

**Spain's leader faces key votes**

*AFP, Bilbao*

Spaniards battling a deep recession voted in two snap regional elections yesterday that could deal a blow to Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy.

Rajoy's right-leaning Popular Party has imposed tough austerity measures on the eurozone's fourth-largest economy and now faces votes in the premier's home region of Galicia and in the Basque Country.

The elections are full of risks for the Spanish leader as he agonises over whether and when to snatch a eurozone rescue line to help finance the nation's soaring public debt.

**WB presses**

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last fiscal year.

Though it was a media briefing on the economy, the WB officials faced queries from journalists on the much-talked-about Padma bridge project.

The WB cancelled its \$1.2 billion funding of the \$2.9 billion project in June this year over corruption allegations. The lender, however, decided to revive its loan on September 21 after the Bangladesh government agreed to its terms and conditions.

Goldstein said the WB decided to engage in fresh discussions on the project, and as part of the move, the lender's external panel finished its first of a series of meetings with the ACC.

Another mission will visit Bangladesh next month to talk on the procedures for revising the project. But it will not handle issues related to the probe into the corruption allegations, she said.

"The panel [WB's external team] has agreed to work together with the ACC for an appropriate investigation."

A three-member external panel, assigned to assess the conduct of the ACC probe into corruption allegations in the project, left Dhaka on October 16 wrapping up its two-day visit.

Luis Moreno Ocampo, former chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, heads the panel.

She said the panel requested the ACC in writing to provide it with more information on the issue.

Goldstein said the panel's next visit is yet to be finalised, but she hinted that it may take place in December or January next year.

**Gaddafi's son**

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before, was known as one of the most hardline of Gaddafi's sons: after studying in a Russian military academy, he formed the 32nd Brigade as a special unit to be at the service of his father.

Reports said his body was being brought to Misrata, in a repeat of last October when his father's body was put on public display before being buried at a secret site. Khamis was wrongly reported dead several times.

Earlier in the day another leading member of Gaddafi's administration, former spokesman and former minister Moussa Ibrahim, was captured as he tried to flee north of Bani Walid. But further confusion emerged after an audio clip posted on Facebook purporting to be the voice of Moussa Ibrahim denied his capture.

Khamis never married, and was regarded as on the side of his older brother Moatasen, forming the "muscle" of the Gaddafi family, in contrast to Saif Al Islam, now in jail in Libya on war crimes charges, who until last year's revolution portrayed himself as a political reformer.

The rest of Muammar Gaddafi's clan is scattered. Wife Safiya is in Algeria, with eldest son Muhammad, fifth son Hannibal and their only daughter by birth, Aisha. Saadi Gaddafi has sought refuge in Niger, which refused bids to extradite him, while Saif is in custody. The whereabouts of the Colonel's adopted daughter, Hana, is unknown.

**China offers**

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students from the current 80 for higher studies.

Li said his government would send language experts and academic materials for Bangladeshi students keen to learn the Chinese language.

Termining the existing relations between the Awami League and the CPC excellent, he called for more political and cultural exchanges between the two countries.

The PM's press secretary said Li had praised the successes of the government under the able leadership of Hasina.

In response, Hasina described China's fast growing economy as a role model for the world. She thanked China for its assistance to Bangladesh.

The premier said the historic visits of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to China in 1953 and 1957 had laid the foundations of bilateral relations between Beijing and Dhaka.

She reiterated Bangladesh's steadfast support to the one-China policy.

At the meeting, the premier highlighted various successes of her government in different sectors, including education and healthcare services.

The Chinese delegation included Minister for International Department of CPC Central Committee Wang Jiarui, Education Minister Yuan Guiren, Cultural Affairs Minister Cai Wu, Minister for State Administration of Radio, Film and Television Cai Fuchao, Minister for General Administration of Press and Publication Liu Binjie and Vice Minister of Commerce Jiang Zengwei.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Enamul Haq, Ambassador at Large M Ziauddin, among others, were present at the meeting.

Later, the Chinese delegation held a meeting with Foreign Minister Dipu Moni

**Dr Kamal**

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"We will get strength through the politics of unity and replace the ongoing sick politics with healthy practice for a bright future of this 16-crore people's land," he said, citing issues such as the stock market and Hall-Mark scams.

Sick politics created new words like "admission trade," "appointment trade," "election engineering", "media coup", "nomination trade", he observed.

AQM Badruddoza said the key problems of this country were corruption, terrorism and political and social instability.

Some greedy politicians, some dishonest businessmen and some corrupt bureaucrats hinder the country's progress while the youth, labourers and farmers struggle to get the country moving, he added.

"We have to wake up and identify our enemies and friends."

"That's why we need poli-

**Six killed in Guinea Bissau fire fight**

**REUTERS, BISSAU**

Six people were killed in a gun battle near Guinea-Bissau's capital overnight in an apparent counter-coup attempt, sources said yesterday.

The West African state, a hub for international cocaine traffickers, is in the midst of a messy recovery after the army overthrew the government and derailed election in April.

Military officials said the fighting erupted overnight near an air force base just outside the city, adding six "rebels" were killed and several others detained.

**US grand jury**

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to be an undercover agent, and the detonator was an inoperative cellphone.

Nafis' parents have disputed that their son is a terrorist.

at the state guest house Jamuna, reports our diplomatic correspondent.

Dipu Moni requested China for early implementation of Kunming Initiative and sought Chinese support for construction of multi-lane tunnel under the river Karnaphuli, Sonadia deep-sea port and Dohazari-Cox Bazar railway link.

At a meeting with a BNP delegation at Sonargaon Hotel, Li said his government would take an initiative to establish direct rail and road links between Chittagong and Kunming.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia led the eight-member delegation.

Earlier in the day, the Chinese delegation met President Zillur Rahman at Bangabhaban in the capital.

During the meeting, the president sought increased Chinese support for energy, information technology and infrastructure development.

**DEALS SIGNED**

The agreement on economic and technical cooperation was signed by Economic Relations Division Secretary Iqbal Mahmood and Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce Jiang Zengwei.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) on strengthening cooperation in the field of electricity was signed between the power, energy and mineral resources ministry of Bangladesh and commerce ministry of China.

Power Division Secretary M Abul Kalam Azad and Chinese Vice Minister Jiang Zengwei signed the MoU on behalf of their respective sides.

A framework agreement on concessional loans to be provided by China to Bangladesh was signed by Iqbal Mahmood and Jiang Zengwei.

Under the framework agreement, China will provide \$ 226 million to implement the Pagla Water Treatment Plant project of Dhaka Wasa.

tics of unity and it is possible without sacrificing own political ideologies. Can't we be united on the issues like corruption, terrorism and the politics of killing and disappearance? Yes we can," the former president said.

Asked whether they would end up again with the two major political parties and abandon the people, Dr Kamal said there was no such possibility.

Both the veteran politicians opined that the caretaker government system was required for a free, fair and credible parliamentary election.

Noted journalist ABM Musa, columnist Syed Abul Maksud, Mahmudur Rahman Manna, and Dr Zafarullah Chowdhury of Gono Shasthya Kendra also spoke at the function, where a number of foreign diplomats were present.

**Yash Chopra**

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with dengue, according to TV reports. He breathed his last yesterday.

Known for making some of the best love stories and action dramas, the veteran had been busy shooting for his last directorial project -- Jab Tak Hai Jaan.

"He had been suffering from complications of dengue for a long time. He suffered from multi organ failure, because of which he died," a hospital source said.

According to reports Chopra had to even cancel a trip to the Swiss Alps for the filming of the last remaining song sequence in his upcoming film. The trip had to be cancelled after he was admitted to Lilavati hospital.

Born in Lahore on September 27, 1932, Chopra began his career as an assistant director to IS Johar and his elder brother, BR Chopra.

In his over five decade old career, Chopra has made several hits like Deewar, Trishul, Chandni, Silsila, Veer Zaara and others.

Chopra is survived by his wife Pamela and two sons Aditya and Uday.

**Rejected**

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CNTIC-CMC was not given exclusive scope to clarify as they had sought clarification from four other bidders as well, except from Chinese company Shanghai Electric which was originally the lowest bidder.

When the bids were opened in June, Shanghai Electric's price offer was seen to be the lowest -- \$242 million. CNTIC-CMC's price offer was \$243 million.

Moreover, CNTIC-CMC's financial arrangement had two flaws. Firstly, it had offered financing from China Export and Credit Insurance -- better known as Sinosure. Sinosure's financing system covers products and services of Chinese origin only. But, at least 30 percent of the power plant's equipment is not manufactured in China. Therefore, the financing would not cover purchase of vital equipment. The PDB committee concerned overlooked this issue.

Secondly, CNTIC-CMC did not mention the insurance premium but said the grace period for the premium would be five years. All other bidders mentioned the premium as 6.7 percent with three-year grace period. The PDB committee borrowed this rate for CNTIC-CMC and showed that its offer has a longer grace period.

All these changes helped CNTIC-CMC's read out price to be revised down to \$236 million. And this made the company's offer the lowest with the per kilowatt construction cost standing at a record low of \$ 654 as against Shanghai Electric's \$658.

**My husband**

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conference.

"He is not a fugitive and was here (Naikhangchhari) only two days ago," Monwara said.

According to newspaper reports, the probe body said that a meeting was held on September 28 at Tofail's residence a day before the attacks that destroyed 18 temples and 50 houses of the Buddhist community.

Monwara rejected the allegation soon enough, saying it was quite impossible to organise such a meeting as their home was situated in a restricted zone where members of BGB and intelligence departments also reside.

Tofail's statement also termed the newspaper reports as "false and imaginary" as the government investigation report has not been made public yet.

Locally known as Jamaat's man, Tofail has a nephew, Abdul Moktadir who, along with Omar Faruk exhibited and distributed the offensive Facebook images to Uttam Kumar Barua's page to provoke locals against the Buddhists.

Moktadir had gone to Tofail's house on September 28, his mother told The Daily Star.

Hamida Chowdhury, vice chairman of the upazila, Monkhiu Chakma, chairman of the upazila union parishad, Md. Nurul Amin, the upazila BNP president were also present in the press conference, among others.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Jasim Uddin, acting deputy commissioner (DC) of Cox's Bazar, was transferred and attached to the public administration ministry yesterday.

Jasim took over as the acting DC of Cox's Bazar from Mohammad Jainul Bari on September 30.

Bari was earlier transferred to Chittagong, but later made an officer on special duty (OSD) over his alleged inaction during the communal attacks on the Buddhist community in Ramu on September 29.

The reason for Jasim's transfer could not be ascertained immediately, reports a correspondent in Cox's Bazar.

Local sources said Jasim, who was additional deputy commissioner in Cox's Bazar during the mayhem, also did not take any steps to quell the violence.

**Ginger prices**

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retailers take the advantage of the growing demand for essentials following eid and thereby make huge profits.

"The prices of garlic and suchlike commodities are too high for the ordinary people," said Md Rasidul Hassan, an employee of a non-governmental organisation, who shops at a roadside kitchen market in Azimpur.

He added, "I bought a kg of onion for Tk 35 yesterday. The same amount of onion cost Tk 26 a week ago."

Reduced supplies by stockists and importers, higher transport costs and delay in releasing of perishable goods from the Chittagong port are blamed for the price spiral of spices.

Idris Ahmed, a wholesaler of onion and garlic at Shyambazar in Old Dhaka, said onion prices increased due to a fall in its import from India.

There was no price hike for local garlic due to its low demand, which was in marked contrast to the huge demand for its imported variety at the retail level, he added.

Most of the customers want to buy Chinese garlic which is bigger and takes less time to peel, he added.

Idris said transport costs have increased significantly. Besides, truck drivers prefer to carry sacrificial animals for high pay.

Just a week ago, shipping such commodities by truck from a north-western district like Dinajpur to the

**Noab wants benefits for all**

**FROM PAGE 1**  
meeting of the 8th Wage Board.

Noab considered it a 'unilateral announcement' and issued a statement signed by its vice president Matiur Rahman after a meeting held in the capital yesterday.

The statement said without a simultaneous increase in newspaper income -- by raising advertisement rate and volume and lowering VAT and removing other taxes -- the newspaper industry will be unable to pay the 50 percent dearness allowance.

"In the previous two meetings [of the Wage Board] different opinions were expressed from the owners and journalists/workers side."

"We feel that the chairman should have held a conclusive meeting of the Wage Board on the interim dearness allowance before unilaterally making up his mind and the information ministry should have discussed the matter with the owners before announcing the decision," it said.

The owners felt that this decision was being imposed on the industry without considering the overall financial situation of industry and the economic realities of the country.

In this connection the Noab members had met with the prime minister, finance minister and information

minister several times and brought out the fact that there has been no increase either in rate or in volume of government advertising since 1998 in spite of the fact that during the said period international newsprint price increased several fold along with the cost of printing, production and distribution.

This had forced many newspapers to suffer great financial loss resulting in the non-implementation of the 7th Wage Board on their part.

"Now again, without any increase in advertisement rate and volume, 50 percent interim dearness allowance is being unilaterally imposed on the newspaper industry," Noab said in its statement.

This will cause serious financial burden with the threat of some being unable to continue, it observed.

Newspaper owners have always been supportive of higher wages for journalists and other employees and have participated in the activities of the 8th Wage Board in spite of serious flaws in its structure and membership.

"We stand ready to support higher wages and benefits of journalists if we are given simultaneous support in terms of increased earning."

"In this regard we appeal to journalists and workers unions to work jointly with us

**Azad faces 10 charges**

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November 1 whether to frame charges against Azad in connection with his alleged involvement in the crimes committed during the Liberation War.

Azad, also known as Bachchu Razakar, is at large.

During the two-hour proceedings that started around 10:30 am yesterday, Prosecutor Sahidur Rahman brought the charges and said on May 14, 1971, Azad and his cohorts abducted Sudhangshu Mohan Roy and his son from their home at Kalaran of Boalmari in Faridpur.

Later, Azad shot Sudhangshu dead while his cohorts shot and injured his son Monimoy Chandra Roy.

The prosecutor said Azad and his cohorts abducted Madhab Biswas of Purua Namapara of Nagarkanda and looted his home on May 16, 1971.

Later, Azad killed Madhab about 300 yards from the house where one Gyanendra was also killed.

Azad and his accomplices raped two women in Boalmari upazila in Faridpur on June 8, 1971, Sahidur said.

On June 3, 1971, Azad along with 20-25 collaborators attacked Fulbaria of Nagarkanda and looted Hindu homes. Chitta Ranjan Das and Badal Devnath were shot dead by Azad, he said.

On May 17, Azad and his cohorts along with 30-35 Pakistani army personnel attacked Hasamdia (a Hindu dominated neighbourhood) of Boalmari and Mayendia Bazar in Faridpur. They killed six people there, the prosecutor said.

Azad detained Dulal Chandra Mia and Kader Matubbar of Joykali village in Salta. He and his associates also burnt down and looted 30-34 houses on May 5, 1971,

capital used to cost Tk 15,000-17,000. Now, it costs twice as much, added Idris.

Ratan Saha, an importer and wholesaler, said prices of onion usually rise during the monsoon.

He claimed onion prices are now stable at the wholesale markets. "The rise is reasonable. The prices of onion go up ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha every year," he added.

Importers said they are having difficulty getting huge amounts of onion, garlic and ginger released from the Chittagong port due to malfunctioning of many cranes in the port.

They urged the government to take steps and repair the cranes as soon as possible to ensure smooth supply of the products.

**TIB sends copy**

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Earlier on Thursday, the ministry sent a letter to the TIB seeking a copy of its recent report on MPs in a bid to scrutinise the allegations of irregularities brought against lawmakers.

TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman, in a statement, said "We are inspired by the interest shown by the information minister and the government indeed."

"We hope the government will take effective steps through analysing the report and its recommendations with a positive attitude so that the path of strengthening the parliamentary democracy gets smoother."

Iftekharuzzaman said both nationally and internationally recognised methods were applied in conducting the study, and the report analysed the negative and positive roles of MPs.

"There is no scope to consider it as an investigation on activities of any individual," he added.

TIB in its report, released on October 14, said 97 percent of 149 sitting MPs surveyed were involved in "negative activities".

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BAU unit Samajantrik Chhatra Front General Secretary Kishore Ahmed told The Daily Star, "As the probe body chief and its members joined the programme organised against us, we are very doubtful about a neutral probe."

Chhatra Front and Chhatra Union form part of a progressive students' combine that has been waging the movement against the admission fee hike.

After the media published photos depicting Proctor MA Salam punching a female student during students' protest against the fee hike, the education ministry asked the university to form a probe body.

On the very first day of the probe body, its head Prof Abdur Rahman Sarker, who is also the BAU Teachers' Association president, became controversial by making apparently biased remarks in the proctor's favour.

Prof Abdur Rahman was replaced in the probe body the following day by Prof Ali Akbar.

And Prof Ali Akbar yesterday with two of his probe body colleagues joined the human chain. They spent a good chunk of the three-day time they have to probe the incident forming the human chain.

The rally was led by none other than Prof Abdur Rahman Sarker, the former probe body chief.

Asked about the matter, university Vice-Chancellor Prof Md Rafiqul Hoque claimed that as teachers, the probe body members could join such programmes and it would not affect the investigation.

A group of university Chhatra League men including its President Shamsuddin Al Azad and General Secretary Rafiquzzaman Emon joined the teachers' association human chain.

Azad and Emon addressed the rally there too.

Asked why they joined a teachers' association programme, Emon said, "We joined it to express our sympathy to our respected teachers who were victims of misbehaviour by a section of students."

**Boy killed**

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Ali's father Yunus Ali is a rickshaw-puller. Ali lived with his family in Bownia Beribadh of Mirpur 11.

A microbus hit Ali around 11:00am when he was crossing the road known as Notun Rasta near Kalshi intersection, a little distance from his house, said his mother Shahnaz Begum.

The victim was rushed to Mirpur Adhunik Hospital. He was later transferred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead around 12:45pm, family sources said.

Police had been informed about the incident, said Abdul Latif Sheikh, officer-in-charge of Pallabi Police Station.

**Fresh drama at BAU**

**BCL men join teachers' human chain against leftist student bodies**

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh**

Nothing seems to going for the pro-left students of Bangladesh Agriculture University, who are protesting at the university's more than tripling the admission fees.

Yesterday, they saw activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League university unit, widely blamed for attacking left-wing students on campus on October 9, and members of the probe body, investigating a teacher's assault on a left-leaning student, join hands with BAU Teachers' Association.

All three groups yesterday formed a human chain to protest what they called "pro-left students' misbehaviour with teachers".

The members of the probe body, whose mandate was to investigate the incident of university proctor punching a female student during the October 9 violence, joined yesterday's human chain raising questions about a fair probe.

BAU unit Samajantrik Chhatra Front General Secretary Kishore Ahmed told The Daily Star, "As the probe body chief and its members joined the programme organised against us, we are very doubtful about a neutral probe."

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