

Strong navy

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The Bay is an important reservoir of both hydrocarbon and fish. Monday's verdict by the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea has cleared the way for Bangladesh to explore new areas for oil and gas. Its fishing fleet will also have access to areas previously aggressively guarded by Myanmar.

"Our fishing trawlers could not go near the disputed area as Myanmar Navy would fire shots at us," said Monowarul Hoq, vice-chairman of Bangladesh Marine Fisheries Association. "Incidentally, that part of the Bay is very good fishing ground. We now need protection from the navy to go and fish there."

Defence experts said since the Bay of Bengal is a rough water area, the navy needs larger ships like frigates and large corvettes to patrol it. Right now, the navy has five frigates. Other than BNS Bangabandhu, the other four frigates need to be replaced urgently for old age. BNS Osman is now on duty in Lebanon.

The navy has been trying to procure larger ships from Montenegro and China.

The urgency of emboldening its fleet is even more important as Myanmar, whose naval capacity was regarded as very negligible even five years ago, has very fast developed its sea power. It commissioned a frigate in 2008, and another one is due very soon. It is in the process of procuring another six frigates.

Bangladesh Navy now lacks wide range maritime patrol aircraft which is very effective in detecting violation of boundary. These aircraft are fitted with surveillance radar with which they can keep an eye on vessel movement. Any foreign vessel violating our maritime boundary can be immediately detected and reported to naval ships for intervention.

The navy is trying to procure a patrol aircraft from Germany, and a team

is currently there to negotiate a deal.

The navy also needs land-based wide range surveillance radar, which it does not have, to keep watch on the vast sea resource. The radar could be installed on top of a hill in Teknaf to monitor vessel movement.

The navy lacks logistics ships too to ferry ration, medicine, and other supplies from the base to patrolling ships. These patrolling ships stay in the sea for a long time, needing replenishment of supplies.

Such naval presence is needed both for hydrocarbon exploration and fishing. For example, when the question of setting up rigs came to explore gas at Sangu in 1994-95, the first issue that was raised by the British exploration company Cairn was the naval strength of Bangladesh. Cairn's US partner Halliburton also waited for strengthening Bangladesh's naval fleet before committing itself.

And it is also important to chase off invading fishing trawlers from Bangladesh territory. Foreign ships can pass through exclusive economic zone (EEZ), but cannot fish or carry out other economic activities.

But Myanmar trawlers do a lot of fishing in the territory that was disputed, and continuation of it will threaten fish stock. An example of severe fish depletion due to overfishing is the Gulf of Thailand which is now economically unviable for trawling.

Already catch in the Bay is declining. According to an independent study, catch per net in the Bay was 8.2 to 130.4 kilograms in 1985 which dropped to 1.43 to 25 kilograms by 2005. Giving permission to too many trawlers without conducting any fish stock survey is thought to be a major reason for such decline. Currently, 146 trawling licences exist with the present government issuing 34, which fishermen think are way too many for sustainable harvesting of fish.

No illegal

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litigation, the court also asked the government to explain why it should not be directed to take departmental action against the officials responsible for allowing operations of the illegal brickfields and sawmills.

Secretaries to the cabinet division and the ministries of public administration and environment; deputy commissioners of the 11 districts; director general of Department of Environment; and chief forest conservator have been made respondents to the rule.

The HC bench of Justice Mirza Hussain Haider and Justice Muhammad Khurshid Alam Sarkar came up with the rule after holding a hearing on the petition.

Supreme Court lawyers Mohammad Hossain, Shahin Ahmed, Habibur Rahman, Tanvir Parvez and Abdullah al Matin jointly filed the petition on February 12 following several reports published in The Daily Star and the Prothom Alo stating that a number of illegal brickfields and sawmills were damaging the environment in the districts.

The petitioners sought directives from the HC on the government to remove the brickfields and sawmills, and to take legal action against the officials concerned and people responsible for such act.

On February 14, the HC bench directed The Daily Star and the Prothom Alo to submit the materials, upon which the reports were published, before it for scrutiny.

The newspapers submitted the materials to the court recently through their lawyers.

While passing the order yesterday, the HC appreciated the dailies for publishing the reports, saying that those would assist the country's development, Advocate Mohammad Hossain, a petitioner and also the counsel for the petitioners, said.

The HC also said more such reports should be published in the interest of the country, he added.

Barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud assisted by Barrister Mustafizur Rahman Khan and Advocate Safayat Sultana Rumi argued for The Daily Star, while Advocate Iqbal Kabir Lytton stood for Prothom Alo.

ACC probe

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The HC bench of Justice A H M Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim yesterday came up with the verdict after endorsing separate writ petitions filed by the 14 challenging the legality of the notices.

The court said the ACC had asked the petitioners to appear before the commission with their property papers as part of an enquiry. As per the rules, the ACC was to complete the enquiry 30 days into issuing the notices, but it failed to do so in three years, the court added.

It also said the petitioners had surrendered their illegal money to the Tac when it was in force legally and therefore, the ACC now cannot enquire on those money.

On May 16 last year, the Supreme Court upheld an HC verdict that had declared the Tac illegal.

ACC lawyer Khurshid

Alam Khan told The Daily Star that apart from the surrendered money, there was no bar on his client to enquire about the petitioners' illegal property.

The petitioners are Emon Shahriar, Suman Shahriar, Dilowara Begum, Mosammat Umme Habiba, Razia Sultana, Misses Afzal Hossain, Mohammad Jalilur Rahman, Kamrunnahar Josna, Reza-e Rabbi, Sahab Uddin, Abdul Jobbar, Golam Mohammad, Khandker Humayun Kabir and Saleha Banu. They filed the petitions on different dates last year.

A total of 452 people, including the petitioners, sought clemency from Tac under the Voluntary Disclosure of Information Ordinance.

Rokonuddin Mahmud, Masood R Sobhan, AM Amin Uddin and some other lawyers appeared for the petitioners yesterday.

Mujib-Yahya

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Meeting took place at President's House. It was the first time that the two men were meeting since late December, when Yahya had visited Dhaka and at one stage told waiting newsmen that the Awami League chief was the future prime minister of Pakistan and would inherit the problems which had accumulated over the years.

Following the meeting, Mujib briefed his senior party colleagues on the contents of the discussion. As Dr Kamal Hossain, constitutional adviser to the Awami League chief, would report Bangabandhu as saying, at the beginning of the meeting Yahya Khan explained the reasons behind his decision to postpone, on March 1, the national assembly session scheduled for March 3.

In response, Mujib told Yahya that the latter had blundered by doing so. He made it clear to the president that by ignoring the majority leader on such a critical issue, Yahya had committed a grave blunder. Yahya's response was that his goal was to find a responsible way out of the situation for everyone.

Bangabandhu's answer was simple. Since the crisis was set off on March 1, much water had flowed under the bridge and the only way in which normal conditions could be brought back was through an acceptance of his four demands made on March 7.

Yahya then said if martial law were withdrawn at that

point, there would be a constitutional vacuum in the country, to which Mujib replied that he would ask his advisers to get in touch with the president's advisers with a view to the two sides working out a formula that would do away with the chances of a vacuum.

Following Bangabandhu's instructions, Dr Kamal met the president's principal staff officer Lt Gen SGMM Peerzada and informed him in no uncertain terms that the manner in which the national assembly session had been postponed was uncalled for.

Scope widened

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blocks can be added to the country's offshore block map in the eastern Bay.

The dispute resolution under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea may also clear Myanmar's claims over six existing blocks of DS08-11, 12, 13, 16, 17 and 18.

"It is indeed a good news. But we will be able to explain the implications definitively once a copy of the verdict of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea is handed over to us from the foreign ministry," said the source.

"We can then prepare an updated topographic map," he added.

In 2008, Bangladesh floated its offshore block bidding for oil and gas exploration in 28 blocks, 20 of which are in the deep sea. Large areas of many of these deep sea blocks were claimed by India on the western side and Myanmar on the eastern side. The maritime claim dispute had watered down much of the interest of the oil companies.

As an outcome of this bid, US company ConocoPhillips signed a Production Sharing Contract (PSC) for two blocks -- DS 10 and 11. Of these, a part of block 10 is claimed by India and a part of block 11 by Myanmar.

The PSC permitted the company to explore the undisputed part. Once the dispute is solved, it will enjoy the right to explore the remaining part.

The company had also submitted bids for blocks 12, 13, 15, 16, 17 and 18 -- all of which were in the disputed area -- mainly with Myanmar.

With yesterday's verdict, around 15 percent area of

block 11 will be dispute-free.

"Conocophillips is currently conducting seismic survey of around 2,200 kilometres. The disputed area -- around 200 km -- is left out of the survey. The company is set to complete its survey by next month and then it would interpret the data to find prospects of drilling. If it finds some prospects, it will seek approval for further programmes like drilling a well," said the official.

The two blocks of Conoco comprise a total area of 5,158 sqkm and are located under 1,000-1,500 metres deep water and approximately 280 km from the port city of Chittagong.

If the company finds no prospect, it can give up the block by mid-2014 as per the PSC.

To enjoy the freedom of exploring a completely undisputed sea area, Bangladesh will have to settle its claims with India in 2014.

The dispute popped up against the backdrop of large oil and gas discovery in the Bay by both India and Myanmar.

Bangladesh has only one producing field in the shallow waters of the Bay -- the 14-year-old Sangu field -- which is now virtually in its death bed. In its best of times, the Sangu field produced up to 160 million cubic feet per day (mmcf) gas.

According to online energy magazine Geo Expro, from April 2009 India is producing 2.1 billion cubic feet per day from different fields in Dhirubhai deep water block in the Bay, which has 25 trillion cubic feet (tcf) gas in place. This is located in Krishna-Godavari Basin -- the midpoint of Bangladesh

and Sri Lanka. Indian Reliance Industries is leading the discoveries.

This has virtually doubled India's gas output. Other Indian discoveries in the Bay are closer to Bangladesh having another 5 to 6 tcf gas. According to the Geo Expro, India has drilled more than 50 wells -- most of those failed to find anything.

On the other hand, Myanmar discovered during 2003-2006 three gas fields having a total of 6 tcf to 10 tcf gas in place in the Bay. Korean company Daewoo made the breakthrough in these discoveries, following which all offshore western Myanmar is now under licence to international companies, including CNOOC, CNPC, Daewoo Petroleum, and ONGC Videsh Ltd.

Bangladesh has claimed a total of 2.07 lakh sqkm exclusive economic zone, half of which was mapped into 28 blocks in the 2008 bidding.

During 1974-76, six oil companies conducted about 33,000 line kilometres of seismic survey and drilled 7 exploratory wells. Back then only one gas discovery was made at Kutubdia by Union Oil. However due to limited reserve, the field could not be developed independently and Union Oil relinquished the area in 1976.

British company Cairn Energy under a PSC conducted seismic survey and drilled five exploratory wells namely Sangu-1, Sandwip East, Sonadia, Magnama and Hatia. Gas was discovered in Sangu in 1996 and two years later that gas was brought in for supply to the national grid.

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DPS STS School, Dhaka
Plot # 2, 4 & 6, Road # 13, Sector # 6, Uttara Model town
Dhaka-1230, Contact No # 8802-8922941, 8922963, 8919370, 7911087, Fax No # 8802-8922970

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ACS TEXTILES (Bangladesh) LTD.
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Invitation for Tender (IFT) for Purchase of Education Materials.

Project name	BEP (ESP & BPS)
Tender package no.	BEP(DC)-EM/ 02-12
Reference no. and date	IFT/BRAC/BPD-BEP(DC)/ 12-04 March 13,2012
Tender name	Education Materials
Time of delivery	As per Tender Documents.
Price of the tender documents	Tk.1000.00 (One thousand) only.
Tender security	2.0% of Total tender value.
Tender documents available	Accounts Department (8th floor), BRAC Center, 75 Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212.
Date & time of Selling Documents	March 18 to April 01, 2012 Between 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.
Tender dropping place, date & time	Procurement Department (Gr. floor), BRAC Center, 75 Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212. April 02,2012. Between 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.
Tender opening place, date & time	3 rd Floor Meeting Room, BRAC Center, April 02,2012 at 2:00 pm.

BRAC, BRAC Centre, 75, Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212
Phone: 9881265 ext 3032

FAO **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**
Emergency 2007 Cyclone Recovery and Restoration Project, Bangladesh (Component A)

Invitation for Bids for Procurement of Live Animals, Live Birds, Animal and Poultry Feed
Credit No. 4507 – BD, Project ID No. UTF /BGD/ 040 /BGD

The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Emergency 2007 Cyclone Recovery and Restoration Project and it intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for the Procurement of goods against different Livestock packages. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply of Live Animals, Live birds and Animal and Poultry Feed. Bidders having a minimum of 3 (three) years of experience in the supply of the tendered items/similar items are only encouraged to participate. The delivery period is between 12 (twelve) weeks and 36 (thirty six) weeks from the date of the Notification of the Award.

Bidding will be conducted through the national competitive bidding procedures as specified in the World Bank's *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits*, (current edition), and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the guidelines.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents from the ECRPP office of FAO Representation in Bangladesh (Hs. # 27, Rd. # 9/A, Apt. # A - 1, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka – 1209, Telephone 8130758/104) during office hours i.e. 08:00 to 16:30 Hrs. A complete set of bidding documents for each package in English may be purchased by the interested bidders from the ECRPP office of FAO on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee as mentioned below. The method of payment for the tender documents will be in cash against a written receipt. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security for an amount mentioned below.

Package No.	Lot No.	Item	Quantity/ Nos.	Bid Security (Tk.)	Price of Bid Document (Tk.)
4G9.L	Lot 1	Live Animals (Goat)	5084 Nos.	500,000.00	2,500
	Lot 2	Live Animals (sheep)	3884 Nos.	400,000.00	
4G11.L	Lot 1	Live Birds (Chickens)	28710 Nos.	200,000.00	2,000
	Lot 2	Live Birds (Ducks)	50000 Nos.	375,000.00	
4G13.L		Poultry Feed	460 MT	500,000.00	2,500
3G20.L		Animal Feed (Goat)	175 MT	150,000.00	1,500

Bids shall be delivered to the address below by 14:00 Hrs. on 12 April 2012. They will be opened immediately thereafter, in the presence of bidder's representatives, who choose to attend, at the address below. Late bids will be rejected.

FAO Representation in Bangladesh
House # 37, Road # 8
Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1205
Tel: 880-2-8118015
Fax: 8802-2-811 3446

The publishing of this notice and the receipt of bids does not commit FAO in any way to any party.