

## DU teacher goes 'missing'

*Kidnap feared*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka University teacher has been missing since Monday night.

The teacher, Dr Nuruddin Alo, is a lecturer of political science department.

Several of his students said that on Monday night they had an SMS from Alo that read, "They have kidnapped me. Please do something for me."

But despite repeated tries, the students could not reach him over his mobile phone.

Enamul Haque Emu, a fourth-year student of political science, who also received an SMS from Alo, told The Daily Star that he filed a general diary with Shahbagh Police Station in this connection yesterday evening.

Sirajul Islam, officer-in-charge of the police station, said the DU proctor had informed them of the matter and that they were trying to trace the teacher.

Sources said Alo lived in Tongi and ran an English medium school there.

Tongi police said he had been involved in a dispute with a woman named Nurun Nahar.

Nahar, a physician by profession, hails from Chittagong. At a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium on March 25, she claimed that Alo married her in 2008 and he would torture her for dowry.

But the following day Alo dismissed the allegations as absurd. At a press conference at DU Journalists Association office, he said, "I am still a bachelor. And there's no question of torturing anyone for dowry."

Contacted, DU Vice-Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said the incident was mysterious. "We have urged the law enforcement agencies to locate the missing teacher."

## 'Bionic' woman

FROM PAGE 20

accident in 2007.

The 32-year-old crossed the finish line at 12:50 BST - 16 days after starting the race with 36,000 other people.

She was met by cheering onlookers and a Pearly King and Queen as she walked beneath an arch of red balloons.

So far she has raised about £80,000 for Spinal Research, a charity which funds medical research around the world to develop treatments for paralysis caused by a broken back or neck.

Lomas has walked around two miles a day, accompanied by her husband Dan, mother Joyce and 13-month-old daughter Maisie.

Organisers have been criticised for insisting that Lomas would not appear in the official results or receive a medal when she finishes, as rules state competitors must complete the course on the same day.

She broke her neck, back and ribs and punctured a lung when her horse threw her off as she took part in the Osberton Horse Trials in Nottinghamshire.

## Madrasa

FROM PAGE 20

In a primary interrogation she admitted her involvement and said she was sorry for what she had done.

"I thought this would help them understand the punishment they will face in hell for irregularity in saying prayers," she told police.

Shafiqul Islam told The Daily Star that they raided a house of Jesmin's relative in Nawabganj where she had taken shelter with her six-month-old baby after a case was filed against her in connection with inflicting torture on the girls.

Abdul Jalil, father of eight-year-old Jannatul Ferdous, one of the girls seared by Jesmin, filed the case on May 1. The madrasa has been closed ever since.

Jannat's father told The Daily Star that she suffered from fever for two days following the incident.

Police produced Jesmin before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court seeking seven days' remand. The court sent her to jail rejecting the remand prayer, the OC added.

# US foils

FROM PAGE 20

attempt to bomb a Detroit-bound jet in 2009 was recovered, the official said, adding that it was meant for use by a suicide bomber.

A spokesman for the Department of Homeland Security said authorities have "no specific, credible information regarding an active terrorist plot against the US at this time," although they continue to monitor efforts to carry out such attacks.

President Barack Obama was told about the plot in April, and the attempt "underscores the necessity of remaining vigilant against terrorism here and abroad," the White House said.

The threat was foiled around the same time as the anniversary of the raid that killed Osama bin Laden, although a second US counter terrorism official said the attempted attack was not timed to coincide with the death of the al-Qaeda leader.

"What this incident makes clear is that this country has to continue to remain vigilant against those that would seek to attack this country. And we will do everything necessary to keep America safe," Defence Secretary Leon Panetta soon after news of the plot broke.

The FBI said it is conducting technical and forensic analysis on the improvised explosive device that was seized abroad.

The device is similar to others previously used by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which Western officials describe as al-Qaeda's most dangerous affiliate, the FBI said.

The device was meant to be put on a US-bound airline, US Rep Peter King, chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, told CNN's Anderson Cooper.

The New York Republican said discovery of the bomb plot is just one part of an ongoing operation.

"It's not over as far as the operation itself, which is why you're seeing very few details being given out," he said.

Both King and a senior

## One hurt as BSF hurls cocktails

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) injured a Bangladeshi man when they hurled cocktails at a group of Bangladeshi cattle traders at Ghasuria border under Hakimpur upazila of Dinajpur yesterday morning, BGB sources said.

The victim was identified as Md Faruk Hossain 32, son of Lutfar Rahman of Changragram under Hakimpur upazila of Dinajpur.

BGB sources said that around eight cattle traders entered Indian territory through Ghasuria border to bring cattle. On their way back, while in Boigram village in India, BSF members fired two rounds of bullets in the air and hurled two cocktails at them injuring Faruk.

The other cattle traders rushed Faruk to Hakimpur upazila Health Complex.

BGB members of Joypurhat-3 Battalion strongly protested the incident.

## Senior Pak cop shot dead

AFP, Quetta

A senior Pakistani police officer was killed in a drive-by shooting in the troubled southwestern province of Baluchistan yesterday, police said.

Shah Nawaz Khan was a senior member of Baluchistan's Criminal Investigation Department (CID), which investigates all offences including terror cases and sectarian killings.

"He was killed in the early morning when he was going for a walk," provincial police chief Rao Amin Hashim told AFP.

administration official said the intended user of the bomb is no longer a threat.

The recovered device, which never made it near an airport or airplane, was not built to be a so-called body bomb, the official said.

"AQAP is the responsible group here," said a different senior US official.

"While similar, a preliminary review of this device shows that it has some significant differences from the device used in the Christmas Day attack. It is clear that AQAP is revamping its bomb techniques to try to avoid the causes of the failure of the 2009 device," the official said, referring to the Detroit incident.

US officials believe AQAP has more than 1,000 members in Yemen and connections to al-Qaeda leadership in Pakistan.

The Yemen affiliate has been behind two of the most audacious attempts to target the United States in recent years: the attempted 2009 bombing and the printer bombs loaded onto cargo planes in 2010 and destined for an address in Chicago.

In both cases, US authorities believe the bombs were built by Ibrahim al-Asiri. Both devices contained a main charge of PETN, a white powdery explosive that conventional "single beam" X-ray machines are rarely able to detect.

In 2009, al-Asiri fitted out his own brother, Abdullah al-Asiri, with a PETN-based underwear bomb to kill Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, a top Saudi security official. The device killed his brother instantly but failed to kill its target.

## DC-led bodies

FROM PAGE 20

The decision of forming the committees was taken at the 17th meeting of a taskforce on river protection yesterday.

Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan, also chairman of the taskforce, chaired the meeting held at the shipping ministry in the capital.

The committees will complete their activities by June 30 and submit their progress reports at the next meeting of the taskforce.

Deputy commissioners of Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur and Munshiganj districts will head the committees while local lawmakers will act as advisers, the minister told reporters after the meeting.

The DCs will also monitor whether the pillars are being installed maintaining the set standard, he said.

A representative each from Land Survey department, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), Public Works department, Bangladesh Paribesh Bachao Andolon, and mayors or chairmen of the respective areas will be the other members of the committees.

Shajahan Khan told reporters that a section of influential people are obstructing the installation process of boundary pillars alongside the banks of four rivers.

"Illegal sand lifting is also going on at some points of the rivers. Today's meeting also decided to take actions against illegal sand lifters," the minister said.

The meeting was told that Water Development Board, after consultation with the deputy commissioner of Dhaka, would take steps for demolishing illegal structures on river banks from Sadarghat to Gabtoli.

The meeting also decided that another committee would be formed to keep the four rivers--Buriganga, Shitalakkhya, Balu and Turag-- free from pollution and manage their waste. The BIWTA chairman will act as the convener of the committee.

The meeting was told that 2,800 boundary pillars, out of 6,854, have already been installed alongside the banks of rivers around Dhaka, and the construction work of Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) at Savar would be completed by December next year.

Land Minister Rezaul Karim Hira, State Minister for Law Quamrul Islam, among others, were present.

# Most of it goes rail's way

ITEMS	TOTAL COST	INDIAN LOAN
Passenger coaches 539	\$271.44 million	\$190.87 million
Locomotives 40	\$117 million	\$82.24 million
Wagons 500	\$54.95 million	\$37 million
DEMU 10 sets	\$47.51 million	\$33.10 million
Khulna-Mongla tracks	\$250 million	\$175 million
Dhaka-Tongi 3rd, 4th lines	\$103.26 million	\$84.67 million
2nd Bhairab & Titas bridges	\$139.32 million	\$120 million

FROM PAGE 1

\$150 million are in the pipeline, railway ministry officials say.

Construction of new track from Khulna to Mongla Sea Port and third and fourth dual gauge from Kamalapur Railway Station to Tongi are crucial among the projects.

Once the Mongla Port is connected to the country's rail network, it will have a huge impact on regional connectivity and trade since Bangladesh had earlier agreed in principle to allow India, Nepal and Bhutan to use the port.

Construction of third and fourth dual gauge tracks between Kamalapur Railway Station and Tongi will help trains enter and leave the capital more smoothly. Now many trains have to wait at either Tongi or Kamalapur as capacity of existing first and second tracks has been saturated.

Sensing urgency of additional tracks, the railway ministry in March this year initiated a project of \$103 million. India cleared the project in a short time due to hectic lobbying by former railways minister Suranjit Sengupta. A tender will be floated in this regard soon, BR officials inform.

Doubling of dual gauge track between Tongi-Joydevpur along with improving signalling is also a part of the project.

Another small but crucial project, construction of two more rail bridges over the Meghna river at Bhairab and the Titas river at Brahmanbaria with approach tracks, is underway. The two bridges are crucial for smooth running of trains between Dhaka and Chittagong.

Although the govern-

ment plans to implement the projects by the end of 2013, sources in the BR say half of the projects might be delayed for some technical issues.

As per the loan agreement, only Indian contractors are eligible for implementing the projects. But in many cases, it has been difficult to find capable contractors as only a few companies bid for the projects. This problem led BR to drop two projects -- buying 264 metre gauge (MG) passenger carriages with two inspector cars, and 150 MG coaches. The projects were supposed to be implemented by the end of 2012.

Above all, India approved the two projects despite the fact that the country no longer manufactures MG coach. On the other side, India did not approve the project to buy 125 passenger carriages, compelling BR to drop the project.

"It has been very difficult for us to find capable companies among the limited bidders. We will face problems when bidders quote higher prices than the estimated cost," a senior BR official told The Daily Star.

Although construction of the second Bhairab and second Titas rail bridges began in March this year with the target to complete those by June 2014, but construction of Khulna-Mongla rail track will be delayed. The BR has yet to float a tender in this regard. The project is supposed to be completed by June next year.

A project to purchase 10 sets of Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) within next year has been

finalised.

One set of DEMU consists of three passenger carriages. It has engines on both sides and thus very useful to quickly transport passengers from one end to the other. The DEMU that has a capacity to carry 600 commuters will operate on Dhaka-Joydevpur, Dhaka-Tangail, Dhaka-Mymensingh, Dhaka-Bhairab and Dhaka-Narayanganj routes.

Problems also arise in purchasing the DEMU. Originally BR proposed to buy MG DEMU. But the plan had to be changed as India does not manufacture DEMU. The project, which was supposed to be implemented by 2012, will be delayed as a new project was initiated to buy broad gauge DEMU.

#### FOUR NEW PROJECTS

Giving priority to the rail sector, four new projects have recently been initiated. The projects are expected to be included in the dollar credit loan list soon.

The projects are rehabilitation of Kulaura-Shahbazpur section, procurement of 70 broad gauge coaches, construction of dual gauge double track on Dhaka-Narayanganj route and establishment of a new workshop in Saidpur.

"The important sector continued to shrink as no governments before the present one took any initiative in the last 40 years to develop it," said Director General of BR Abu Taher. He added the entire scenario of rail services will change once the projects are implemented within the next couple of years.

# Responsibility expands

FROM PAGE 1

operate," said Rahman, chairman and chief executive officer of Transcom Group.

Gone are the days when one could say that Bangladesh's standards would have to be different because it is a developing country, he told a group of businessmen and economists at a ceremony in Oslo on Monday.

"In order to build sustainable businesses that bring benefits to the shareholders, employees and the larger community, it is obvious that the management has to behave in a socially responsible and ethical manner if it wants to succeed in the long term," Rahman said.

He made the comments after receiving the coveted "Business for Peace Award" in the Norwegian capital for his leadership, integrity, ethical standards and business acumen.

Rahman, also vice president of International Chamber of Commerce, Bangladesh (ICC-B), is the first Bangladeshi to win the award.

"It [Transcom Group] generates a significant number of employment in a country like Bangladesh, where unemployment rate is high. Providing stable and sustainable employment is a satisfaction," a jubilant Rahman said in his immediate reaction.

"I hope the award that I have been given will remain as an ideal and inspiration for Bangladesh's business community and our colleagues in the group."

He said it would also inspire new entrepreneurs. "With this award our responsibility expands. These standards have to be maintained as individuals and a business organisation."

"My being bestowed this

unique and prestigious honour by the Business for Peace Foundation, in a sense, puts greater responsibility on myself and the Transcom Group to be even more conscious of its social responsibilities and ensure ethical business practices in the years to come in order to succeed and help Bangladesh find its rightful place in the global context."

ICC-B President Mabbubur Rahman, who was also present at the ceremony, said, "The award gives us a ray of hope. People like Latifur Rahman have shown that one can achieve a huge success by doing business properly and transparently."

Entrepreneurs will be inspired by seeing this type of achievement. It will be helpful for the country's businesses, he said.

Conferred annually since 2009, the award is the highest distinction given to a businessperson for outstanding accomplishments in the area of ethical business.

The recognition has put Latifur Rahman in the group of exceptional business personalities like Ratan Tata, chairman of India's Tata Group, who got the award in 2010, and Jeffrey R Immelt, CEO of USA's General Electric, who won it in 2009.

Transcom Group's growth has taken place under adherence to ethical and responsible business practices that serve as a guideline for other businesses in the region, according to a citation by the Oslo-based Business for Peace Foundation.

The Group is one of the highest payers of corporate tax, VAT and import duty in Bangladesh, with a clean bank record. The companies in the Group also adhere to labour standards

# India to fulfil

FROM PAGE 1

socio-economic development.

He also reiterated Indian engagement in resolving issues pending with Bangladesh.

The Indian PM's assurances came as Foreign Minister Dipu Moni called on him in New Delhi yesterday afternoon, said a foreign ministry press release.

On the proposed Tipaimukh dam and river interlinking projects, he said India would not take any unilateral action that would have an adverse impact on its neighbour.

During the meet, Manmohan also conveyed his greetings to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and said India had deep admiration for her efforts to further develop the existing "excellent bilateral relations" between the two countries.

Dipu Moni, on the other hand, said she was happy to be visiting India for two special events -- the maiden meeting of the Joint Consultative Commission and the closing ceremony of the joint celebration of Tagore's 150th birth anniversary.

She said since Manmohan's visit to Dhaka last year, there had been significant progress in the initiatives undertaken by the two countries.

Also yesterday, Dipu Moni met Indian Water Resources Minister Pawan Kumar Bansal and discussed for more than half an hour the Teesta deal, river interlinking project and Tipaimukh dam construction in northeastern Indian state of Manipur.

The Bangladesh side expressed hope that the agreement on the Teesta water share would be signed soon, reports our New Delhi correspondent.

Bansal, emerging from the meeting at his parliament office in New Delhi, said he had told Dipu that India was putting in efforts to reach an internal consensus on sharing Teesta water with Bangladesh and was optimistic about positive results.

The treaty was expected to be signed during Manmohan's Dhaka visit in September last year. But it was cancelled at the last moment due to opposition from West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

"We hope it [the treaty signing] can be done sooner rather than later," Dipu said, asked whether she had sought a timeline from Bansal for signing the Teesta treaty.

On Mamata's opposition, she said it was an internal matter of India. "In Bangladesh, we are waiting eagerly for this treaty to be signed."

Dhaka says water of the Teesta is crucial for Bangladesh, especially during the lean period between December and March. Drastic fall in water flow in the

Teesta at that time seriously hampers irrigation in the country.

On the river interlinking scheme, Dipu told reporters that India had assured that Bangladesh need not worry over the issue as nothing would be done on the Himalayan component, which has 14 potential interlinking projects and can "affect interests of neighbours".

On the Tipaimukh dam that India has planned to build over the Barak river, Dipu said a team of journalists from Bangladesh would be taken to the project site and briefed about it.

To discuss the Tipaimukh project, she said, they had talked about holding a meeting of a sub-group under Joint Rivers Commission.

The sub-group would examine all aspects of the project and the Indian prime minister's suggestion that Bangladesh should have a stake in it. The 38th meeting of the JRC might take place next month when the sub-group would place its report.

India maintains the Tipaimukh dam will be a hydroelectric project with provision of flood control and that it will not involve diversion of water for irrigation.

**BORDERTALKS** Dipu Moni yesterday also met Indian Home Minister P Chidambaram and discussed terrorism and smuggling of goods through international borders.

After a 20-minute meeting with Chidambaram, the foreign minister told reporters, "Smuggling, terrorism, water and border management issues were discussed. I am hopeful about a positive outcome of the meeting."

She also hoped all outstanding bilateral issues would be resolved through discussions.

The two sides also discussed the issues involving border management, Dipu said adding it was good news that both India and Bangladesh had begun to deal with border management issues, which will lead to a positive outcome.

Besides, the matter of adversely possessed enclaves came up at the meeting, she said without elaborating any further.

India has 110 enclaves in Bangladesh and Bangladesh has 51 in the Indian territory. The issue was likely to be resolved under the land boundary agreement signed during Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Dhaka tour last year.

The ruling Congress-led coalition needs two-thirds majority in Indian parliament to ratify the land boundary agreement through an amendment to the constitution.

"It is before parliament of another country. So, I cannot say anything. But we are hopeful that the issue will be resolved soon," Dipu noted.

# Urban students

FROM PAGE 20

examinations, shows the urban schools, particularly those in the metropolitan cities, are the best.

And, most of the around 1,92,485 students who failed in the examinations are from the rural institutions, sources in the boards said.

Of the top 160 institutions under the eight general education boards, 78 are state-run and these are considered the best in the districts with most of their students coming from well-off families. Most of the remaining ones are either cadet colleges or run by specific forces such as the army, or located in district towns.

Under Dhaka board, 16 of the top 20 institutions are in the capital and only four are outside it.

The four are Mirzapur Cadet College, Mymensingh Girls' Cadet College, Cantonment Public School and College, Tangail, and Mymensingh Zila School at the district town.

Under Jessore board, 14 of the top 20 schools are government-run. Five are either cadet colleges or specialised schools.

The picture is similar as

regards institutions under other boards.

Under Dhaka board, around 3.24 lakh students from 18 districts, and those under a foreign centre, took the examinations. Around 2.78 lakh of them passed.

The pass rate in the capital is 94 percent while it is 81.29 in Munshiganj, 79.6 in Faridpur, 79.02 in Shariatpur, 79.15 in Gopalganj, and 81.28 in Mymensingh districts.

Of the 25,629 students who got GPA-5 under Dhaka board, 15,368 are from Dhaka metropolitan area.

Educationalists observe that urban schools do better than the rural ones since they have necessary investments and better facilities. Such discrimination must be minimised, they say.

Rasheda K Choudhury, former adviser to a caretaker government, said, "We need to invest more in those schools that are struggling for doing better. We need to train their teachers and provide them with other educational facilities."

Rasheda stressed allocating at least four percent of the GDP or 20 percent of the annual budget for education to improve the situation.