed a struggle between the government and the military, which has ousted three civilian governments in coups since independence in 1947 and has ruled the nation for more than half of its history.

Gilani last week criticised Army Chief General Ashfaq Kayani and the director general of the Inter-Services Intelligence agency Lieutenant-General Ahmed Shuja Pasha for filing court papers in a case involving a mysterious memo that has pitted the military against the civilian government.

In an interview with Chinese media, Gilani said the filings were "unconstitutional," infuriating the military's high command, who issued a stern press release on Wednesday.

"There can be no allegation more serious than what the honourable prime minister has levelled," it said.

"This has very serious ramifications with potentially

grievous consequences for the country."

Gilani further infuriated the army on Wednesday by sacking the defence secretary, retired Lieutenant General Naeem Khalid Lodhi, for "gross misconduct and illegal action which created misunderstanding" between institutions.

Lodhi was the most senior civil servant responsible for military affairs, a post usually seen as the military's main advocate in the civilian bureaucracy.

The unusually public sniping comes amid a roiling political scandal involving the mysterious memo.

The memo, allegedly drafted on the direction of former ambassador to Washington Husain Haqqani, asked for US help in reining in the army, which the memo said was planning a coup.

When an American businessman revealed his role in writing and delivering the memo, the army was enraged. Haqqani was forced to resign, and "memogate" has locked President Asif Ali Zardari and the military in trench warfare ever since.

**DIVISIVE STATEMENTS**  
Gilani's comments were in response to a journalist's question about media reports in Pakistan last year that Kayani was infuriated by Gilani's criticisms.

The army chief complained to Zardari and demanded that Gilani's comments be clarified or withdrawn, a military source told Reuters on Saturday.

Gilani, however, showed no signs of backing down.

"What I said was not an accusation," he told reporters. "We want there to be respect for the constitution, rule of law, and all institutions to work within their limits. I said just one thing, that rules and procedures were not followed. And that was the defence secretary's fault, for which we removed him from his post."

The military, despite being officially under civilian control, sets foreign and security policies and drew rare public criticism after U.S. special forces killed al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden on Pakistani soil in a raid in May 2011, an act seen by many Pakistanis as a violation of sovereignty.

Pakistanis rallied behind the military after a November 26 cross-border Nato air attack killed 24 Pakistani

soldiers on the frontier with Afghanistan, driving ties with Washington to their lowest point in years.

The latest crisis also troubles Washington, which wants smooth ties between civilian and military leaders so that Pakistan can help efforts to stabilize neighbouring Afghanistan, a top priority for President Barack Obama.

# Mother

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Saturday morning.

Doctors at Nitor said Rahima would need to have a surgery on her knee.

Ashraf Munshi, Ruman's father and a socks manufacturer, said Ruman went to the roof and started throwing down materials after he was denied the money.

His mother followed him to the roof to pacify him. But at one stage, a hysterical Ruman pushed her off the rooftop.

Ashraf called the police and handed him over to them after capturing him with the help of locals.

Monir Hossain, Ruman's brother, told The Daily Star that they had sent him to rehab centres several times but to no avail.

"We want him to stay behind bars for a long time so that he could kick his drug habit," he said.

# Shibir strike

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against the 'anarchy' of Shibir.

The situation on the campus is now under control, Sust Registrar Ishfaqul Hossain told The Daily Star.

Selim Hossain, officer-in-charge of Jalalabad Police Station, said additional forces of police and Rapid Action Battalion have been deployed on the campus to avert further clash.

On Wednesday, a series of clashes between BCL and Shibir activists on Sust campus left at least 20 people injured. BCL activists vandalised dormitory rooms of Shibir activists during the clash.

Two cases were filed in this connection against Islami Chhatra Shibir activists.

Shibir activists announced the strike on Thursday demanding withdrawal of 'fake cases' against them, ensuring security for students of all political organisations on campus, punitive action against attackers and compensation for valuables looted from their rooms during the clash.