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# Arms, nuke deals lack transparency

The Daily Star - CFAS discussion on Bangladesh-Russia relations told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The \$ 1.5 billion arms purchase and Ruppur nuclear power plant deals with Russia lack transparency, as they had been signed hastily without any public debate, former ambassadors and retired military officials said yesterday.

Although the country's armed forces need supplies from varied sources, the move with Russia demands accountability, they said at a discussion on Bangladesh-Russia relations and its prospects and challenges.

The Daily Star and Centre for Foreign Affairs Studies jointly organised the discussion at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

On January 15, governments of both the countries signed the deals in Kremlin in presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Russian President Vladimir Putin with the latter granting \$ 1 billion weapon purchase loan at 4.5 percent interest rate.

The rest \$ 500-million loan at 3.5 percent interest rate is for conducting feasibility study for setting up two nuclear power plant reactors, each with 100MW capacity, in Ruppur.

According to former foreign secretary Syed Muazzem Ali, both the deals lack transparency and accountability.

A public perception was that Russia had pushed the high-interest loan on Bangladesh in exchange for helping to set up a nuclear power plant, he said, adding that a pre feasibility study should be conducted by an independent third party.

He also emphasised training for the required manpower for the projects.

Muazzem Ali pointed out that the natural cooling system for a nuclear reactor would not be possible, though planned, as the rivers in Ruppur were drying up and had changed course.

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PHOTO ON PAGE 5



People use boats to cross the river, as Meghna Gumti bridges on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway were closed from yesterday for desperately needed repairs.

PHOTO:  
BANGLAR CHOKH

## KILLING OF THREE 6,000 sued in Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

The district administration has withdrawn Section 144, which was imposed in Cox's Bazar following Friday's clash, as the first day of Jamaat-enforced 48-hour hartal passed off peacefully in the district yesterday.

While shops kept their shutters closed, rickshaws and auto-rickshaws were seen plying the streets.

Section 144 was withdrawn around 10:00am as normalcy returned to the district, said Md Ruhul Amin, district

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## Jamaat men fight with cops in Sylhet

40 injured; Patuakhali Jamaat office vandalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

At least 40 people were injured, two of them bullet-hit, as activists of Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir clashed with police in Sylhet yesterday.

Twelve policemen were also among the injured.

Against such backdrop, the government yesterday decided to deploy four platoons of Border Guard Bangladesh at different strategic points of the district

town from Sunday 6:00am, Lt Col Shafiu Azam, commanding officer of BGB-5 battalion confirmed.

Meanwhile, of the two bullet-hit Shibir activists, condition of Ali Asgar Khan alias Rahat was stated to be critical. Rahat, a student of accounting at Madan Mohan (MC) College, was airlifted to Dhaka from Osmani Medical College Hospital, Sylhet.

Sadik Ahmed, the other wounded Shibir activist from the same college,

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## No clemency for war criminals

Nirmul Committee demands amendment to constitution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee yesterday demanded that the government amend the constitution to disqualify war criminals for presidential clemency.

The organisation reiterated its demand of trying Jamaat-e-Islami, Peace Committee, Razakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams as organisations and forces for their involvement in genocide and other crimes committed during the Liberation War.

Nirmul Committee, which works for elimination of the killers and collaborators of 1971, came up with the

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## Facebook hit by cyber attack

AFP, San Francisco

Facebook said its computer system was "targeted in a sophisticated attack" last month, but that it found no evidence any user data was compromised.

The company said in a blog post on Friday that malware came from an infected website of a mobile developer and that "we remediated all infected machines, informed law enforcement, and began a significant investigation that continues to this day."

The attackers used a previously unseen exploit taking advantage of a

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**TEARAWAY TASKIN:** Young Chittagong Kings pacer Taskin Ahmed expends full effort while taking 4 for 31 against Duroto Rajshahi in the 1st BPL T20 semifinal at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Story on page 16.

PHOTO:  
FIROZ AHMED

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## 16 PCJSS men abducted in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

At least 16 leaders and activists of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) were abducted from Katholi in Longudu upazila here yesterday morning.

PCJSS leaders blamed the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) for the abduction. They also claimed that the number of abductees is 70.

Among the abductees are Moni Shankar Chakma, secretary of Longudu upazila unit PCJSS, Josho Chakma, secretary of Jubo Samity, and its organising secretary Milon Chakma, said Longudu police.

Md Rezaul Haque, officer-in-charge (OC) of Longudu Police Station, said some 40 people blocked an engine boat in Jottila area of Longudu around 10:30am and abducted the PCJSS men at gun point.

The PCJSS members were returning home from Rangamati town after attending the party's 41st founding anniversary programme.

A joint team of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and police is conducting drives to rescue the abductees, added the OC.

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## Nerve-racking competition

SHAHNOOR RABBANI

The Daily Star Spelling Bee witnessed one of its most intense and emotionally charged competitions of this year during its final zonal activation on the playground of Comilla Zilla School yesterday.

Around 118 students, divided into 3 groups, took part in the competition from all over Comilla.

Hundreds of onlookers, including students, parents and teachers, cheered at the contestants to boost their

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## UN chief urges India, Pakistan for restraint

PTI, United Nations

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has urged India and Pakistan to exercise restraint and resolve issues peacefully after a Pakistani soldier who intruded into the Indian territory was killed by the Indian Army along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir.

Ban's spokesperson Martin Nesirky yesterday told reporters that the UN chief was aware of the latest incident on February



Ban Ki-moon

14 at the LoC in which the Pakistani soldier, after intruding into Indian territory in a fresh incident of ceasefire violation, was killed by the Indian troops.

"The Secretary-General has repeatedly called on all concerned to exercise restraint and solve issues peacefully," Nesirky said when asked if Ban had a comment on the fresh incident along the Indian-Pakistan border.

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**ONLINE POLL**

Do you believe Finance Minister AMA Muhith that there would be no corruption in building the Padma Bridge?

Yes (6%)

No (92%)

No Comments (2%)

TOTAL VOTES: 509

**TODAY'S POLL**

Do you think it was justified for the government to make Brojo Mohan (BM) College principal an officer on special duty (OSD) instead of taking no action against BCL activists for roughing him up?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT [www.thedailystar.net](http://www.thedailystar.net)

YOU MAY ALSO VOTE AT [facebook.com/dailystarnews](https://www.facebook.com/dailystarnews)

**PRAYER TIMING** February 17

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-25	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	5-57	6-01
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation