Fund for Padma bridge in next budget

Says Muhith STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will allocate fund in the upcoming budget for the construction of Padma bridge, Finance Minister AMA Muhith said yesterday at a pre-budget

discussion. Implementation of the project will start in the next fiscal year, he said at the discussion on budget FY 2012-13 organised by Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Maasranga Television at Radisson Hotel in the city.

The World Bank earlier suspended its funding for the \$2.97 billion Padma bridge project on alleged grounds of corruption in the process of short-listing the contractors.

Driver, helper

FROM PAGE 20 slam, 28, were from Mirsarai upazila in Chittagong, reports

our Narsingdi correspondent. Locals noticed a foul smell coming from the vehicle and informed police. Around 12:30am, law

enforcers recovered the bodes stashed under the driver's seat of the van, Narsingdi police told The Daily Star. The vehicle, carrying cot-

ton worth about Tk 32 lakh, was hijacked on Friday night on its way to Mymensingh from Chittagong Port.

Police suspect muggers might have killed the duo to steal the cotton. Doctors at Narsingdi Sadar

Hospital carried out autopsies on the two bodies. Later the bodies were

handed over to the relatives of the victims. Police have seized the van and were looking for the sto-

len cotton. A case was lodged with

Narsingdi Sadar Police Station in this connection.

Our Mymensingh correspondent adds, Idu Miah Transport in Chittagong was given the contract to carry the cotton from Chittagong Port to Patriot Spinning Mills Ltd at Bhoraduba in Bhaluka upazila of Mymensingh.

Contacted, manager of the transport firm Gopal Saha said the consignment was sent hiring a van of Ujala Paribahan in Chittagong.

The van driver left Chittagong Port on Friday night for Bhaluka loading the vehicle with 56 bales of cotton, he added.

"We found the driver's mobile phone switched off since Saturday morning and could not contact with him," mentioned Gopal. Md Ayub Ali, manager of

Patriot Spinning Mills Ltd, said the transport company did not inform them about the incident till yesterday, though they came to know about the trouble on Monday from another source in Chittagong.

BNP prepares

FROM PAGE 1 The BNP-led 18-party alliance might even enforce a

dawn-to-dusk hartal, some senior leaders hinted. Two cases were filed with

Tejgaon and Ramna police stations on April 29 for torching a bus in front of the Prime Minister's Office and a blast at the secretariat during hartal hours.

Earlier on May 7, the leaders accused in the arson case filed with Tejgoan Police Station appeared before the High Court seeking bail. But a two-member HC bench delivered dissenting orders on seven bail petitions.

Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain sent the case to a third HC bench on May 10 for its final disposal.

The third bench on Sunday ordered the 37 accused to surrender before the trial

Accordingly, they will surrender before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court today at 10:30pm.

The court will hear the bail petitions at 12:15pm, BNP leader Masud Ahmed Talukder told The Daily Star yesterday. Masud is also a

counsel for the accused. Police earlier arrested BNP Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi Ahmed and six

others in the same case. They are now in jail custody while another accused, BNP lawmaker barrister Mahbub Uddin Khokon, secured bail till May 20 from a

trial court.

Journalists

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), made the announcement yesterday while wrapping up a sitin programme in front of Bangladesh Secretariat.

Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ), Jatiya Press Club (JPC), BFUJ and Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) jointly organised the programme.

Other demands include ensuring safety of journalists and providing a safe environment for performing their duties, stopping oppression on newsmen, investigation of earlier killings of journalists, freedom of mass media and a job for the wife of Bibhash Chandra Saha, a journalist who was killed in a road accident in the capital on May 11.

Leaders of different journalists' unions, editors and senior journalists of various print and electronic media organisations will march towards the PMO to submit a memo to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to realise their demands. On February 11, Sagar,

news editor of Maasranga TV, and his wife Runi, a senior reporter of ATN Bangla, were found murdered at their rented flat in West Rajabazar of the capital. As part of the fresh agita-

tion programme, on June 5, the journalists would hand over a memo to the Speaker urging introduction of a law for ensuring safety of journalists and freedom of mass media. From May 20 to June 15

they would also carry out an awareness programme at the print and electronic media offices to strengthen their movement. The BFUJ president

warned of tougher movements including observing work absention in all media

houses across the country if their demands were not met.

He also urged the print and electronic media to publish and air news items everyday on Sagar and Runi, highlighting the failure of the law enforcement agencies into the investigation of the kill-

Earlier, the journalists held their scheduled sit-in programme for around 90 minutes in front of the secretariat yesterday morning.

A section of journalists took position in front of Gate No-2 of the secretariat after defying police resistance at Paltan intersection around 11:30am, as the gate was promptly locked from inside to prevent the journalists from entering.

The remaining journalists were forced to hold their programme on the street running between JPC and the secretariat. President of Federal Union

of Journalists Ruhul Amin Gazi, BFUJ Secretary General Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, DUJ President Abdus Shahid, DUJ General Secretary Mohammad Baker Hossain JPC President Kamaluddin Sabuj, and DRU President Shakhawat Hossain Badsha spoke at the rally.

Newspapers published editorials on the unsolved murder case of the journalist couple while several electronic media houses aired special news on the issue yesterday. Meanwhile on April 18, the

High Court ordered to shift the case to the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) after being frustrated over the failure of the Detective Branch in identifying the killer(s) of Sagar and Runi.

Rab is now investigating the case though it is yet to unearth the mystery behind the murder of the couple.

Once over-staffed

Classes	Approved posts	Appointed	Vacant posts
Officers (grade 1)	548	437	111
Officers (grade 2)	1,356	964	392
Class III employees	21,886	14,221	7,665
Class IV employees	16,484	8,002	8,482
Total	40,274	23,624	16,650

FROM PAGE 1

employees coming over from India joined it.

There were some 60,000 regular employees at the time -- more than a third required. BR's workforce now stands at around 23,000.

After the suspension of recruitment in 1985 following the recommendation of the Asian Development Bank, the government offered voluntary retirement to 8,000 staff in the early 1990s.

Over the years, hundreds of railway staff members have retired, but no fresh recruitment took place, resulting in the present manpower crisis.

A number of policymakers now tell The Daily Star that the decision of suspending recruitment and closing many stations

was not wise. A fresh recruitment did begin in 2010 but it too got stalled following allegations of irregularities in the process and the Tk 70-lakh railwaygate scandal involving former railway minister Suranjit Sengupta's assistant personal secretary and two railway officials last

"Overall maintenance and operation in the railway sector are being seriously hampered due to the manpower shortage," BR Director General Abu Taher told The Daily Star.

month.

He said the authorities cannot run many stations and also have to engage a good number of retired staff on a temporary basis to operate trains and maintain operational activities at stations, tracks and signalling systems.

"A total of 146 stations across the country are now closed. We want to open many of them, but cannot do so due to manpower shortage," Abu Taher said, adding that each station required 10 months.

to 12 staff.

There is also a huge crisis of locomasters, booking clerks, attendants and security guards, the railway DG said and added the authorities had appointed 137 locomasters and 112 station masters on a contractual basis in 2009 and 2010 to keep things going.

Railway officials have said a fresh recruitment will begin next week with an aim to hire 5,000 class-III and class-IV employees.

Application forms will be available on the railway's

website, they added. In the last few years, the BR made several attempts to recruit staff, but failed due to court injunctions against

the recruitment. The railway authorities cancelled an advertisement for recruitment several years

ago following a court order. Some railway staff, who had been working under temporary appointment, filed a writ petition challenging the fresh recruitment at that time. They demanded that the BR give them priority in the recruitment pro-

cess, BR sources said. Against this backdrop, the BR placed a demand for recruiting some 9,448 staff in 125 categories. However, the ministry of public administration gave approval for 7,275 staff under 68 categories in 2010.

been recruited -- 1,128 for the BR East Zone and the rest for the West Zone.

Communications Minister Obaidul Quader, after taking charge of the railway ministry last month, said 5,000 more staff would be recruited.

"There is no alternative to immediate recruitment for proper operation and maintenance of the railway sector," he said, adding that 11,000 staff would be gradually recruited in the coming

Sleep more

FROM PAGE 20

In contrast, getting too little sleep seems to have the opposite effect.

Previous research has shown an association between poor sleep and obesity, but the new findings reveal a complex interaction between sleep and genetic factors linked to body weight.

Scientists made the discovery after studying 1,088 pairs of identical and non-identical twins. Only identical twins

share the same genes, and are therefore subject to the same genetic effects, so differences between them are likely to be due to environmental factors. The study found

heritability of body mass index (BMI) -- a measurement relating weight and height -- was twice as high for short than for long sleepers. For twins sleeping less

than seven hours a night, genetic factors accounted for 70 per cent of differences in BMI. In twins averaging more than nine hours' sleep, only 32 per cent of weight variations could be attributed to genes.

"The results suggest that shorter sleep provides a more permissive environment for the expression of obesity related genes," WAtoday quoted Nathaniel Watson, from the University of Washington, who led the US study, as saying.

extended sleep is protective by suppressing expression of obesity genes," he stated. The scientists suggested

'Or it may be that

hectic modern western lifestyles might contribute to obesity.

'Modern society with its ubiquitous technology often can cause misalignment between sleep need and sleep actualisation. This frequently has adverse consequences for cognitive (mental) function and metabolic, cardiovascular, and immunologic health,' they wrote.

'Evidence is mounting that chronically reduced sleep times are associated with obesity," they added.

Sleep may influence weight by affecting hormones, glucose metabolism and inflammation, they said.

The findings were published on Monday in the journal, Sleep.

8th wage board

FROM PAGE 1

board has already been completed, Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad, who was present at the meeting, told the reporters.

But the government could not announce it [eighth wage board] as the newspaper owners did not send the name of their

representative, Azad said. In this connection. Hasina said if the owners do not do that the government will select the name of their representative for the board.

During the meeting, the premier gave a patient hearing to various demands of the journalists and assured them of solving their problems.

Azad also informed the prime minister that the Insolvent Journalists Assistance Allowance Grants Policy 2012 has been framed with an initial allocation of Tk 50 lakh for the current fiscal.

Under the policy, three committees--National Dhaka City and District-have been formed.

The information secre-So far, 1,611 staff have | tary and the press secretary to the premier would act as chairman and vicechairman of the national committee. DUJ President Omar

were present.

was having none of that. Faruk and its General "My question is simple," Secretary Shaban Mahmud said Justice Huq, "Did you use led the delegation. the word 'liar'?" Press Secretary to the Persistent Fakhrul said, "I premier Abul Kalam Azad,

used the same language Bangladesh Federal Union before the press that I had of Journalists (BFJU) used in the court yesterday." President Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, its Secretary The tribunal chairman then passed an order saying General Abdul Jalil that the defence counsel had Bhuiyan, among others,

Woman killed

FROM PAGE 20

Chandana and Saju Miah were recently divorced but had been living together in a sublet room of a house in the area, family sources said.

Quoting Mahbub, who had sublet the room to the couple, police said Chandana and Saju locked into an altercation at about 9:00pm at their ground floor room. As the family of Mahbub

tried to arbitrate, Saju asked

them not to meddle in their

dispute since it was their personal affair. At one stage, Chandana's screaming stopped and Saju walked out of the room locking the door from outside, Mahbub said adding that there was blood all over

Saju's shirt.

FROM PAGE 1

12.21 crore.

buildings at Sutrapur.

DCC insiders say corrup-

In 2005, through a direc-

tive of former mayor

Sadeque Hossain Khoka, the

DCC initiated a project to

construct 12 buildings for Tk

20.93 crore. Due to unavail-

ability of land, the project

was revised to construct

nine buildings at a cost of Tk

The buildings were sup-

posed to be completed by

2007. But the contractors

could not meet the deadline.

The construction was sus-

pended after the building

collapse in Dayaganj in

the project director, were

held responsible for faulty

construction that led to the

Dayaganj building tumbling

down. They were, however,

handed down minor pun-

ishment like withholding of

promotion for a couple of

even given more responsi-

employed a Buet team to

examine the usability of the

remaining eight buildings.

The team submitted its

report on September 21 last

year, declaring the buildings

were unsafe and uninhabit-

The report mentioned

that the strength of concrete

in the buildings was very low

Justice Nizamul Huq, on

Monday, told the defence

counsel that he could not

disrespect Prof Anisuzzaman,

who was in the dock as the first

prosecution witness against

Salauddin Quader

is a respected person," the

nal resumed its proceedings

at 10:37am, prosecutor Zead

Al Malum told the court that

despite the court's order to

not disrespect the professor,

the defence counsel had

called Anisuzzaman a "liar

court order, said Malum

adding that the prosecution

would be prejudiced if con-

tempt proceedings were not

initiated against Fakhrul

that witnesses could be

insulted and maligned when

they appear to testify against

an accused, the prosecutor

then asked Fakhrul Islam

whether he had used the word

answering by giving a long-

winded reply but the tribunal

repeated the word "liar"

"liar" before the press.

The tribunal chairman

Fakhrul tried to evade

This would send a message

This was a violation of

Yesterday, after the tribu-

"You should remember he

Chowdhury.

chairman had said.

before the media.

Islam.

added.

The project director was

In late 2010, the DCC

years.

bilities.

Three officials, including

tion is to blame for the poor

construction of the buildings.

Upon receiving Mahbub's phone call, the law enforcers rushed to the spot and recovered the body

Govt discards

that bore stab injuries, police said.

Mohammad Samrat, maternal uncle of the deceased, told The Daily Star Saju went to Chandana's village at Pocharpara, Pirganj in Rangpur district one year back and forcibly married her after blackmailing her father.

"We had no information about Saju's family during their marriage. We only knew his name at that time," Samrat added. Chandana and Saju often

locked in frequent quarrel after their marriage. Seven months back, they became separated by a divorce and Chandana started living in a girls' hostel at Mohammadpur in the capital, family sources said.

Around five to six months back, they started living together in the rented sublet room at Adabor, they added.

and piling was very weak.

Because of these conditions,

the foundation of these

buildings was inadequate

report, the government's

Implementation Monitoring

and Evaluation Division

issued a letter to the LGRD

ministry on March 13, rec-

ommending punitive mea-

sures against the officials

responsible for the irregular-

letter on April 24 asked the

DCC to investigate and

identify those responsible

for the faulty construction of

the buildings. But the DCC

Shahid Khan, secretary of

the Local Government

Division, recently told The

Daily Star that the authori-

ties were firm about taking

action against the irregulari-

ties and had already taken

Jahangir Alam said a com-

mittee would be formed to

identify the officials respon-

sible for the irregularities

did not find an alternative,

they would bring down the

buildings. This would be

done after taking permis-

The fiasco in the DCC

project has caused a loss of

Tk 12.21 crore to the public

exchequer. Also wasted was

Tk 40 lakh that the DCC

before the press despite the

court's cautioning him of the

that the counsel had "deliber-

ately violated the court's

Crimes (Tribunal) Act, 1973,

"The tribunal may punish any

person, who obstructs or

abuses its process or disobeys

any of its orders or directions,

or does anything which tends

to prejudice the case of a party

before it, or tends to bring it or

any of its members into

hatred or contempt, or does

anything which constitutes

contempt of the tribunal, with

simple imprisonment which

may extend to one year, or

with fine which may extend to

taka five thousand, or with

tribunal began recording

cross-examination of Dhaka

University Professor Emeritus

Anisuzzaman for the second

Ahsanul Haq Hena, a

defence counsel of Salauddin

Quader, asked the professor of

Bangla department about the

thesis of his doctorate degree,

the awards he has received

and the chronicles of his

passports among other

definition of democracy.

The tribunal did not record

Proceedings against

Salauddin Quader

Chowdhury were later

adjourned until today. The

BNP lawmaker was produced

After passing the order, the

As per the International

The tribunal chief noted

sion from the government.

He said if the authorities

DCC Chief Engineer Md

some steps to that end.

within a month.

SQ Chy's counsel

order".

both".

things.

Abu Alam Mohammad

has so far done little.

The LGRD ministry in a

ities in the construction.

Following the Buet ommendation.

for retrofitting.

Musleh Uddin, a subinspector of Adabor Police Station, told The Daily Star Mahbub and his family members had no information about the marital status of the couple.

city

They only shared one of their rooms on rental basis, the SI added. Chandana's family col-

lected a copy of marriage

document of the couple and found the address of a house in Mohammadpur in it. As police went there to verify information on Saju, locals told the law enforcers

that no one lived in that address in the name of Saju. Family sources also said that Saju helped Chandana to get admitted in the social work department of the

college. There were 16 stab marks on Chandana's body, Dhaka Medical College morgue sources said.

spent on a consultant that

Software

in 2011

AFP, Singapore

study.

BSA said.

users in 33 markets.

These markets account

before the court yesterday.

against humanity allegedly

committed during the

Meanwhile, the tribunal-1

yesterday recorded the cross-

examination of the last prose-

cution witness against

Jamaat-e-Islami leader

cific charges of crimes against

humanity committed during

Sayedee is facing 20 spe-

Delawar Hossain Sayedee.

LiberationWar of 1971.

SAYEDEE CASE

piracy costs

record \$63.4b

industry a record \$63.4

emerging economies listed

as the main culprits, an

annual study said yesterday.

high of \$21 billion last year

This was up nearly eight

suggested retrofitting the buildings to make them Talking to The Daily Star, usable. The Buet report Aminul Islam Chowdhury, chairman of the Oikya Parishad, dismissed this as a bad recsaid the prime minister pledged to regularise their jobs in the election manifesto and repeated that pledge before drafting the previous national budget. Yet the government is showing negli-

ernment does not allot money in the upcoming budget for regularising their jobs. "If primary education Software piracy cost the system collapses due to the billion globally in 2011 with

ity," he added. The teachers returned to the Shaheed Minar after those

percent from the previous record of \$58.8 billion in The teachers started their 2010, the Business Software demonstration from Monday Alliance (BSA) said in the when they staged a sit-in at the Shaheed Minar to press home their demand.

Court premises. Emerging markets had an average piracy rate of 68 percent, far exceeding the 42 percent global average and 24 percent in mature econo-

which is based on a survey of about 15,000 computer In the rule, the court also asked the trio why they should not be punished for

> The HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim issued the rule after Manzill Murshid moved the petition on behalf of Human Rights and Peace

vesterday afternoon. Earlier on May 2, following a writ petition filed by the HRPB, the same bench directed DPDC to provide uninterrupted power supply to Dhaka District

the 1971 Liberation War. functions. Facing cross-examination for the ninth day, witness and investigation officer of the case Mohammad Helal Uddin yesterday answered quesincludes 30 containers of

sented against the Jamaat naveb-e-ameer. Mizanul Islam, a defence counsel of Sayedee, suggested that several pieces of evidence, including footages and special TV reports, had little relevance to the case.

tions about evidence he pre-

Those were presented only to make the courtroom atmosphere "heavy", he suggested.

Helal Uddin, the witness, however said that it was not true. The cross-examination

would resume today. Heat wave

FROM PAGE 20

a number of questions due to their irrelevance. The ques-

Bogra, Rangpur, Syedpur, Dinajpur, Khulna, Mongla, tions included one regarding Satkhira, Jessore, Tangail the land route from Dhaka to and Faridpur. Kolkata and another on the

Temperature may remain unchanged day and night across the country, and some areas may receive rainfall today, said the met office.

Police action

FROM PAGE 20 Shaheed Minar around noon

to place a memorandum containing the one-point demand for regularisation of their jobs.

Police intercepted their procession and asked them to send a delegation to the PMO to submit the memorandum, Sirajul Islam, officer-in-charge

of Shahbag Police Station, said.

But the teachers tried to move towards the PM's office. At one stage, police charged batons on them and used water canons to disperse them around 12:30am.

and staged a sit-in in front of Shahbagh Police Station from 1:00pm for the release of their four detained colleagues. A portion of the teachers again tried to go to the Shahbagh intersection when police dispersed them.

University was blocked from around 12:10pm halting vehicular movement. The blockade was removed around 6:00pm in the evening.

gence. He said that they would go for tougher movement if gov-

have to take the responsibil-

directors for not ensuring uninterrupted power supply at Dhaka District Judge's

The court also summoned the managing director and two directors (operation and engineering) of DPDC before it on May 22 to explain why they have not

for 82 percent of the global the contempt of court.

for Bangladesh (HRPB). specific charges of crimes

The bench, however, said it would withdraw its order on May 16 (today) if DPDC managed to ensure uninterrupted power supply to the buildings

Judges' Court and its bar association buildings for smooth running of judicial

Zarda (chewing tobacco), two packets of gunpowder and Acting on a tip-off, the detectives went to the office, on the first floor of an eight-

up, Tariq Ahmed, additional deputy commissioner of the DB, told reporters.

media, said Tariq. "We found the materials in a bag tucked inside the shutter roller," said the ADC add-

future programmes of the opposition.

Teachers have been dem-

onstrating under the banner of "National Non-Government (registered) Primary Teachers' Oikya Parishad", a platform of four organisations of nongovernment primary teachers. Later teachers held a rally

The road from Shahbag intersection to TSC on Dhaka

movement, government will

detained were released at around 6:30pm yesterday.

In the Asia Pacific, which comprises several emerging Power supply economies including China, bootleg software usage also FROM PAGE 20 cost the industry an all-time

up 12 percent from 2010 mies, according to the study

complied with the order.

Salauddin is facing 23

Bomb-making FROM PAGE 1

11:00pm. The stuff seized

storey building at Tin Polar Matha, but found it locked

As the caretaker of the office was not available, police forced open the lock in presence of the locals and the

ing that another DB team held Idris Ali, the caretaker, at his house at Kazir Deuri around the same time. Police suspect the materials might have been brought to make bombs to be used in

The DB raids came two days after violent clashes between the activists of the BNP-led 18-party alliance

and police.